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# Adaptations of Euro-Canadian Schools to Inuit Culture in Selected Communities in Nunavut

**by Paul Berger ©**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education

Lakehead University

May 16th, 2001

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# Dedication

To my two grade seven classes in Nunavut.

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# ABSTRACT

This study explores educators' current and desired 'adaptations' of Euro-Canadian schools to Inuit culture, in five communities in one region of Nunavut. Communities ranged in size from 800 to 3500 residents, of which on average 90% are Inuit. Primary data collection occurred in the five communities through taped interviews with 20 educators, as well as informal conversations with 8 educators, in April, 2000. All those who volunteered to take part after hearing a description of the study, became participants. 1 of the 20 participants in the formal interviews, and 1 of the 8 in the conversations, were Inuit. All other participants were from Southern Canada.

This study creates a reference to current and desired 'adaptations' which can be used by educators in Nunavut when considering change. Reported and desired 'adaptations' are grouped into seven themes. Very few instances were reported where community input was solicited, desired, or used in determining the direction of the schools, or where schools explicitly taught Inuit values. Examples were given of attempts to incorporate 'Inuit curriculum' into schools, or the desire to do so, and many practices were documented which are educators' attempts to interact with students 'like Inuit do'. As well as adaptations toward Inuit culture, many changes were reported or desired which are current Southern practices, teaching ESL practices, or practices designed to respond to the effects on students of societal problems.

To increase the success of Inuit students, the main recommendations from this study are: 1) Increasing community ownership of schools through meaningful consultation, 2)

Increasing the number of Inuit educators in schools, and supporting them in remaining Inuit rather than adopting Euro-Canadian ways of being/teaching, 3) Creating an orientation to Inuit culture, learning styles, and communication patterns for new teachers hired from the South, 4) Inservicing Southern teachers on cultural and ESL issues, 5) The creation and effective distribution of relevant, culturally sensitive curricula and resources in Inuktitut and (ESL sensitive) English.

# ADAPTATIONS OF EURO-CANADIAN SCHOOLS TO INUIT CULTURE IN SELECTED COMMUNITIES IN NUNAVUT

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study examines "adaptations" which are currently in use, and those desired, by some school personnel in selected schools in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut. I begin by introducing the reader to the topic and its importance, and by describing the methodology used in the study. Next, I review the literature as it relates to "adaptations" in Inuit schools. Findings from 15 formal and eight informal interviews are then presented and interpreted with respect to school documents and the literature. The data are then summarized, and recommendations aimed at improving the quality of education for Inuit students in the communities are made. Finally, I present conclusions drawn from the work.

### 1.1 Background

Formal schooling is less than one hundred years old in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut (Van Meenan, 1994). Euro-Canadian schools, when they arrived, superimposed Southern educational traditions on the previously existing Inuit system of education (Douglas, 1994). As with most of the colonial policies pursued in Arctic North America, this schooling was often aimed at the assimilation of northern indigenous peoples into the "mainstream" (Lipka & Stairs, 1994). Due to the size and power of the institution, assimilation is often the result of transplanting schools from the dominant-culture to minority settings, whether or not the school system was, or is today, intentionally assimilationist (Henze & Vanett, 1993). For indigenous peoples,"it is extremely difficult to be educated in a western way and, culturally, remain who we are" ( La France, 1994, p. 20). This is partly the case because "formal education is not only alien to Inuit culture but, as initially transposed from the south, is in direct conflict with indigenous modes of transmitting knowledge across generations" (Stairs, 1988, p. 315).

Over the last four decades an awareness has been growing about the potential damage to students' self-esteem and school performance when the school does not reflect and value their native culture (Bennett, 1999). Wright, Taylor and Ruggiero (1996) noted that "Canada's Inuit also experience persistent, disproportionate academic failure" (p. 734), and Binda (1999) wrote that "the high dropout and failure rates and negative impacts of schooling testify to the dysfunctional effects of a EuroCanadian education system of service delivery for Aboriginal and Inuit people" (p. 87). Stairs (1994) noted some of the common difficulties indigenous students have in dominant-culture classrooms: "These include a reluctance to perform in front of peers and to compete with them, avoidance of communication with teachers, non-comprehension of decontextualized verbal instruction, and general withdrawal from and even resistance to classroom life and routines" (p. 68). Wright et al. (1996) found that Inuit children do not arrive at school lacking intelligence, nor develop it more slowly once in school, ruling out the possibility that an intelligence deficit model could be used to explain the disproportionate failure of Inuit children in the Euro-Canadian school system.

Historically, the systems of education imposed on the Inuit of Nunavut have not reflected or valued Inuit culture. Efforts to do so have increased over the last three decades (Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly Special Committee on Education [NWT LASCE], 1982; Serkoak 1989; Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment [NWTECE], 1996). These efforts have resulted in "adaptations" to the Euro-Canadian school system at various levels and to varying degrees. For example, at the board level, 'Inuit' curriculum has been developed; at the community level, some control has been transferred to District Education Authorities; at the school level, cultural inclusion programs have been instituted, and at the classroom level, educators employ a variety of strategies to try and make learning relevant for Inuit students. "Adaptations" which change school culture toward community culture are efforts to "contextualize" schools. In this study, the word "adaptations" is used to denote changes in structure, procedure, or habit from the norms of Euro-Canadian schools to fit the conditions of schools in Inuit communities. It is also used for everything reported by participants as adaptations, and thus includes changes and strategies which may not represent adaptations at all. "Contextualizing" is used to mean making the schools more congruent with the communities in which they are found.

At the 1983 Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the general assembly passed a resolution "that our educational systems are to prepare our children for life based on values and skills from the Inuit culture and the western culture" (cited in Stairs, 1991, p. 290). There is a mandate, then, for some form of Euro-Canadian schooling to continue to exist, but the literature suggests that it should move toward Inuit culture to increase student performance and well-being. Stairs (1994) cautioned, however, that "this emphasis on 'cultural compatibility' may also mean that students are offered a relatively narrow and unchallenging education inadequate for strong competence in both indigenous and non-indigenous worlds" (p. 68), and Corson (1992) offered Philips' concern, based on studies of cultural minority pupils, that "teachers themselves are too busy and powerless as individuals to make much impact" (p. 488). Annahatak (1994) cautioned that there are many questions involved in deciding how to structure 'Inuit' schooling: "They have been questions with no easy answers, and I see it even as dangerous to approach these questions too simply with only educational issues in mind" (p. 15). There is no agreement regarding to what degree the schools should be changed to reflect Inuit culture, nor how this should best be achieved.

Do we need to remove EuroCanadian schools and Southern teachers altogether? Leavitt (1991) claimed that "it is possible to provide culturally appropriate education for native Indian and Inuit children within the framework of the European model of schooling" (p. 266). Stairs (1991) thought it possible to adapt the Euro-Canadian school, with native teachers "looking to students for clues about the best ways to help them learn within the formal educational system [while] simultaneously searching the system itself for modifications to allow more appropriate responses to the needs of native students" (pp. 287, 288). Also optimistic, Annahatak (1994), an Inuk, commented that "a value in my culture is to accept and negotiate change" (p. 15). And Wright et al. (1996) claimed that "there is no Inuit model for formal institutionalized education. The introduction of formal education itself represents an intrusion into the indigenous culture. Thus even a truly "Inuit school" would have to borrow much from a mainstream Canadian model" (p. 737). Simply removing Euro-Canadian schools and Southern teachers does not seem to be a viable option.

The marriage between Western classrooms and indigenous peoples' values is not an easy one. Annahatak (1994) wrote that "more often than not Inuit values are left out of school (p. 17). Douglas (1994) noted that in one Nunavut community, "values associated with schooling are seen to be inconsistent with the Inuit way of life....The challenge posed by recontextualizing schooling in Arctic Bay lies in part in resolving these inconsistencies" (p. 163). Inuit culture is undergoing a rapid change in values, due, at least in part, to the foreign institution of western schooling and other western practices (Crago, Annahatak & Ningiuruvik, 1993; Eriks-Brophy & Crago, 1994). Melding two dissimilar but 'static' cultures would be a formidable task. 'Resolving the inconsistencies' under the present circumstances will be even more difficult.

Educators in Nunavut make changes which may be seen as attempts to contextualize their schools and classrooms. Some changes are undoubtedly made on pragmatic grounds, while others are based on a belief in the appropriateness of trying to fit the schools to the communities. Will isolated changes be enough? Ryan (1989) believed that the alienation of students would persist as long as the values of the dominant society permeate the school. With isolated changes, these values are likely to remain unaltered, although the quality of some students' educational experiences may improve in the interim. Cummins and Skutnabb-Kangas (1988) wrote that "the structure of interactions that leads minority students to internalize shame remains intact" (p. 5). A concerted effort at many levels will likely be needed to substantially alter this situation, and the "disproportionate failure" of Inuit students.

## 1.2 Researcher's Personal Experience in Nunavut

LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (1998) suggest that when doing phenomenology the researcher "bracket" his/her perspective, which "allows the reader to identify how her perspective may influence her findings" (p. 224). It is for this reason that I include a short account of my own experience teaching in Nunavut.

I was hired in May of 1997 to begin my teaching career teaching grade seven in a community in the Baffin Region of Nunavut (then the Northwest Territories) in late August of the same year. Ninety-five percent of the population of the community was Inuit. Many people had government jobs; some were privately employed; there was much unemployment, and many people still hunted and fished. I was employed by one of three school boards (now operations centres) in what was a part of the Northwest Territories, and is now Nunavut.

Included in my orientation package was a copy of The Inuit way (Boult, n.d.), Piniaqtavut: integrated program, (Baffin Divisional Board of Education [BDBE], 1989), Inuuqatigiit: The curriculum from the Inuit perspective, (NWTECE, 1996), and Our future is now: Implementing Inuuqatigiit, (BDBE, 1996). The first is a 28 page document meant to familiarize people with Inuit culture. This document, together with Inuuqatigiit, served as my only orientation to Inuit culture before starting my teaching career in the far North. The lack of an orientation period represented a step backwards from the early 1970s, when the adaptation that saw a two to three week orientation period was deemed insufficient, and a longer orientation was recommended (The Arctic Institute of North America, 1973). Piniaqtavut "is a program, not a curriculum" (BDBE, 1989, p.ii), and served only to suggest possible themes to use for teaching grade seven. The third document, Inuuqatigiit, is a curriculum document to be used in conjunction with other documents, and Our future is now is a blueprint for school change.

Upon arrival I found several curriculum guides which had been adapted from those of southern provinces, including the Junior high English language arts curriculum and program guide (Northwest Territories Education [NWTE], 1988). In other areas such as science, no curriculum documents were available. I was startled to realize soon after the beginning of school that most of my grade seven students, all Inuit, had only formally started to learn English when suddenly immersed in it in grade five. This meant that most textual material that was accessible to them was intended for students in the primary grades, and that my Southern expectations of student progress had to be modified. This was reflected on one page in the language arts curriculum document, which advised teachers that in ESL environments, much less material could be expected to be covered than was set out in the document (NWTE, 1988).

Unfortunately most of the curriculum documents were of limited use to me as a teacher. Although the reasons varied from one document to the next, problems fell mainly into one of two categories; a) curriculum was beyond my students' abilities or of little interest to them, or, b) curriculum was beyond my ability to teach or facilitate, since it dealt with traditional Inuit knowledge. The curriculum documents served at best to guide some of my decisions, and as resources to be heavily modified. At worst, in the complete absence of documents, I decided on what to teach, when to teach it, and how to teach it. This was reminiscent of much of the history of formal education in the Canadian Arctic. I often felt unqualified, I had been poorly prepared, and I had few resources.

When teaching, then, I did my best to use and modify existing curricula and resources, and to create curricula and resources which I believed would fit the needs of my students and help them learn. I often needed to change my teaching methods, my classroom management procedures, my assessment techniques, and my lesson content from what I imagined were the norms in Southern schools.

Some of my colleagues, my wife, and I used to frequently discuss the roles of Southerners in Inuit communities. We were aware of some of the dissonance between the cultures of the institutions we represented (the healthcare system, and formal education), and the culture of the people in the community. Sometimes we tried to second guess 'what would be best' for the community, and what we could do to help. We did this with an awareness that we could not know 'what would be best'. We did not know how the community could be meaningfully involved. While the District Education Authority [DEA] (elected by the community) was, by its mandate, responsible for creating certain policies, which should have insured a measure of community input, the task usually fell to a school committee. The DEA approved our proposals.

When addressing the problem of violence in the schools, there was reticence among staff to the idea of holding a school/community meeting to address the concerns. In the preceding years, colleagues reported that the DEA Annual General Meeting, open to the public, had turned into complaint sessions lasting late into the night. This happened again in my first year of teaching, while in my second year the process was abandoned altogether. We lacked a process for dialogue, and the skills to facilitate it.

Near the end of my second year, several colleagues and I, frustrated by the lack of success of some of our students, and uncomfortable with the negative effects of retention, sat down to make a plan. We thought that perhaps by removing grades seven, eight and nine, and by expecting that most students would take at least four years to become prepared for success in grade ten, that the stigma of failure could be removed and we could create flexibility to modify programs to better fit the students. We were, for the most part, designing in the dark, and the idea did not get beyond the board of education. When, almost exactly a year later, I heard that a community in Nunavut was using a modified junior high program, the seeds of this study were sown. It was important, I thought, for educators to know what others in Nunavut were doing that they believed was successful, and what others would like to try.

## 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine adaptations in schools in selected communities in Nunavut. The major questions are;

1) What are some of the adaptations currently being made to help selected Euro-

Canadian schools fit the Inuit communities in which they are located?

2) What changes do educators in these schools think should be made to better fit their schools to the communities?

This study documents what has been done in selected communities and what educators would like to do to better fit schools to local culture.

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

Educators in Nunavut are isolated from one another by vast distances, the absence of connecting roads, and in some communities the lack of reliable Internet access. They have few opportunities to meet with colleagues from other communities, to share concerns and work together towards solutions. This isolation contributes to school staffs and individual educators working with differing awareness and levels of commitment toward the goal of adapting Euro-Canadian schools to fit the local communities. It also makes it more difficult than in the South to share strategies that would help to increase the effectiveness of schools in their present forms.

Although shared documents exist which are designed to help in the process of adapting schools toward Inuit culture (BDBE, 1989; NWTECE, 1996), and although texts exist documenting adaptations to culture on a case study basis (for example Lipka & Mohatt, 1998; Tompkins, 1998), no reference document could be found describing practices across a region of Nunavut. A common reference document such as the one created through this study will be valuable for several reasons. It can be used as a resource by educators in Nunavut who would like an overview of adaptations currently in use in Nunavut schools, by suggesting possible changes at the school or classroom level. It will also provide support for educators attempting change, since a desired adaptation successfully in use in some schools provides greater hope that it might also succeed in another setting. The documentation of adaptations desired by educators will give interested parties a starting point in their search for ways to improve Nunavut schools. Finally, where the literature suggests changes which were not reported by educators in this study, their discussion will illuminate fertile areas of potential growth for teachers, administrators, board and ministry personnel.

## 1.5 Limitations

Limitations of the study vary with the ethnic background of the participant. The Inuit participant may have had a limited ability to identify ways in which his/her school differs from a Euro-Canadian model. Most Inuit teachers have not been schooled in southern Canada, and may therefore not recognize some of the adaptations. For example, calling teachers by their first names, standard practice in Nunavut schools, would not seem different to someone who has no experience with addressing teachers by their surnames (common practice in Euro-Canadian schools). Some Southern-Canadian educators also disclosed their lack of extensive experience teaching in a Southern setting, which may have similarly limited their ability to discern differences in practice.

Southern-Canadian educators' ideas about desirable adaptations to fit schools to Inuit culture will be based on their conceptions of Inuit culture. Many of these educators will have spent at most several years in Arctic Canada, and it is assumed that even long-time residents will understand Inuit culture to a far lesser degree than do Inuit, despite study, observation, and interaction. This may mean that Southern-Canadian educators' recommendations for change are based on flawed assumptions, and would in practice be of little value. Counteracting this mechanism will be the professional judgement of educators who develop or advocate for adaptations. This is predicated on the assumption that what teachers find or feel will 'work' with Inuit students, may primarily be things that better 'fit' those students. Paradise (1994) called the ability of mainstream teachers to recognize and respond successfully to minority children's culture "practical consciousness" or "teacher radar" (p. 69).

My incomplete knowledge of Inuit culture may have limited my ability to interpret some contributions, as I may fail to understand or may misinterpret the connections between an adaptation and its relationship to Inuit culture. Mitigating against this to some extent is my experience living and teaching in Nunavut (1997-1999). This experience has given me an understanding of the context of this research, although it may also be responsible for introducing biases which have limited my ability to fairly interpret participants' contributions, as may other biases stemming from my background and upbringing. LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (1998) wrote that "researcher bias will color what is learned by covertly directing observation and interview, as well as shading the interpretation of data" (p. 218). My own lack of experience as a researcher may have limited my effectiveness in conducting interviews, limiting the breadth or depth of information which resulted.

Maguire & McAlpine (1996) defended the involvement in certain contexts of mainstream (Euro-Canadian) researchers studying matters involving Aboriginals. This may be more of an ethical than a pragmatic question. I believe that, while not ideal, it is defensible in this context, as I attempt to be aware of my position and potential biases. Nonetheless, it is important for the reader to remember that the frame within which the data collection and analysis took place, is a Southern one.

Participants volunteered to take part in this study. It is possible that, given the nature of the study, those who chose to participate are generally more supportive of the goal of reflecting Inuit culture and values in Northern schools. This may mean that the picture of awareness and willingness to accept and encourage change which emerged, is skewed, and conclusions about the general level of adaptations currently employed or desired in the schools should be drawn with extreme caution.

Nunavut has three distinct regions in terms of education, which were formerly administered by three different school boards. Policies, programs, and philosophies may have varied considerably between these three boards. My teaching occurred in one region, and this research took place in only one region (a different region). It cannot be assumed that the same adaptations are employed and desired in all three regions.

Only one Inuk volunteered to be interviewed, perhaps because the asking of direct questions may be perceived as invasive by Inuit (Boult, n.d., p. 18; Lipka, 1989). That the researcher is non-Inuit, and was only in each community for a very short period of time, may also have contributed to an unwillingness among Inuit educators to volunteer. Due to the lack of Inuit participants it cannot be claimed that the findings represent the views of Inuit educators.

An Inuk researcher would likely have had more Inuit participants, and would certainly find other adaptations being used and desired, perhaps along with many found in this study. He or she might also find disagreement with some of the findings of this study. That is as it should be. Participants in this study were not always in agreement, and the practices reported and desired by these participants should be viewed as points of departure for the discussion, not final answers regarding what works or what does not work in contextualizing, or making effective, schools in Nunavut.

## 1.6 Delimitations

This study does not undertake an exhaustive study of multicultural educational practices in Nunavut, rather it documents adaptations perceived or desired by educators in selected Nunavut schools, and relates these to the literature, including Inuuqatigiit: The curriculum from the Inuit perspective, (NWTECE, 1996). The study does not analyze each suggested solution to problems of incompatibility between the Euro-Canadian schools and Inuit culture, but presents educators' ideas about changes which could be made to reduce the incompatibility, and/or increase the school's effectiveness..

The author assumes that the goal of adapting Nunavut schools to reflect and value Inuit culture is an important one. The study is not meant to debate this question, but to determine how this is currently being done, and how Northern educators think it could be done better.

The study does not assess the effectiveness of adaptations which are currently in use. Informants' perceptions have sometimes been included, but no attempt to corroborate their beliefs has been undertaken. In the discussion, adaptations are situated with respect to the literature.

## 1.7 Definition of Terms

| | |
|---|---|
| Adaptation: | A change in structure, procedure, or habits to fit different conditions. In this study this includes all things reported as 'adaptations', even when they are, for example, strategies in common usage. |
| Contextualize: | The process of trying to adapt Euro-Canadian practices to fit the circumstances in which they are being employed in Inuit communities. |
| Euro-Canadian School: | This is used to mean the structures and practices usually associated with schools operating in the dominant culture in the Canadian provinces. Also 'Southern school'. |
| Inuit Culture: | The beliefs, values, habits, and other endeavors characteristic of the Inuit. |
| Southern (Canadian/Educator): | This is used to mean a non-Inuit person who lived in |

| | |
|---|---|
| | the dominant culture in Canada or in another Western country before his or her employment in Nunavut. |
| North/Northern: | These terms are used to denote Arctic Canada and people, places, and things indigenous to Arctic Canada. |
| Inuk: | Singular of Inuit. |

## 1.8 Assumptions

Several assumptions underlie this work which are important to its success and usefulness. They are:

1) Many educators in the North struggle with their roles in schools which are to varying degrees culturally incompatible with the communities in which they are situated, and these educators desire changes to the way schooling is done.

2) Educators who adapt standard Euro-Canadian schooling practices, or who seek changes which would help students to achieve greater academic and social success, without this desire being based on beliefs about cultural incongruity, have still contributed to the study and are still able to use the findings of the study. It is assumed that most adaptations which aim to increase student success or well-being, and which are successful, will be so because they help to better fit the school to the student. Where this is not the case, educators may still choose to use adaptations which might lead to

increased student performance or well-being.

3) Communities, schools, and the Inuit culture are sufficiently similar across Nunavut for there to be a possibility that adaptations used in one location will be useful in other locations.

4) Many ideas from other indigenous and minority education situations may be relevant to the Inuit and Northern schools, as they will be general strategies rather than site or culture-specific solutions. Ideas from Arctic regions may be particularly relevant since:

> with many parallels in their surroundings, life styles, and historical circumstances, all indigenous peoples of the Far North have experienced similar problems and changes due to the introduction of Western culture and schooling. Since education often motivates and facilitates change, it is reasonable to expect that the effects of western education on the various Northern indigenous societies have been similar in many ways. (Darnell & Hoem, 1996, p.7)

5) Continuity between Inuit culture and school culture is desirable.

# CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

This is a survey study designed to explore the phenomenon of 'adaptations' within selected Nunavut schools. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, the analysis of documents, and personal reflections.

## 2.1 Site Description

Five communities in one region of Nunavut were chosen for this study. The communities ranged in size from 800 to 3500 inhabitants, with an average of 90% Inuit population. Most Nunavut communities share many of the characteristics of the five communities selected for this study. All Nunavut communities are remote, that is, they have no road access to southern Canada or to each other (with the exception of Arctic Bay and Nanisivik which are connected to each other by road). The schools employ predominantly Inuit teachers at the primary level, and predominantly Southern-Canadian teachers at the intermediate and senior levels.

## 2.2 Participant Selection

A convenience sample was used from the population defined as including any educators (including student-teachers) from the five communities visited who consented to a voluntary, taped interview, or who agreed to speak informally with the researcher. It was assumed that all participants who volunteered would have something to contribute.

I spent between two and four days in each community, and visited each of the nine schools in the capacity of faculty liaison for student-teachers doing a placement there. In each school, I posted a description of the study and a request for volunteers in the staff room. I also introduced myself and my research to people in the staff room, and to others whom I met, and indicated that they could approach me at any time if they would like to volunteer. Twenty participants took part in fifteen taped interviews. One participant was Inuit, and nineteen were Southern-Canadians. Four were student-teachers near the end of a four week placement. The other sixteen included educators with a wide range of subject and grade experience, including administrators. In addition to the formal interviews, eight participants spoke with the researcher casually. One of these participants was Inuit, and seven were Southern-Canadians. These participants indicated their willingness to contribute, but were not interviewed formally, largely due to scheduling constraints.

A further accounting of the gender, grade and subject of teaching, and experience of the participants is not offered. The goal of the study was not to determine differences in attitudes or practices relating to any of these variables, but rather to find a broad description of adaptations desired and in use by Nunavut educators.

## 2.3 Validity

Although this sample is small and non-random, it is believed that data were obtained which represented the views of many educators in this region, due to the common recurrence of ideas. Further, the sample constituted about 10% of the region's educators. Small samples have legitimacy in exploratory studies, in areas lacking extensive research (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 1998; Mueller, Schuessler, & Costner, 1977).

Due to the small number of Inuit educators involved, it cannot be assumed that the views of Inuit educators are adequately represented here. More research is needed, especially research conducted by or with Inuit, to find the views of Inuit educators which relate to adaptations in Northern schools.

Participants in this study were self-selected. This may have resulted in selection bias toward educators who support the goal of moving Euro-Canadian schools in Nunavut toward Inuit culture. For this reason, care must be taken in generalizing findings to other educators within the region regarding the level of commitment to adapting Northern schools.

One threat to a study's validity can be the effect of reactivity (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 1998). In this study, reactivity might have caused participants to describe adaptations which had not actually been made, or to glorify the success of described adaptations. Although this cannot be ruled out, confidence increased when more than one participant described the same change. Some adaptations could be supported through the existence of documents describing the adaptations, or observation of the adaptations. My experience as an educator in the North has given me a sense of the context in which northern educators work, thus providing another point of reference for weighing and interpreting data.

## 2.4 Interview Format

Observations took place and interviews were conducted during a two week period in April, 2000. The interview guide was tested (March, 2000) in a pilot prior to the departure of the researcher for Nunavut. In the pilot, four interviews were conducted, each with a student-teacher from Lakehead University who had done a student teaching placement in Nunavut. It was found that even beginning teachers with limited first-hand knowledge of Inuit culture could describe adaptations they had seen, made, or desired.

Interviews for this study were scheduled to last approximately one hour. They were semi-structured and began after the participant signed a consent form attesting to the fact that he or she had been informed of the nature of the study and the purpose of the interview, and that his/her identity would remain confidential. In some cases more than one participant was interviewed at the same time.

At the beginning of each interview I briefly outlined my interest in the topic, and disclosed my experience as an educator in Nunavut. This served to "break the ice" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). My first question was an open-ended question about what adaptations of the Euro-Canadian schools to Inuit culture they were familiar with. LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (1998) recommend the use of open-ended items when the researcher "does not know all of the possible alternative responses" (p. 316). I interacted with the participant(s) to broaden or deepen their responses, and to encourage the participant to explore all areas related to the first question. The interview questions emerged as participants named areas of exploration that I had not thought to include in my initial interview guide (see appendix A). The guide provided me with prompts for probing questions, which I used if the participant seemed stuck. The focus of each interview evolved as participants stressed that which resonated most strongly with them.

When a participant had no more current adaptations , I asked the next question, pertaining to desired changes, and allowed the participant to respond, asking for clarification where necessary. Finally, I asked the participants what they thought of previous participant's selected suggestions (without identifying the source of the suggestion). These I selected according to how much allotted time was remaining in the interview, and what similar themes I had recognized in the participants' interviews thus far. In this way the interview questions emerged. The formal interviews were audio-taped for later analysis.

Although the interviews were expected to take approximately one hour, several took more than an hour, and others were completed in 35-45 minutes. In some cases, interviews ended naturally when the interviewee seemed to indicate that s/he had no more ideas, and in others, demands of scheduling meant that the interviews ended at an agreed upon time. One interview was lost due to technical problems. Notes on this interview were made from memory and used as data.

The informal interviews took the form of discussions with participants who indicated that they had something to contribute. Brief notes detailing the content of these discussions were recorded following the discussions.

## 2.5 Observation

Observations were recorded as field notes for later reference. Salient features of Inuit culture were also noted. Observations made during my time in the five communities gave me a sense of context for the data obtained through the interviews, and served as an additional source for triangulation of obvious structural/procedural adaptations in the schools.

My own experience of what adaptations were being made in the community in Nunavut in which I worked, and my desire to know what others were being tried, provided the incentive to begin this project. The experience helped me to formulate the research question, to understand adaptations described during the interviews, and to be able to interpret what the participants said.

## 2.6 Documents

School documents such as curriculum documents are used to help illuminate topics arising from the interviews. One important document was Inuuqatigiit: the curriculum from the Inuit perspective (NWTECE,1996). Teacher perceptions of adaptations and desired adaptations are situated with respect to Inuuqatigiit. This serves to determine whether they have been officially suggested or sanctioned.

## 2.7 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed holistically. Observations, documents, and personal reflection were used to help understand and organize the interview data. The tape recorded interviews were transcribed and coded to group data into categories which emerged during the interviews and transcription. Fieldnotes written after the casual interviews were also coded and used. In some cases overlap existed and adaptations fit into more than one category. For each category, findings were recorded in two parts, one with adaptations to a Euro-Canadian school model which are currently employed, and one with adaptations desired by educators. Although this representation reflected my initial intent for this study, by creating a guide to adaptations in the region, it did not lend itself to interpretation, and so was distilled into a point form summary, which can be found in appendix B.

The data were then reconsidered in terms of type of adaptation towards Inuit culture. The genesis of this taxonomy was Stairs' (1994) discussion of the 'what','how', and 'why' of schooling, which will be elaborated upon in chapter 4. A further theme, 'negotiating culture' was added, to include descriptions which move the school closer to the community, or the community closer to the school. Finally, since many of the 'adaptations' described by participants were not, in fact, moves toward Inuit culture, themes to organize these include 'non-adaptations to Inuit culture', 'adaptations to the ESL environment, and sound pedagogy', and 'adaptations to the effects of cultural dissonance'. The emergence of these themes is discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.

Within these themes the findings are presented, discussed, and situated with respect to the literature.

# CHAPTER 3: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In order to understand points of conflict between Inuit culture and Euro-Canadian schools, it is necessary to have an understanding of some features of Inuit culture which may be important in the context of schooling. These will be described briefly, with a focus on traditional Inuit ideas about education, and will help the reader to understand why certain adaptations might be made or desired.

Formal education in the Canadian Arctic is a relatively recent phenomenon. It is important to be aware of this short history, and to understand recent trends in the Eastern Arctic towards education which reflects and values Inuit culture, in order to understand the historical context in which Northern educators function, and in which adaptations are made and desired. This historical context is described. Next, the 'hidden curriculum' is discussed through literature relating to Southern schools in Northern settings. By pointing to its damaging effects on students, this will help to orient the reader to the need for adaptation of the Euro-Canadian school model for schools in Northern settings.

In order to understand the context of individual adaptations which will be discussed, it is necessary to have an overview of different theories and thoughts on ways in which changes in the culture of schools, which serve minority populations, might take place. This is presented, with a focus on Northern educators' perspectives. Finally, current adaptations to Southern school models, found in the literature, are described.

### 3.1 Inuit Culture

It is important to note that, with the exceptions of Mary May Simon, who is part Inuk, and Oscar Kawagely, who is a Yup'ik Eskimo, the authors cited in this section are from the dominant-culture. Thus, it should be remembered that this description of Inuit culture may differ significantly from one written or told by Inuit from their perspective.

Before contact with Europeans, Inuit lived a nomadic or semi-nomadic life in the Arctic regions of North America. They lived in camps which ranged from single families to many families, and subsisted by hunting, gathering, trapping and fishing (Brody, 1975). Often all members in a camp were related either by blood, marriage, or by adoption. Minor (1992) described the importance of relationships for Inuit:

> Among the Inuit, the emphasis upon relationships allowed cooperation and assistance without mistrust or guilt. Group cooperation was the basis of physical survival, within which a complex system of kinship terminology clearly specified the relationship and responsibility of the individual to the group....The use of relationship designations in speech was valuable in efforts that required collaboration, for when one Inuk addressed another, each was reminded of the duties in their relationship. (p. 46)

She reports sharing and partnerships as being vital to the survival prospects of groups of Inuit.

Briggs (1998) reported the Inuit love of children, and the absence of anger shown towards them: "To be angry with a child was demeaning; it demonstrated one's own childishness, and one older woman told me that, as an educational device, scolding was likely to cause a child to rebel" (p. 5). Minor (1992) wrote that "the rearing and teaching of children gave meaning to the life and struggles of the Inuit, and immense joy and happiness" (p. 52). Inuit tended to marry young, often having children in their mid-teens (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996). This is still the case for many Inuit women, making staying in school a sometimes stressful choice.

The rhythms of traditional life were much different than the rhythm of Euro-Canadian schools or work (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996, p. 225). "They come from a culture where precision in time is not a valuable commodity" (p. 231), and, with continuous daylight for part of the year, people often slept all 'day'. Inuit children often helped with chores and with looking after younger siblings. Today this can create conflict with the school as some teachers view 'babysitting' as an inappropriate reason for a student's absence (Douglas, 1994).

Inuit valued independence greatly, and as a consequence believed in not interfering with others' choices. Direct requests, even of children, were thought to be rude, and no explanation was expected to explain a person's behavior (Boult, n.d.; Minor, 1992). Unwanted behavior was dealt with in a number of indirect ways, including: ignoring the behavior, ridiculing the person, gossiping about him/her, shaming the person, and in extreme cases ostracizing him/her (Boult, n.d.; Briggs, 1998). These methods were well suited to camp environments, but are less effective in the larger settlements which were created in the 1950s and 1960s. They are very different from some of the normal modes of discipline in Euro-Canadian schools.

Inuit believed/believe that a baby receives a recently departed relatives' soul. Babies are therefore often named after relatives who have died. This is another reason why parents rarely tell a child what to do, "as this would be equivalent to ordering an elder about" (Boult, n.d., p. 10). Euro-Canadian teachers are often frustrated by the unwillingness of some Inuit parents to set limits on their children's behavior. Students getting to school late and tired cause disruption in a Southern school; teachers in Northern schools may misunderstand parents' unwillingness to intervene by sending their children to bed as a lack of concern for the child's well being.

Inuit are reported to trust in authority (Annahatak, 1994; Tester & Kulchyski, 1994). This may play many roles in schools which are staffed by both Inuit and non-Inuit, and in communities where local elected bodies have only recently assumed 'control' of the schools.

Inuit feel close ties to the land and employed a "rich mythology that sought to explain both the natural and spiritual world" (Boult, n.d., p. 5). Boult also reported that Inuit admire those who reflect on a problem and solve it (p. 16), rather than coming to a hasty conclusion. This can be inconsistent with the expectation of Southern teachers who often expect quick answers.

Minor (1992) reported the attitude of the Inuit, when faced with tragedy or seemingly insoluble problems, as being summed up by the word *ajurnarmat*, 'it can't be changed'. She writes: "They simply could not waste time in despair or yearning, because they were faced each day with the reality of finding food and shelter" (p. 53). Instead, they accepted the loss, and carried on living. This can be seen as fitting the often harsh conditions within which the Inuit existed. Minor (1992): "they are men and women who accomplished tremendous and ingenious feats in their will to survive and built highly effective approaches to interpersonal relationships into their culture" (p. 54). Unfortunately a tendency to accept a seemingly overwhelming problem as insoluble, and meeting it with quiet resignation, can be misunderstood by Southern teachers who value "making an effort", in some cases even more than they value success.

"When a traditional Inuk is asked how she learned to sew skins or how he learned to hunt, and who was the teacher, the most common answer is that no one taught her, that he just learned or knew how" (Minor, 1992, p. 66). Traditionally, Inuit children learned by observation and example, at convenient times, and as long as their interest held (Boult, n.d., p. 11) . Later, they got "strict and consistent education in matters of survival" (Minor, 1992, p. 52). Stairs (1994) contrasted the traditional Inuit educational model (*Isumaqsayuq*) with the Southern educational model (*ilisayuk*):

> *Isumaqsayuq* is the way of passing along knowledge through observation and imitation embedded in daily family and community activities, integration into the shared social structures being the principal goal. The focus is on values and identity, developing through the learner's relationship to other persons and to the environment. In contrast, *ilisayuq* is teaching which involves a high level of abstract verbal mediation in a setting removed from daily life, the skill base for a future specialized occupation being the principal goal....Native learners typically develop concepts and skills by repeating tasks in many different situations, such as hunting under varying conditions of weather and animal movement and with

> various types of equipment. They do not traditionally make explicit verbal formulations of basic ideas or rules for success, but rather recount what they have experienced and listen to stories which present concepts and principles implicitly....the praise and punishment so central to the 'push' of *ilisayuq* are in *isumaqsayuq* either the positive inclusion of the child in community activity or the negative non-response–and sometimes teasing–of the group....The social structure of *isumaqsayuq* is easily and often misunderstood in *ilisayuq* classrooms. In formal schools, where maturity is equated with the achievement of autonomy and individual success, observation and cooperation may be interpreted as inattention or even "cheating". (pp. 281-284)

Stairs (1994) continued:

> ...activities are acquired as wholes rather than in a series of sequenced steps....The motivation seems simply to be included, to contribute, and so to strengthen bonds of relationship. Children appear confident in what they have learned; they know what they know without being judged by adults....the initiative for learning comes from the learner; it is seldom directed or controlled by older relatives or other 'teachers'....Even the cursory description above reveals many levels of contrast with standard classroom practice which is characterized by professionalized teachers, teacher direction, sequenced student practice and performance, competitions and evaluations and extrinsic rewards, and an overall decontextualization or removal from everyday life and relationships. (p.67)

Crago (1992) studied the way Inuit families use language to interact, and found it far different than the way language is used in Euro-Canadian schools:

> The nature of caregiver accommodations to the child found in North American dominant society are not the same in Inuit families. Inuit adults do not use questions to draw their children's attention to such things as names of objects and events. Both French- and English-speaking non-Inuit second language teachers in northern schools, however, often still use 'transmission' style of teaching in which a child is singled out to respond to a question whose answer the teacher already knows. (p. 499)

Another traditional form of education which differs markedly from Southern concepts is presented by Briggs (1998):

> A way of stimulating children to think and to value that Stairs does not discuss was to present them with emotionally powerful problems that the children could not ignore. Often this was done by asking a question that was potentially dangerous for the child being questioned and dramatizing the consequences of various answers: 'Why don't you kill your baby brother?' 'Why don't you die so I can have your nice new shirt?' 'Your mother's going to die—look. She's cut her finger—do you want to come live with me?' In this way , adults created, or raised to consciousness, issues that the children must have seen as having grave consequences for their lives.
>
> These questions and others equally potent were asked frequently and repetitively in interactions between adults and all small children....questioners

> were simultaneously and to varying degrees teaching and testing, challenging and teasing...In a sense, this education was a trial by fire. For uninitiated children who were not yet able to understand either the motives of their adult interlocutors or the playful aspect of the questions, the challenge might be severe and the tease a torment....these interactions in various ways enhanced the children's safety and protected them from defeat, even while they elicited their fears. (pp. 6,7)

Briggs (1998) wrote that these questions were asked to preschool aged children from Alaska to Greenland, and that they can still be heard in modern Inuit communities, although she cautioned that the chance of misunderstanding is "vastly increased" in "complex communities" (p.7), by which I believe she meant any of the modern communities, as opposed to the traditional small hunting camp of 60 where she did her research. It seems likely that without a thorough understanding of why this questioning was done, Southern educators would find it baffling. It is included here to illustrate how wide the gap may be between Inuit and Southern concepts of socialization/education.

Formal assessment did not exist in traditional Inuit education, however Kawagely (1995) has pointed out that "competency had an unequivocal relationship to survival or extinction. You either had it, or you didn't, and survival was the ultimate indicator" (p. 88). This, the most 'authentic' of assessment, differs greatly from the typical testing and examination strategies in many western schools.

Elders were respected for their knowledge, wisdom, and story-telling ability (Boult, n.d.; Minor, 1992; Simon, 1992), and played a key role in helping to resolve conflicts.

Minor wrote that *"issuma* is an Inuit concept somewhat comparable to 'the ability to reason'....[it] may be said to be the gaining of knowledge over time and experience. This concept provides some insight into the respect provided by the Inuit to the elderly" (p. 56). She explained that an older person was often chosen or appointed to help resolve a conflict, that the helper would listen intently, and arbitrate the matter if the problem had not already been resolved just by talking about it (p. 57). Minor expressed admiration for the patience of elders in listening to a speaker, and even waiting for a time after the other had finished, in case s/he has an afterthought. An Inuit listener will reportedly often repeat back what a speaker has said to verify that it has been understood (p. 57).

Minor (1992) described 'advice giving' as another critical skill, with respect going to those who give good advice and whose advice was followed. The recipient could choose to follow the advice, accept the trauma in silence, or act on the disharmony: "the results were swift and clear. Depending on the disharmony to the camp, several actions or punishments would be enforced....if the matter was not settled the whole camp could perish" (p.58). Boult described this as Inuit culture being superbly fitted to the conditions in which it existed; the focus was on maintaining harmony in the camp, essential for survival in the harsh environment. Thus, disagreements were often settled with fist fights, wrestling matches, or song duels, after which the conflict was deemed to be finished (Boult, n.d., pp. 6, 8).

Contact with whalers, explorers and traders began to change Inuit culture, a process which accelerated with the arrival of missionaries and government personnel in the Arctic. Jenness (1964), writing largely about the period prior to the movement from camps to the settlements, said that the children lacked the desire to learn, and blamed this on a lack of encouragement from their parents. This, he in turn blamed on contact with White society and the disappearance of the herds of caribou after the white man arrived: "The Eskimos of today are a beaten people, bewildered by all the changes that have buffeted them since the beginning of the century, and unsure both of themselves and of their futures" (p. 133).

Residential schools, of which there was one in the region currently under study, often alienated children from their culture and families (Tompkins, 1998). Beginning in the 1950s the Canadian government moved families away from their camps and into settlements. With permanent housing replacing seasonal dwellings, wage labor competing with subsistence hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering, snowmobiles replacing dog teams, and cable television bringing images of the South to the North, Inuit culture has had to adapt rapidly. This rapid change has resulted in "an incongruity of cultural values" within Inuit culture (Sampath, 1992, p. 146), and even the creation of 'youth' as a social category which previously didn't exist (Thorslund, 1992). The 'new' communities are composed of extended family groupings which traditionally had limited contact with each other. Jordan (1988) blamed the schools for destroying the identity and culture of Inuit, and Minor (1992) described the destruction of tradition brought about by the contact of Inuit with the powerful White society:

> Today young Inuit are surrounded by conveniences of white society. They have no need to hunt or to challenge the elements as their ancestors did, nor is there any longer a pressing need to set goals or to reflect upon their spiritual

> experience. There is clearly a lack of roles in comparison to the traditional Inuit. Through a lack of traditional communal order, the emphasis has shifted from communal responsibility to individual survival....a growing gap between the youth and the elderly causes an alienation of trust and a diminished desire to share. This results in ambivalence in both parties towards mutual interaction, and thus a loss of role models for Inuit youth....The youth are not only lost in the confusing aspects of a foreign culture but also find themselves in a cultural vacuum where the elderly are powerless to help them.
>
> A common psychological response among youth to this confusion is boredom, and this boredom often leads to violence, alcoholism and suicide....A vacuum has been created and the attempt to fill it with material goods renders the traditional philosophy of life meaningless....The youth so wish to be true Inuit, but their Levi jeans and Hudson's Bay jackets are just not strong enough to allow them this freedom. So much of what the youth depend on takes away their Inuit culture and channels them in a direction of uncertainty. (pp. 80,81)

Minor's account of troubled Inuit youth is drastic, and is included to orient the reader to the degree of change which traditional Inuit culture has undergone in very recent times. 'Which culture?', may be an important question to ponder when considering adaptations; traditional Inuit culture, or the culture of Inuit youth today (Henze & Vanett, 1993)?

## 3.2 Historical Context of Northern Schools

Formal education was introduced in the Arctic regions to the Saami peoples of northern Scandinavia in 1596 (Darnell & Hoem, 1996), sometime later in Greenland, Alaska, the Canadian Western Arctic, and most recently in the Canadian Eastern Arctic. Prior to the advent of formal schooling the peoples of the Arctic learned through an apprenticeship model, whereby children observed adults, emulating them in play, and taking on responsibilities appropriate for their ages (Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment, 1996).

Formal schooling came to the Canadian Arctic with the arrival of a small number of mission schools in the late 1800s (Tompkins, 1998). These schools taught western religion and English, concepts foreign to the Inuit (Van Meenen, 1994). By the 1920s, boarding schools had been established in the Western Arctic, teaching religion, school subjects commonly taught in Southern Canada, and practical skills. In the Eastern Arctic missionaries predominantly taught classes where Inuit tended to gather for periods of time, such as trading posts and whaling stations, teaching religion and the reading and writing of syllabics (Van Meenen, 1994, pp. 146, 147).

By the 1930s there was some government attention being focussed on Inuit education:

> The overriding concern was that the Inuit 'should not be deliberately transformed into White men, who would inevitably demand public schools, medical care, and other services that would entail a considerable expenditure of public funds.' (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 149)

In the midst of difficult financial times the Canadian Government was wary of destroying

Inuit culture, primarily because to do so would have expensive implications for the future. The government did increase funding to the mission schools, and by 1937 there were seven day schools in operation, teaching from curriculum and using methodologies chosen by the missionaries, few of whom were trained as teachers (Van Meenen, 1994). By the late 1930s there were voices calling for education which would prepare the Inuit for the encroachment of civilization without destroying their traditional lifestyle. This was a pragmatic approach and was based on the lack of industry or other opportunities for employment open to Inuit at that time.

Another issue which surfaced at the same time was the question of Arctic sovereignty. Jenness believed that Inuit should receive a vocational education to prepare them to take part in resource development. This would serve to keep Inuit in the far north despite their declining population, thus ensuring Canada's continued claim to dominion of the Arctic archipelago (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 157). Although several efforts were made in this direction, there were still no government schools in the Arctic in 1940. The Depression and the advent of World War II "contributed to the government's ambivalence toward native people in general and the Inuit in particular"(Van Meenen, 1994, p. 160).

World War II brought much attention to the Arctic, which had a major impact on policy. The question of Arctic sovereignty loomed large with a recognition of the strategic importance of the Arctic, and its resource potential (Tester & Kulchyski, 1994). The Canadian Government could not reasonably claim that the Inuit were Canadians if it did little to police, educate, and assist them. If the Inuit were not considered Canadians, Canada's claim to the Arctic Archipelago became extremely dubious, especially since there were more American scientists and military personnel in the area than there were Canadians at that time. It was in this climate that Andrew Moore began an official study of the ownership and operation of schools in the Northwest Territories (NWT) in 1944, a study which resulted in the transfer of educational responsibility to the NWT in 1946, although the running of schools was contracted back to the federal government until 1967 (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 162). The first public school opened in Tuktoyuktuk in 1947.

At mid-century, with public schooling in the North in its infancy and only 25% of Inuit children 'exposed' to any school at all, 'welfare teachers' were introduced, civil servants who would serve as teachers. They were to teach arithmetic, hygiene, games, conservation, and handicrafts, and, "...in the absence of any official, standardized curriculum, they were expected to create their own" (Van Meenen, 1994, pp. 174, 175). At the same time the decision was made that all instruction should be in English, in part because the teachers spoke English, and in spite of the high proportion of Inuit literate in Inuktitut and the very low percentage literate in English (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 179).

In the early 1950s education moved from a religious to a secular orientation. The first curricula appeared, based on Southern standards, and lessons for the first two grades were in use by the mid-1950s. Regions in the NWT adopted the curriculum of the adjoining southern province, resulting in Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario curricula being used in the NWT (Van Meenen,1994, pp. 184,189). During a 1952 meeting it was decided that promising students should be trained to become the first Inuit teachers. It was also decided that itinerant teachers who followed the movement of the camps should be employed, and that tent schools should be erected at sites where Inuit gather in the summer. In 1952 it was deemed allowable to instruct certain courses in French or Inuktitut, which served to allow elementary textbooks to be produced in Inuktitut, complementing the English versions. This was one of the first adaptations to a school system designed in Southern Canada and implemented by Euro-Canadian, British, or Scottish administrators and 'teachers'.

In 1956 all mission school teachers became federal employees as the government moved towards assuming total control of education. This was part of a trend which saw the government take more responsibility for the condition of the Inuit, which had declined in part because of a drop in fur prices (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 195). A Curricula Section was established in the Education Division and streamed curricula were proposed; academic (for those who would complete high school), all-purpose (for those who would not stay in school), and pre-vocational (to create skilled tradespeople) (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 200). By 1960, satisfactory curricula still had not been developed and there were few local teachers, but the Southern and European teachers teaching in the north were all qualified teachers (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 201; Jenness, 1964, p.127).

In Baker Lake in the Eastern Arctic local Inuit were hired to teach traditional skills in the school in the 1957-1958 school year, but this adaptation was abandoned, apparently due to the lack of parental support. While many continued to advocate for the preservation of Inuit culture, the Superintendent of Education expressed the view that Inuit should be trained for the mainstream economy (Van Meenen, pp. 204, 206). With an almost complete lack of Inuit teachers and the preponderance of Southern curricula, this was in fact what was taking place.

Inuit were consulted for the first time regarding education, and Inuit classroom assistants began to be hired during the late 1950s (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 212). These assistants formed a pool from which many of the first Inuit teachers were later hired. Hiring the first Inuit during the 1950s was the first adaptation to staffing. With the removal of religion from the centre of Inuit education, the 1960s progressed with schools and curriculum still based almost entirely on a Southern model, and "the premise that the transition of the Inuit from the traditional lifestyle was inevitable" (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 225). Vocational training was a continued focus, "to provide the most efficient path into the wage economy"(Van Meenen, p. 227).

Until 1960, decision making about Northern curriculum had been made by individual teachers in the North, or at the Education Division in Ottawa, thousands of kilometres from the Arctic. During the 1960s, curriculum experts began to travel to the North, and curriculum committees were set up in many communities, though without the inclusion of Inuit. By 1965, there were many curriculum documents which included Northern themes, but "they still did not directly relate to Inuit culture" (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 235). In 1971, a federal study "found that children in northern schools could not relate to the existing teaching materials" (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 251). Adaptations to curricular materials were deemed necessary. A second survey by the NWT government ended proclaiming goals for the role of education, including to "enable each individual to choose freely between different courses of action in a manner such that he (sic) can live a satisfying personal life" (cited in Van Meenen, 1994, p. 252). The extension of community schooling to grade nine, and the teaching of the first few grades in Inuktitut were two changes which followed from this survey. The switch to schooling in Inuktitut represented a major adaptation of the Euro-Canadian system.

Also of great significance during this time was the increasing effort of the federal government to move Inuit from their traditional camps to settlements where policing, healthcare and schooling could be provided less expensively. This changed the culture of the Inuit dramatically, and allowed access to schools for almost all Inuit children. In 1964, Jenness pointed to the problems of poor attendance and low achievement. He also documented the practice of a Southern teacher diverging from the official curriculum.

The 1970s saw more attention focussed on the question of culture in Inuit education. A series of studies called the very structure of the school system into question, pointing out that Southern teachers' knowledge and values belong in the South, and blaming schools for the loss of Inuit culture (The Arctic Institute of North America, 1973). Poor teacher preparation was cited, with criticism levelled at the standard orientation period which lasted only 2 - 3 weeks for new teachers hired from the South (The Arctic Institute of North America, 1973, p. 136). Van Meenen (1994) comments that "this process of recruiting and 'preparing' teachers almost guaranteed that they would not have an appreciation for their students or their way of life" (p. 261), and concludes that although well-intentioned, the government takeover of education led to the single-minded purpose of integrating the Inuit into mainstream Canadian society (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 270). In 1977, Local Education Societies were elected to oversee each community's school(s) (Serkoak, 1989). This was a step towards local control of education, and is another major adaptation to the Southern system.

In 1982 the NWT LASCE tabled its report which called for substantial modifications to the educational system in the Northwest Territories. Amongst many recommendations it called for the creation of school boards, community control of schools, and the decentralization of curriculum control. The report stated clearly the aim of educating students to have a choice between a traditional and a modern way of life. This time an Inuk was on the committee, the report was written in English and Inuktitut, and extensive hearings had been held to encourage Inuit input. The committee noted that "there is an immense gap between the Department of Education's conception and production of a curriculum and its implementation in the classrooms" (NWT LASCE, 1982, p. 34), and recommended that curriculum development be delegated to the divisional boards of education (p. 73), to be developed with the input of parents and teachers (p. 77), based on research and systematic observation by teachers (p. 81). The recommendation to develop curriculum locally was an attempt to make schooling more relevant for the predominantly Inuit students.

In the following years many of the committee's recommendations were implemented, although not all were adopted. In 1985 the Baffin Divisional Board of Education became the first school board in the NWT (Colbourne, 1989). In three phases the Department of Education published a language arts curriculum covering kindergarten to grade nine. In 1989 the Baffin Divisional Board of Education published Piniaqtavut: Integrated Program, designed to help teachers move toward culturally appropriate teaching. The development of resources in Inuktitut was stressed to support Inuit teachers in the primary grades, and teachers teaching Inuktitut as a subject at the other levels. ESL materials were created to recognize the reality of the vast majority of classrooms in the Eastern Arctic (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 293). Many of the changes were efforts to adapt the transplanted Euro-Canadian model of schooling in ways that would help it to fit Inuit culture. Also in the 1980s, two Inuit Circumpolar Conferences were held which affirmed that formal schooling should teach the "attitudes, skills, and knowledge necessary to achieve success in subsistence and wage economies" (Inuit Circumpolar Conference [ICC], 1992, p. 137).

The 1990s were a time of accelerated change in education in the Eastern Arctic. Many Inuit teachers were certified through the Eastern Arctic Teachers' Education Program (Wilman, 1989), although most schools still switched from Inuktitut as the language of instruction to English immersion, between the 3rd and 5th grades. The Northwest Territories Ministry of Education, Culture and Employment published curriculum documents in 1996 in an attempt to move toward a truly Inuit curriculum. Pressure continued to be high for more integration of traditional knowledge, as there was not yet a 'formal or explicit' commitment by government to this concept (Legat, 1991).

In the two years after the creation of Nunavut (April 1st, 1999), structural changes took place, with control of education being transferred from the Northwest Territories to Nunavut. The new Ministry of Education, Culture, and Employment has expressed the goal of incorporating more Inuit culture into the schools, and it has transformed the three former boards of education into centres of school operations.

The history of formal education in the Eastern Arctic began with primarily religious content taught by missionaries in places where the Inuit naturally lived or gathered. Curricula then became assimilationist with the adoption of Southern curricula, while schools were built and the Inuit were enticed or forced into settlements (Tester & Kulchyski, 1994). There has recently been a breaking away from the past with the creation of curricula which reflect Inuit concerns and Inuit identity, and with the hiring of more Inuit teachers, principals, and classroom assistants. These and other adaptations to a Euro-Canadian school system are the focus of this study.

## 3.3 The Hidden Curriculum

"What goes on in schools...is an outcome of the curriculum, whether recognized or not" (Wein & Dudley-Marling, 1998, p. 409). The hidden curriculum includes a broad variety of school experiences not formally included in the curriculum. Some of these may result from formal constructs such as a discipline policy, but others are created by things like teacher attitudes, or from knowledge or experiences which are not offered, what Eisner called the 'null curriculum' (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998, p. 12). In the history of Inuit education, including the recent history, the hidden curriculum may have been more important than the formal curriculum, and is one reason why educators try to adapt Euro-Canadian schools to Inuit culture. It has even been suggested that "the White teachers' living style is seen to be as significant a part of White education as is the school curriculum" (J. Collier, 1973, p. viii).

An historical pattern which continues through the present day is the presence of the

Southern institution of school in the Northern setting of small Inuit communities. In 1958, Hinds, a teacher in one of the first Eastern Arctic schools, wrote: "The Eskimo should remain an Eskimo no matter how much of white man's ways he is able to absorb. Otherwise he is a lost soul" (p. 108). Despite this grave warning, schools remained conveyors of White culture. In 1987 the Baffin Divisional Board of Education expressed the view that "it is widely recognized that a major function of schooling is the transmission of culture. But up to now, we as Inuit have had to ask whose culture the school was transmitting" (Colbourne, 1989, p. 68)? Writing about the Yup'ik Eskimo of Alaska, Lipka (1990) stated that the "Yup'ik Eskimo worldview differs markedly from a western-oriented worldview in such fundamental ways as differences in time and space...." (p. 19), and yet these differences have not been recognized by the traditional Southern school model.

It is almost impossible for Southern educators to leave their worldview behind when travelling to the North to teach. Schools in the North are almost all structured like Southern schools, with buildings and schedules that represent White and not Inuit culture. In 1991 McAuley wrote that the Baffin Divisional Board of Education "...had to confront the post-colonial legacy of what is essentially a foreign institution...delivering a foreign curriculum...in a foreign language....(p. 45). Kawagley wrote of the Yupiaq that "their schooling leads to disillusionment and alienation from the Native ways while instilling values and aspirations from another world that is out of reach" (1995, p. 99). Clearly a clash of cultures exists between the institution of schooling, and the Native cultures in whose communities Southern schools are located. Reducing the culture clash has been the goal of many adaptations to the Euro-Canadian (or Euro-American) school model.

Although many things have changed to help the schools reflect Inuit values, they remain foreign institutions. The vast majority of Inuit teachers teach primary and junior classes, giving the impression that the prestigious (intermediate and high school) positions are occupied by Whites. This sends a damaging message to Inuit students. Lipka and Mohatt (1998) noted that Native teachers are often expected to behave like White teachers, thus serving to alienate students from people of their own culture. Similarly, bringing traditional knowledge into classrooms which then treat the knowledge in ways consistent with the dominant culture, is unhelpful (Darder, 1991; Lipka & Mohatt, 1998). Bringing in elders to teach in traditional ways is one suggested solution, but even this will be difficult to achieve in a Southern institution where 'guests' are expected to arrive 'on time'.

Harris (1990) suggested that the damaging aspect of the "hidden values curriculum" can be controlled in situations of minority-culture education:

> The main point to remember here is that teachers need to make it clear over time that what the children are learning about Western culture they are learning because it is needed for surviving in the Western domain, not because it is intrinsically better or more valuable. (p. 145)

He also wrote that Aboriginal control of schooling would provide "the surest protection against unwanted effects of the hidden curriculum" (p. 118).

Inuuqatigiit attempts to address some of the issues in the hidden curriculum by discussing Inuit values, including notions of time and discipline, areas of notorious culture clash. Unfortunately in the bottom-line conscious late 1990s and early 2000s, the practice of an orientation for new teachers no longer exists, despite the aforementioned recommendation that it be lengthened from two weeks. New teachers learn about Inuit culture through reading and on the job. That these are the primary means of acquiring this knowledge, is to the detriment of themselves and their students. As well as poor preparation, Tompkins (1998) noted problems with the transfer of Southern values to Northern settings:

> In some schools so much time is spent on detentions or on elaborate policies regarding what will happen if people wear hats in school that an alien visiting from another planet would think that somehow these things are what school is about. (p. 46)

The issue of hats was contentious in the community in which I taught, where respected elders would routinely arrive at school functions wearing baseball caps, while educators spent time and energy struggling with students about the no-hat rule. This is an example of the culture of a school remaining unresponsive to local norms.

Community involvement and control, although officially desired, remains highly variable. Local controlling bodies, now called District Education Authorities, have enormous power over what goes on in the school, but it seems that they are often unaware of this power and end up 'rubber-stamping' decisions made in the school. The bureaucracy of the system is not of their making (Douglas, 1994), and not of their culture, often leading to communication problems between the predominantly Inuit Education Authorities and the predominantly non-Inuit administrators. Guides and elders are hired by the schools, and local people volunteer to varying degrees. Still, the schools remain largely White institutions serving largely Inuit populations. As Tompkins wrote, "it is next to impossible to create an Inuit school when most of the staff are not Inuit" (Tompkins, 1998, p. 43). There continues to be high dropout rates, alienation between generations, and low participation rates in traditional and modern occupations (Van Meenen, 1994, p. 290), and the hidden curriculum continues to work against Inuit students in spite of great changes in the official curriculum. Problems arising from culture clash in the 'hidden curriculum' have provided impetus for the adaptation of the schools to the cultures in which they exist.

## 3.4 Changing School Culture in Minority Educational Settings

> Effective education could be the degree of harmony between the students' culturally and environmentally acquired intelligence, and the learning opportunities and intelligence developing procedures and goals of the school. Reasonably, if significant conflict lies between Eskimo processes and the school, some variety of educational failure must be expected. Teachers may be seen teaching ideally *with* the flow of Native intelligence, or teaching negatively *against* the Native stream of consciousness. (J. Collier, 1973, p. 4)

Many models exist which seek to foster a change in school culture to reduce the conflict Collier referred to. Some of the strategies described in the literature are presented here.

### 3.41 Culturally-grounded pedagogy.

Lipka (1990) detailed many specific areas and ways in which the culture of the schools can be adapted to the students' culture, increasing the 'harmony' of which Collier wrote. He described a lesson which; 1) used a culturally significant activity, 2) respected the Yup'ik cultural norms of group cohesiveness and individual autonomy, 3) used students' preferred learning styles, 4) contextualized the classroom by connecting it to the community, 5) used Yup'ik social organization and discourse style, and, 6) incorporated and taught Yup'ik values. This lesson took place in a Euro-American school with a Yup'ik teacher, and illustrates the successful integration of "Yup'ik cultural values, with western knowledge while reinforcing and building upon the children's existing Yup'ik identity" (p. 19).

Lipka (1990) called this a "culturally-based classroom environment" using "culturally- grounded" pedagogy (pp. 18, 19). Leavitt (1991) also called the result of incorporating the pedagogy of the native culture a 'culture-based' program, and wrote that the goal of a bicultural curriculum is to teach native students in English in a way that "takes into account both the mainstream culture and that of the community" (p. 275). This would, it was hoped, allow "economic and political independence" while "maintaining a native way of life" (p. 268). Leavitt stressed the native culture's material, social, cognitive, and linguistic cultures, as being the important bases for congruity between the teacher and students, and recommended classroom activities "centred on real life tasks, with children involved as apprentices" (p. 274).

Stairs (1994) wrote that historically the 'what' of schooling was considered in minority education, and so culture and language were included as subjects. Next, the 'how' was considered, and educators began to look at "cultural models of interaction with the human and non-human world" (p. 73). This led to a focus on learning styles, which, despite its value, carried with it the danger that "the learning context, the subculture of the classroom" would be underestimated (p. 68, also L. Collier, 1993). Now "we are reaching for the levels of the 'why' of education—cultural values and goals" (Stairs, 1994, p. 73).

### 3.42 Indigenous teachers as change agents.

Congruence between the values of Euro-Canadian school culture and Inuit culture will not be easy to reach (Corson, 1992; Douglas, 1994; Lipka, 1989; Ovando, 1994; Stairs, 1991,1994). Conflicting values can cause "tremendous internal conflict...when an individual tries to live according to two value systems that in some ways contradict each other" (Henze & Vanett, 1993, p. 124). One promising way to try to reconcile the differences between school and community cultures is through the use of indigenous teachers in Euro-Canadian schools (Eriks-Brophy & Crago, 1994; Lipka, 1990; Lipka & McCarty, 1994; McAlpine & Taylor, 1993; Stairs, 1988). Problems, though, will be encountered by native teachers trying to teach in culturally compatible ways within Southern schools (Lipka, 1990; Lipka & Mohatt, 1998; Stairs, 1991). These include poor evaluations by Southern educators who don't understand what is happening in their classes, the burden of being 'cultural brokers' between native and nonnative, and having to gather information and then teach it in a rapidly changing culture.

Lipka and McCarty (1994) discussed resistance to change, and the need for groups of indigenous teachers to work together in "zones of safety", in order to gain confidence and "challenge conventional practices" (p. 272), while Eriks-Brophy and Crago (1994) found that indigenous teachers were able to maintain "traditional patterns of discourse" in their teaching, when teacher-trained in alternative teacher-training programs (p. 107). Indigenous professionals have been described as key in the process of gathering a knowledge base and implementing programs based on indigenous pedagogy, working in close consultation with Elders (Harris, 1990; Lipka & McCarty, 1994; Stairs, 1988).

### 3.43 Preparing students for cultural discontinuity.

In the absence of changing the culture of the schools, Macias (1987) wrote of a program to help preschool Papago children learn the norms of mainstream schools, while mitigating the effects of cultural discontinuity through careful structuring of the program environment. In this way children are still expected to adapt to the Western school, but they are 'taught' these skills in a respectful way. Macias claimed that teachers in all schools could be trained to be ethnographers, which would allow them to identify and therefore better respond to their students' interactional patterns through positive interventions.

### 3.44 Negotiating schooling.

The theme of negotiating the direction of schooling with people from the community is prominent in the literature (Armstrong, Bennet & Grenier, 1997; Barnhardt, 1999;

Douglas; 1994; Corson, 1992; Lipka, 1989, 1994; Stairs, 1991, 1994; Williamson, 1987). Barnhard wrote that "most of the significant changes in the school in recent years were attempts to recognize and meaningfully integrate what is important and valued in the life of the community with the teaching and learning which occurs in school" (p. 105). It is apparent that in order to incorporate community values there must, at the very least, be community involvement. In the Alaskan school case study discussed by Barnhardt, the Alaska Onward to Excellence (AOTE) planning process was used:

> The AOTE process involves the entire community at the village level in determining the knowledge and skills students will need to succeed, and in determining and developing action plans to meet those goals and implement those plans. Through this process, the communities and schools are building partnerships so that the educational system can prepare our children to survive and prosper in two worlds. (Lower Kuskokwim School District, 1998)

She claimed that because of its structure, "the goals developed were clearly those identified and desired by a wider cross-section of the community than is typically represented on advisory boards or strategic planning committees" (p. 105).

Armstrong et al. (1997) documented a process called *Satuigiarniq* in northern Quebec. It aimed at providing opportunities "for all stakeholders to involve themselves in reclaiming and redefining an education system which will remain true to Inuit culture and values while preparing children for the modern world" (p. 7). This process involved the training of community representatives who then carried out community consultations through a variety of strategies, leading to "community ownership of the process....if education was truly going to be different, everyone agreed, the stakeholders would have to be involved in the entire process" (p. 8).

Armstrong et al. (1997) described the consultation as the beginning of the process of transformation which would need to continue with the full involvement of the communities. They identified secure political backing as a necessary support for the reform effort. Barnhardt (1999) also noted the local school district's support as a key factor in efforts to implement self-determined educational priorities, while Lipka and McCarty (1994) and Watahomigie and McCarty (1994) wrote of the necessity of financial resources to support the efforts and collaboration of indigenous teacher groups, working to combine traditional practices and values with western schooling.

In a community in Nunavut, Douglas (1994) wrote of community involvement in setting the new course of the school there: "As they give direction to the goals and practices of schooling they are making the change from being passive recipients within a superimposed system to becoming active participants in an evolving process" (p. 156). Although she sees this involvement as important, Douglas did not, however, make clear how this direction is given, beyond stating that "community members are performing new school-related roles" (p. 154).

### 3.45 Community control for cultural survival.

Lipka (1989) went beyond the idea of consultation and community involvement in the creation of culture-based schooling, asserting that the community must initiate changes in the curriculum, as otherwise "the school still knew what was best" (p. 224).

This, he said, was important in places where "issues of control, power, and lack of trust defined the relationship between professionals and the community" (p. 216). He suggested that the traditional relationship between school and community must change to one where the school serves as a "resource to the community" so that schooling is seen "as supportive of the community's efforts to face the future—their own future in their own way" (p. 216). Thus, the community would be intimately involved in deciding the curriculum, which would be driven in part by "contemporary Native issues...while concurrently providing for state required academic courses" (p. 227). "The community must see that the outcomes of a local curriculum are for the benefit of students and community alike" (p. 229). Similarly, Cummins (1988) wrote that "minority students will be empowered in the school context to the extent that the communities themselves are empowered through their interactions with the school" (p. 141). The need to empower communities fits with the view that Northern schools are ultimately necessary for the cultural survival of the indigenous populations (Bunz, 1979; Kawagely, 1995; Simon, 1996; Stairs, 1988). Kawagely (1995) wrote:

> In the past, Native people tended to view formal education as a hindrance to their traditional ways, but they have begun to look at it in a different light. They are seeking to gain control of their education and give it direction to accomplish the goals they set for it, strengthening their own culture while simultaneously embracing Western science...." (p. 89)

The theme of minority cultures taking control of their own education, and using it to ensure the survival of their cultures, can also be found in the literature not limited to

Arctic peoples (see, for instance, Lopez, 1997). According to Hornberger (1997), with respect to changing the education system:

> while non-indigenous governmental and non-governmental organizations have played significant, and at times positive , roles in many cases, it is fair to say that the efforts which have had the greatest impact and duration are those initiated and carried out by the indigenous community. (p. 357)

Harris (1990) wrote in an Australian context, and gave many arguments for minority-culture control of minority education, including the possibility of reducing the negative effects of unequal power relations on student learning. Not having clear authority, he wrote, undermines the status of minority-culture parents and teachers, providing a disincentive for minority students. The schools will always be alienating, until they are reformed by indigenous people to become their own (p. 117). Schools controlled by Aboriginal parents will also be able to contribute towards cultural maintenance.

For a shift in power to occur, Harris thought that

> to some extent control, or independence, can be given rather than having to be taken. The responsibility of non-Aboriginal teachers and administrators is to discern where desire for control is developing and, when asked, to support that desire, from behind the scenes in a non-manipulative way. (p. 118)

He noted, however, that a shift of power will take time and struggle, and will need Aboriginal people to desire the control themselves before it becomes feasible.

### 3.46 The illusion of local control.

Kawagely (1995) noted that community input and control seems sometimes to be in place, though it in fact may not be. The school boards, he wrote, although filled with Native members, "work within the parameters established by the state board of education with state rules and regulations. Local control is really in the hands of newcomers, with an administration controlled by outsiders" (p. 100). He wrote forcefully for self-determination:

> The Yupiaq people have not been dehumanized to the level that they are unable to devise and implement their own programs to release them from the clutches of poverty and self-degradation. The Western models of education and progress have not been able to bring to fruition their promises, so they must acquiesce in their 'cognitive imperialism' and allow the Yupiaq people an opportunity to plan and work for their own destiny. (p. 101)

When Maguire and McAlpine (1996) wrote about control of the Eastern Arctic schools, they echoed Kawagely's complaints in Alaska:

> Formal, centralized, established institutions like the Ministry of Education, Culture and Empoloyment and the Keewatin Divisional Board of Education both articulate the importance of local control. However, they have an explicit need to evaluate and monitor it by external, westernized standards of schooling and success as represented in the normative language of benchmarks, indicators, outcomes, and institutionalized symbolic forms such as tests and report cards. (pp. 227, 228)

In this way control seems to be transferred, but is in fact maintained at higher levels by policy structures and expectations.

### 3.47 The need for communities to value schooling.

Ogbu (1992) argued "that the crucial issue in cultural diversity and learning is the relationship between the minority cultures and the ... mainstream culture" (p. 5), and wrote that cultural/language differences exist which "cannot be remedied through cultural infusion into the curriculum or teaching and learning styles" (p. 6). Instead, he felt that the "meaning and value that students associate with school learning and achievement play a very significant role in determining their efforts towards learning and performance" (p. 7). In other words, changing the curriculum and the pedagogy of the schools to fit Inuit students is not likely to reduce failure significantly, unless communities and students come to value schooling (Ogbu, 1987, 1989, 1992). This is most likely to occur through parental/community involvement. As an example, Watahomigie and McCarty (1994) credited parental and community support for the success of reforms aimed at strengthening the Hualapai language and including local ways of knowing in the school curriculum: "Genuine bilingual/bicultural/biliteracy education requires local initiative and control, and the realization that indigenous communities have the power to transform the school curriculum" (p. 41).

Ogbu (1992) identified 'involuntary minorities' as peoples brought into a society against their will, for example, through colonization, and described the trend wherein involuntary minority groups do poorly in dominant culture schools, while other minority groups often succeed. He postulated that 'secondary cultural differences', largely in style (cognitive, communication, interaction, and learning styles), develop in reaction to the subjugation of the minority people, and that "the minorities have no strong incentives to give up these differences as long as they believe that they are still oppressed" (p. 10). This is not a conscious process. Voluntary minorities seem able to adopt White cultural frames of reference for some purposes, while they maintain their own frames of reference, and their cultural identities therefore remain strong. They can, for example, adopt 'White ways' which help them to succeed in school, without living those ways outside of school. Ogbu thought that involuntary minorities were less able to do that: "Involuntary minorities do not seem willing or able to separate attitudes and behaviours that result in academic success from those that may result in linear acculturation" (p. 10). Student resistance may, then, be a strategy for cultural survival (Darder, 1991).

Ogbu (1992) also noted that involuntary minorities may believe less strongly in the "material payoff later" that dominant culture schooling promises, and therefore have less incentive to "try to overcome cultural, language, and other barriers" (p. 11). This may be especially important in an Eastern Arctic context, where materialism is a radical departure from traditional Inuit values, and where there are limited employment opportunities in the communities, plus cultural barriers which discourage people from leaving them. Ogbu recommended that teachers help involuntary minority students to "recognize and accept the fact that they can participate in two cultural or language frames of reference for different purposes without losing their own cultural and language identity or undermining their loyalty to the minority community" (p. 12), while Darder (1991) advocated student involvement in the selection of curriculum, and wrote that educators should focus on transforming "the traditionally oppressive structures of educational institutions" (p. 96). It should be noted that while Ogbu wrote of involuntary minority student effort in dominant culture schools *on average*, individual schools and individual teachers in classrooms will affect student motivation to varying degrees, even within the confines of communities which may not generally value the traditional model of Euro-Canadian schooling. Thus, educators in communities that do not wholly support Euro-Canadian schooling, or feel agency with respect to the direction of the schools, will still be able to make significant changes that affect student motivation and success (Henze & Vanett, 1993).

### 3.48 The Australian two-way schooling model.

Beyond advocating Aboriginal control of schools for Aborigines, Harris (1990) developed a 'two way schooling' model, in which the school would be split into an Aboriginal domain and a Western domain. It was thought that this would be the best way of teaching Western content and culture while maintaining Aboriginal culture, as it would minimize the "ambiguity and confusion" (p. 121). The Western domain would "teach English language and culture, school-type learning and survival skills, and sufficient orthodox school subjects to allow entry to high schools for those who desire it", while the Aboriginal domain would have as goals, to "strengthen Aboriginal identity and to maintain distinctively Aboriginal ways of doing, feeling, learning and believing, and to 'hold' Aboriginal knowledge" (pp. 148, 149).

Within this model, Harris (1990) suggested that the Aboriginal domain was in its infancy, and would develop in unpredictable ways if truly under Aboriginal control. Aboriginal staff action groups, with power bases in both the school and the community, would be instrumental in shifting school control and defining curriculum (p. 121). The Western domain should take place in Western classrooms, with Western organization, manners, and rules of punctuality (p.146). Still, within these confines, Harris described "key ingredients of an effective teaching methodology" for remote Aboriginal contexts (p. 144). These are similar to many found in the literature for use in Arctic contexts, including the knowledge of learning style preferences of the students.

### 3.49 Impediments to community control.

Lipka (1989) cautioned that the transition to communities feeling ownership of their schools will be a slow process. One problem is that "generational differences in small Native communities are sometimes quite profound, making it difficult to determine the community's voice" (p. 229). Lipka and McCarty (1994) wrote that "internal community conflict" was a factor affecting the reform process, noting that some Yup'ik board members were against moving away from all-English instruction (p. 275). Crago (1992) noted that Inuit culture is 'evolving', and pointed to a changing pattern of discourse between young Inuit mothers and their children, in the direction of Southern school norms. The schools, she wrote, were not making the reciprocal effort to change toward Inuit norms. Change of school culture toward Inuit culture, which itself is changing, will be a difficult process.

Douglas (1994) wrote that school-related concerns can give rise to "conflicting values among Inuit themselves" (p. 162), while Maguire and McAlpine (1996) saw some Southern teachers making efforts to adopt Inuit pedagogy, at the same time that some Inuit parents wanted to maintain "traditional signs of mainstream schooling, such as grades and marks" (p. 231). Stairs (1994) encountered community resistence to the idea of 'Inuitisation' of the schools, and Freeman, Stairs, Corbiere & Lazore (1994) cautioned that community controlled schools sometimes end up transmitting only western values, and speculated that indigenous people's tendency to give up control may be a legacy of residential schooling.

It seems likely that the rapid change in Inuit culture, the school's former and current role in changing Inuit culture, and the heterogeneity of opinion within Inuit communities, will make the shift to local control problematic.

### 3.50 Summary.

To summarize, then, adaptations which move Euro-Canadian school culture towards Inuit culture in terms of what is learned and how it is learned, are said to increase student performance and well-being. Inuit teachers may be crucial as change agents toward culturally-grounded programs, but are likely to meet with resistance from mainstream educators, and to have difficulties in integrating values that are often in opposition. In another type of solution, Macias (1987) documented a program which would help prepare students for cultural discontinuity, thus increasing their success in a Western school.

Negotiation is said to be needed between the schools and the communities to define how much and in what ways the schools should change. The AOTE process in Alaska, and the *Satuigiarniq* process in northern Quebec are described as successful models for community consultation. It is likely that community control is needed to ensure cultural survival. Current community control of schools at the present time is thought to be largely an illusion, as the reins of power remain largely in Southerners' hands. An increase in community control and feeling of ownership, and therefore valuing of the schools, is thought necessary to lead to greater student motivation and success.

Harris (1990) proposed a 'two-way' model of schooling in Australia, as a possible option for education in indigenous communities. In it, control is held locally. He suggested that with true local control, the shape of schooling might change in unexpected and unpredictable ways. To complicate a consultative process for deciding how the schools should function, Inuit culture is changing rapidly, and Southern values are already taking hold (Crago, 1992, Maguire & McAlpine, 1996). This has likely led to an increase in the diversity of opinion surrounding the aims of schooling within the communities. Furthermore, school cultures are notoriously resistant to change, and would need to undergo "radical changes in the existing cultural ideals and organizational arrangements" (Clifton & Roberts, 1988, p. 341), if they were to truly reflect and value Inuit culture (Corson, 1992).

## 3.5 Adaptations: Examples

Despite the importance of meta-level approaches to changing school cultures, grassroots efforts are made by teachers and administrators, regardless of whether or not "the extra energy demanded...to be knowledgeable about and respectful toward people who are different from themselves" (Barnhardt, 1999, p. 115) is supported by policy structures.

### 3.51 Nunavut adaptations. Joanne Tompkins' work.

Joanne Tompkins, a principal for four years in a small Eastern Arctic community, is a pioneer in adaptations in a Canadian setting. Inspired by Cummins (1986), she initiated many adaptations which moved her school towards Inuit culture, and she also described a process of school change based on work by Fullan (1988), which would benefit any school. Tompkins worked, for example, to build a shared vision amongst staff, and to create a safe environment in which educators were willing to take risks, as she tried to "spread the good pedagogy [present in some classes] throughout all classes in the school" (p. 51). The latter involved implementing structures which supported teamwork such as team planning time, encouraging teachers to be educational leaders, and involvement of the principal with teachers in their classrooms on a regular basis. In making certain changes which improved the school without especially taking Inuit culture into account, Tompkins did what I referred to earlier, that is, created positive change within the confines of a community which did not wholly support Euro-Canadian schooling.

3.511 Increasing Inuit staff and the status of Inuktitut. In her book Teaching in a cold and windy place: Change in an Inuit school, Tompkins (1998) documented many adaptations which she and her colleagues made at one school in what is now Nunavut.

> A key issue to creating schools which reflect the culture of the Inuit is to have staff who reflect the culture of the community working in the school....Local people brought with them the enormous strength of speaking Inuktitut and sharing the culture of the children. (Tompkins, 1998, pp. 89, 93)

Amongst specific adaptations discussed by Tompkins which moved the school towards Inuit culture, she discussed increasing the number of Inuit staff as a key to making the school 'Inuit'. When she arrived in 1987 as principal in a community in the Baffin region, 38% of the staff were Inuit. When she left in 1991, 72% of the staff were Inuit, and an Inuk had been trained to take over the principalship (Tompkins. 1998, p. 39). The staffing change affected programming, and the amount of Inuktitut taught increased dramatically. Programming in Inuktitut and employing teachers who are untrained or qualified through different programs than Southern educators, mark divergences from the Euro-Canadian norm. Effects of these changes included "strengthening Inuit language, culture, and identity in the school", making Inuktitut more "*real*" (Tompkins, 1998, p. 93), and reducing staff turnover.

Making Inuktitut more *real* might carry with it many benefits. Wright & Taylor (1995) determined that Inuit children educated in their native language showed an increase in self-esteem, would in some cases show faster academic progress, and perform better in English "in the long run" (p. 242). The NWT LASCE (1982) wrote that much evidence exists that Native children do well in arithmetic, science and English when they spend much time in the study of their Native language (p. 90), and said that the retention of language is dependent on its daily use (p. 91). Fuzessy (1998) also found that having a strong basis in a first culture and language supports the acquisition of a second culture and language. Inuqaatigiit, the Inuit curriculum, was created in part to help enhance and enrich the use of Inuktitut (p. 3) in the schools.

Maguire and McAlpine (1996) wrote that "Inuktitut...is intimately linked to Inuit cultural identity" (p. 225), and found in one Northern community that language is a "major political, sociolinguistic, and cultural force and tension" (p. 225). They wrote that although "Inuktitut has the power to be a vehicle for conducting all aspects of their lives...the power of English is seductive, pervasive, and frequently associated with social and economic success" (p. 226). The community under study had adopted a bilingual maintenance model, but this was under fire from "some parents who favor English-only instruction" (p. 226). They also pointed out the difficulty in understanding the subtleties of the language issue, including the importance of dialect, as non-Inuktitut speaking researchers.

Corson (1992) and Lipka (1991) documented some of the specific ways in which minority teachers' interactions with students are often different from those of mainstream teachers. They include; beginning lessons without much introduction, modelling behaviour, joining students in doing the task, respecting individual autonomy (by, for example, not demanding that everyone listen or start at the same time), using patterns of communication which differ from the mainstream norm of 'initiation-response-evaluation', students using affectionate forms of address for their teacher, and privatization (not correcting or disciplining individual students publicly).

Due to a shortage of housing for Southern teachers, Tompkins secured permission to hire untrained people from the community to become teacher-trainees, with full-time teaching duties. In the hiring process, Tompkins reported a shift from desiring people who had progressed the furthest in school and who were the most literate in Inuktitut, to seeking candidates who "demonstrated above all an interest in children and good interpersonal skills" (p. 93). Stairs (1988) described a similar hiring practice in northern Quebec, where teachers were chosen by "community standards" (p. 315).

To support the teacher-trainees, Tompkins (1998) instituted programming and staff development that were "intertwined" (p. 94). Experienced teachers provided support during theme planning at biweekly meetings, and trainees met with their trainers each day after school to "*debrief and plan for the next day*" (p. 94). Tompkins stressed that Inuit and non-Inuit educators learned from each other, which suggests that this team approach was not meant to acculturate Inuit teacher trainees to the norms of the school.

3.512 Administrative and scheduling changes. In order to support all staff, Tompkins (1998) made administrative/scheduling changes including getting rid of staff meetings and initiating inservicing during lunchtime every Thursday. Her goal was to increase her staff's feeling of being a team, and to create a time when problems encountered in the multicultural environment could be addressed (p. 97). As well, she held orientation sessions for staff to explore the nature of Inuit culture (p. 103). Other similar changes included successfully lobbying the Community Education Council (now called the District Education Authority {DEA})for bi-weekly early closures, for the aforementioned theme planning in teams:

> These biweeekly meetings became important staff inservice events, because during each meeting we were talking about teaching and pedagogy. People began to see the connection between behaviour and programming and to see that the more relevant the program, the more individualized and varied the programming, the less reason students had to misbehave. (p. 56)

3.513 Taking the school into the community. Tompkins encouraged home visits and initiated a community radio show run by students to help get the school "out into the community" (Tompkins, 1998, p. 75). Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) recommended that teachers visit their students' homes to learn. This, they believed, would result in seeing students more as whole people, in changing relationships between parents and teachers, and in "contributing to the academic content and lessons" (p. 139). Darder (1991) also believed that by learning about the minority-culture, and by recognizing the knowledge that students bring to the classroom, that dominant-culture teachers would be better able to help students "to affirm, challenge, and transform the many conflicts and contradictions that they face" (p. 115).

3.514 Assessment and grouping changes. Tompkins also reported that assessment changed, with report cards becoming "much more anecdotal and global in nature" (1998, p. 79), while developmental-skills checklists were adopted to track student progress. Classes began to be configured to reflect family groups, rather than ability or age groupings: "For the students, family grouping modelled itself after what happens in the family and the community" (p. 69). In Tompkins' view, all these changes taken together helped to fit the school to the community in which it was situated, increased student attendance, performance, and well being. She reported that school records and data produced by the school board served to confirm her perceptions (Tompkins, p. 9).

3.515 Summary. To recap, then, some of Tompkins' 'adaptations' were consciously aimed at 'contextualizing' the school, although many others were what might be called 'current best practice'. Tompkins credited Cummins (1986) for many of her ideas relating specifically to minority settings, and Fullan (1988) for staff development, which helped her pursue teamwork and the willingness to learn together as a staff. The changes reported, which did not start at the meta-level with the involvement of the community in the setting of educational priorities, nevertheless resulted in improving school/community relations, as well as improving student performance and well-being. It would appear, then, that no one need wait for change to begin at another level, that current best practice, such as the creation by principals of open and risk-taking environments within their schools, have the potential of creating positive change.

### 3.52 Other Nunavut examples.

Maguire and McAlpine (1996) reported the practice in one Nunavut community of hand-delivering report cards to parents who did not show up at parent teacher interviews, and noted that igloo building was part of a cultural inclusion program. Home visits meant to "transform the negative images" of the 'others'' culture took place. Whether these practices fell outside of normal school hours and therefore resulted in an increase in teacher workload was not discussed.

Douglas (1994) mentioned several adaptations in use in Arctic Bay, including the presence of Inuit cultural instructors who teach traditional skills and guide trips on the land, and the acceptance by the school of student absences due to hunting or camping trips.

### 3.53 Alaskan adaptations.

3.531 Lipka's work. Many other authors have written about adaptations to the Euro-Canadian/American system of schooling. Many adaptations can also be seen in the Alaskan example of a Yup'ik teacher's lesson related by Lipka (1990). These include the following:

1) the teacher is bilingual and is of the culture of the students,

2) the "social interactional context of the classroom is adapted in a fashion to accommodate the social discourse and social relations of the students in a way more congruent with the natal culture" (p. 20),

3) the teacher does the task while the students observe - no instructional comments are used,

4) the teacher speaks with the students, while doing the task, about topics relating to the task,

5) the teacher asks who is ready to perform the task, rather than

commanding everyone to start at once,

6) the teacher uses the students who were paying attention during her demonstration, to teach the other students when they are ready,

7) the teacher does not single out students who are performing the task poorly, but states that it must be done properly if the student is to be a Yup'ik,

8) the teacher stresses cultural values such as 'helping' throughout the lesson,

9) an 'authentic' task was used, one which was valued by the community,

10) the students had control and responsibility regarding the timing of their participation, and,

11) the task, when completed, was used as a basis for a language activity.

In a later analysis of the lesson, Lipka & Mohatt (1998) suggested that the use of modelling, observation, apprenticeship, and the use of " non-standard school discourse routines that [result] in lively discussions" (p. 135) were contributors to the lesson's success.

3.532 Kawagely's work. Kawagely (1995) also wrote of culture and prior knowledge: "I propose that it is possible to teach Native youth...by capitalizing on the Native knowledge already existing in their culture" (p. 114). He noted the existence of locally developed science curriculum in a Yup'ik community, "a compilation of ideas for lessons [that] could be easily applied and changed by the teacher", which encouraged teachers to, in its own words, "'use the curriculum and adapt to fit educational and cultural needs of students'" (p. 91). This is a divergence from the standardized curricula characteristic of Euro-Canadian schools (Wein & Dudley-Marling, 1998). Kawagely also documented a teacher who asked his students what they thought would be useful to know, then "pursued those paths" (p. 92), as well as including outdoor experiential education in his methods.

3.533 Barnhardt's work. Barnhardt (1999) documented some of the adaptations made in a small Yup'ik Alaskan community. As mentioned earlier, the community took part in a goal setting and planning process. The majority of the school staff are Yup'ik, with nearly 50% of the certified teaching staff coming from the community, including the principal. There are photos of Elders in the hallways, inspirational posters and paintings of local scenes on the walls, and a library which has "nearly every book ever published in the Yup'ik language" (p. 107). "The school office publishes a *Daily Bulletin* that serves as an information source for students and staff...it also serves to keep community members notified about school events" (p. 107). The bulletin also reminds the community that attendance is important, and publicizes the names of those who are absent along with their excuses.

Barnhardt (1999) reports that the language of instruction in K-3/4 is Yup'ik, while the upper grade students receive Yup'ik language classes from a Yup'ik instructor. The local school district "provides summer institutes that support Yup'ik educators in preparing and producing a wide range of curriculum materials in the Yup'ik language" (p. 109), while a district-wide K-12 curriculum uses thematic units throughout the year to help students "gain knowledge and skills related to Yup'ik values, beliefs, language, and lifestyles" (p. 109). Highschool students take courses which meet Alaska highschool requirements, as well as computer journalism, workplace basics, wood I or II, and a compulsory Yup'ik Life Skills class. The latter includes Yup'ik language, culture, orthography, and life skills, involving "students meaningfully in the examination and solution of some of the most important and real issues related to the daily life of people in Quinhagak" (p. 109). Barnhardt also described the structure of the school, whose 140 students are put in multigraded classes from grade 1 to 8, and then into two groups which meet together for most of the day in highschool.

The school district has put emphasis on 'valid assessment', and supports the school's use of "authentic and performance based [assessments] that allow for more than one correct response" (Barnhardt, 1999, p. 109). Portfolios which may include work done in both languages are used by all students. As well, family and community participation is solicited by the school, which identified 15 initiatives "to promote increased parent, family, and community involvement and participation in the school" (p. 111). An 'Advisory School Board' has duties including approving program changes, identifying budget priorities, and approval of the principal. The AOTE process used community volunteers for various purposes, and held community-wide pot lucks and meetings, and a discipline committee involved community members in drafting a discipline 'plan' in 1997. As well, the school building was used for a multitude of different community functions.

In her summary, Barnhardt (1999) identified support of the school district as a factor in the implementation by the school of "self-determined educational priorities" (p. 113). As well as those already mentioned, supports included "bilingual program options, bilingual training for teachers and aides...hiring processes that give priority to Yup'ik teachers when other qualifications are equal, and strong and consistent career ladder development programs" (p. 113). She also noted the contribution of several state-wide reform initiatives, and the AOTE process which she described as "a bottom-up effort rather than a top-down mandate" (p. 113).

3.534 Dull's work. In Nelson-Barber and Dull (1998), Dull, a Yup'ik, described modifying her teaching from the 'clinical' style she learned as a teacher trainee, to teaching using themes familiar to her students and local experts: "Not only was the content relevant to the students, but the students were able to make meaningful connections with them using local and recognizable strategies for transmitting knowledge" (p. 96). Dull also modelled her classroom after the community, by, for example, allowing anyone to visit at any time. She also gave students a voice in decisions affecting instruction in the classroom. Both of these practises fall outside the norms of Euro-American education.

### 3.54 Northern Quebec adaptations.

3.541 Crago's work. Crago (1992) documented differences in discourse patterns between Inuit caregivers and their children, and the normal discourse in Euro-Canadian schools. She recommended "ample input that is well structured by the teacher" for classrooms "where the teacher is the only fluent second language speaker" (p. 500), and comprehension-based second language programs for the Inuit, whose culture stresses learning by listening. As well, cooperative, peer-interactive activities were recommended, with the caveat that "successful implementation of cooperative learning strategies will require accommodation to the precise cultural repertoire of the students involved" (p. 501).

As well as these recommended adaptations, Crago (1992) describes in a footnote (p. 499) some adaptations the Kativik School Board in northern Quebec undertook as a result of her research. They inlude:

> A course on the educational ramifications of Inuit child rearing and cultural values was initiated and made available through McGill University to all non-Inuit teachers in northern Quebec....Courses on cooperative learning have also been instituted for non-Inuit teachers and content from the research has been integrated into courses for Inuit teachers. (p. 499)

3.542 Stairs' work. Stairs (1991) provided an 'open learning' example in which upper primary students worked together

> making beginning reading booklets for younger children. Students worked in groups with no clear leaders, variously contributing art work, writing, or technical skills according to their abilities or interests, helping and correcting each other and responding to the reactions of their young reader clientele....Evaluation was largely qualitative and was on a group rather than on

> an individual basis. (p. 284)

Stairs (1994) also noted increased peer interaction and increased physical movement as modifications made by indigenous students themselves in classrooms.

### 3.55 Summary.

It may be noted that much of the literature on adaptations describes Native teachers who follow culturally relevant practices in ways that often diverge radically from a Euro-Canadian school model. Tompkins (1998), who sees the Southern-Canadian role as diminishing but likely ever present, attempted to encourage emulation of this divergence from Euro-Canadian norms by educating her Southern-Canadian teachers about Inuit culture. It is not likely that Southern-Canadian educators will soon disappear from schools in Nunavut. As well as learning about Inuit culture, educators need to be aware of adaptations which are in use, so that they too can consider alternatives to Euro-Canadian norms, as well as general strategies for improving schooling.

# CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to create a reference documenting current and desired adaptations of Euro-Canadian schools to Inuit culture, as reported by educators in one region of Nunavut. In so doing, a partial picture of where schools in the region are, on the path to culturally congruent schooling, also emerged.

Data analysis yielded three main types of findings from the interviews. They were: i) currently employed adaptations as reported by participants in the study, ii) desired adaptations as reported by participants, and, iii) statements about Inuit culture, and problems posed by participants. In the initial draft of the findings I described current and desired adaptations by category, then reported general statements and problems. This approach fragmented the findings and seemed inadequate. While it created the reference to adaptations that this study had set out to construct, it did not lend itself to interpretation. I have used it to create a list of all of the adaptations in use or desired. This can be found in appendix B.

The listing of adaptations under the headings of discipline, pedagogy, and so on, might be helpful when searching for solutions to a specific problem. It will, however, leave the solution out of the context it needs, if the reader is to be able to weigh the possible impact of the change, and understand in what way the adaptation is related to the contextualization of Northern schooling. We have seen through the literature that *how* educators do things may be more important than *what* they teach. We have also seen that negotiating the direction of the schools with the communities may be the only way for communities to feel the ownership required for them to value schooling and support it as an institution, and that without this support, it may be unlikely that Inuit students will succeed. It is important then, that educators know where adaptations fit in terms of these ideas.

The presentation of findings begins in section 4.1 with the theme of 'negotiating culture', which explores to what extent the communities are involved in setting the direction of the schools, as well as presenting adaptations which can be seen as attempts to accommodate (or acculturate) the community to the values of the school. Very few instances were reported of attempts to include community voices in setting the direction of the schools, while a theme of changing the community to have its members value Euro-Canadian schooling ran through a number of the adaptations. This is a cause for concern, as without community control, or, at the very least input, the goals of schooling are imposed from without, and the probability that students will succeed is diminished (Ogbu, 1992). Furthermore, if the aims of schooling are clearly defined, issues of curriculum and pedagogy can flow from them (personal communication with Joanne Tompkins, May 1st, 2001). In the absence of a clear idea of what school is for, or that the goals of education might be different in Nunavut than in, say, Ontario, Southern educators may be frustrated, and may fall back on Southern ways of doing things to cope with 'problems' in the North. This is often to the detriment of themselves and their students.

Section 4.2 presents findings which fall under what Stairs (1994) called "the 'why' of education—cultural values and goals" (p. 73), although I give the 'why' a somewhat circumscribed meaning compared to Stairs, who included “future pictures, evolving identities and meaning” (p. 73) in her description. This category includes instances of Inuit values being brought into the schools to be taught or transmitted, a practice which was reported as occurring on a very limited basis. This again, is a cause for concern, and may be a result of the limited consultation which seems to have occurred, to include community members in setting the goals and priorities of the schools. It may also be that Inuit educators would have reported this practice more frequently than Southern educators. Nevertheless, the majority of teachers in the North are still Southerners, and Euro-Canadian schools which predominantly exist to teach Inuit students, and which don’t teach or transmit Inuit values, will be agents of acculturation, whether or not that is the intent of the educators who staff them.

Section 4.3 presents findings from the category defined by Stairs (1994) as “the ‘what’ of schooling—the choice of language instruction, content, materials” (p. 73). A number of this type of adaptation were reported, especially relating to curricula which were perceived by many to be culturally insensitive, and therefore inadequate. It appears that the ‘what’ of schooling, which should flow from the goals of schooling, could be interpreted as following from the goal articulated by one participant, which was not to “be that much different than schools elsewhere in the world”, while reflecting “some of the beliefs and values of the communities” (O:13). These changes do not address changes in the fundamental nature of the schools, but seek to make them function more smoothly, and more relevantly for their students.

Section 4.4 presents findings which fit into Stairs’ (1994) category of “the ‘how’ of learning and teaching—attending to cultural modes of interaction" (p. 73). Many strategies which saw participants doing things that were more congruent with Inuit culture, more like Inuit do (or would have done) things, were reported. In some cases these adaptations were not conscious attempts to be culturally congruent, while in other cases they were motivated by the goal of better matching Inuit students' cultural expectations with the way they things were done in the classroom. The latter represent attempts to contextualize Northern schools, and must have proceeded from a conviction that the goal of doing so is valuable.

Paradise (1994), in an article discussing cultural compatibility, noted that in her study neither the dominant-culture principal, nor the minority-culture teacher "could describe any feature or characteristic of what went on in their school and classrooms, or of their students, in terms of cultural particularities" (p. 69). Many of the participants in the current study did specifically make reference to Inuit culture. For example, one participant said that she dealt with discipline "like Inuit do". Still, most of the current and desired adaptations were not referenced to culture. In this study, while I set out specifically to find 'adaptations toward Inuit culture', participants reported numerous strategies for improving education which are not adaptations to better fit the schools to Inuit culture, at least not in my understanding of Inuit culture. Many are, however, ESL or other best practice methods, which likely improve the performance of students, the harmony in classrooms, and even students' self-esteem. Some are attempts to cope with what may at least in part be the effects of rapid culture change and cultural dissonance. As well, a number of 'non-adaptations' were reported—Southern practices which were described as being aimed at increasing student learning. These types of strategies are presented in sections 4.5 - 4.7. They are included because they were described as successful by participants.

It has been seen through the literature (and appears in the findings) that there is no unanimous agreement amongst Inuit about how much (or even if) the schools should change. A strong mandate to include western knowledge and values in the schools along with the strengthening of Inuit cultural identity (ICC, 1992) precludes the discarding of adaptations which increase school performance but may seem unrelated or even against Inuit culture. Clifton and Roberts (1988), for example, found that demanding teachers increase student performance at the price of being incongruent with Inuit students' cultural dispositions (p. 341), and Crago (1992) reported that the Inuit directors of the Kativik School Board wanted their secondary school students to be exposed to the dominant culture discourse patterns in order to prepare them "for post-secondary education in southern Canada and for other forms of interethnic dialogue" (p. 499), despite her findings documenting their negative effects. The value of an adaptation, then, rests on whether or not it succeeds in fulfilling the function for which it is chosen.

If, for example, it is decided to adopt a Southern-style discipline code to help bring order to the learning environment, and more order is achieved, then this change is valuable for use in increasing order, even though the change is not an adaptation toward Inuit culture, and does not help to contextualize the school. If, on the other hand, it is decided to structure a program to make small group interaction with an elder possible, in order to facilitate learning and reduce discipline problems, and these goals are achieved, then the change is valuable for those goals, and also adapts the school toward Inuit culture. Communities, when consulted, may chose some changes which do not move the schools toward Inuit culture. It is for these reasons that it is important to remember that 'value' can only be assigned to an adaptation when one has a goal in mind.

Within these themes, the findings are explored in relation to official documents (primarily Innuqatigiit:The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective), and the literature. There is overlap between the themes, and some adaptations were difficult to place because too little information was included to indicate intent. For example, the intent in desiring more Inuit teachers to help motivate students within the framework of the typical Euro-Canadian school, is different from the intent in desiring more Inuit teachers to help transform the school toward Inuit culture. The adaptation may look the same, and too little information may have been available for me to judge intent. I have noted when this is the case.

Not all adaptations have been presented in this chapter. A table to give the reader an overview of adaptations begins each section; an asterisk (*) denotes adaptations which have not been described. The adaptations which have been chosen for discussion were chosen because they help to illustrate a theme, were described by a participant as particularly successful, were mentioned frequently by participants, or would have been difficult to understand in point form in a table.

The North is a vast space physically, but is small with respect to people. Some adaptations which are described may be recognizable as coming from a certain place. For this reason, to maintain the confidentiality of participants, I have used an unusual method of referencing the interviews. Quotes are referenced by letter and number to my pages of grouped coding, rather than to a particular participant or a particular interview.

The intent of this research was not to evaluate or judge Nunavut educators' strategies or beliefs. It is acknowledged that participants' motivation for making adaptations was to increase the learning, quality of school experience, or well-being of their students.

## 4.1 Negotiating Culture

Table 4.1 Negotiating Culture

Pulling the community toward the school

-pursue positive parental contact
-use empathy (when dealing with parents)*
-10pm siren to remind parents/ students to go to bed*
-homework to put responsibility onto parents
-homework to develop student responsibility
-teaching to use basic supplies (individual ownership and care)*
-desired: develop homework responsibility early (school is part of life)
-desired: pre-school program to prepare students for school structure
-NTEP graduates paired with Southern teachers for planning support
-desired: raise standards of those accepted to NTEP*
-desired: more Southern-trained Inuit teachers for the primary grades*
-desired: English upgrading opportunities for Inuit staff*
-ice cream social at start of year (for positive contact with parents)
-phone calls home when problems arise
-parents in for lunch/activities/checking about concerns they might have, keeping good relationship for support
-school activity nights ('Just mom and me'/'Just me and my Dad')
-desired: lengthen NTEP program from two years *
-desired: focus more on assessment in NTEP*
-curriculum night early in year to meet and discuss expectations
-contact through school teams/activities, lead to support later*

-desired: more parental involvement*
-desired: more assemblies*

Taking the school toward the community

-small group culture program with community developed curriculum
- District Education Authority helped with discipline policy
-NTEP to get more Inuit into teaching*
-having many Inuit teachers has a positive impact on getting school into community
-school opens early to accommodate working parents*
-school year shifted to accommodate spring camping/goose hunting*
-school building used by community*
-Inuit teachers go on radio to inform community about 'what's happening' in the school
-desired: local participation by bilingual educators in curriculum development
-desired: classroom teachers to design curriculum*

(*asterisks denote 'adaptations' which are not discussed)

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It is at this level where the battle over what the schools will look like gets played out. On the one side there are educators and community members aiming to improve student performance in the Euro-Canadian school. This side, consciously or not, often reinforces and defends the cultural values of the institution in their pursuit of student success. By desiring community support of the school as it exists, the consequence is that people in the community must change their values, an acculturation towards Euro-Canadian school culture. On the other side, there may be community members and educators who would like the school to change to better reflect the community's culture. This group will make moves to include Inuit curriculum, incorporate Inuit pedagogy, share decision making as to how the schools will function, increase community input, or work toward a complete shift of control to the community.

Many people will be members in both groups, desiring the increased performance of students in the traditional Euro-Canadian school, and at the same time a greater reflection of Inuit culture in the schools, and a greater measure of community control. Although sometimes confusing, this need not be contradictory, as we have seen the mandate of the schools to be the teaching of both western and Inuit ways of knowing and valuing (ICC, 1992; Kawagely, 1995). We have also seen that largely Inuit communities may elect largely non-Inuit DEAs, and that DEAs elected by Inuit communities may adopt measures such as discipline codes which do not reflect traditional Inuit ways of doing things. In this section, in the absence of substantial community input, I describe the pull to each side as described by participants who are all educators in the schools. We find that while there were many attempts to move the community towards supporting the school as it existed, there were few cases described where community members were consulted or otherwise involved in setting the agenda of the schools.

### 4.11 Pulling the community toward the school.

> ...there isn't a whole lot of, generally speaking, transfer from school to home, because you know the Inuit language is very different, many of the parents have had very unsatisfying and unpleasant experiences with school. They haven't been in school for a long time and they don't view education as as important as we do. Most of the kids that we've dealt with in the South, they kind of expect that they should go to school and so on, but a lot of the kids here and the parents haven't internalized that view, that it's important. (O:3)

This participant said that the effects of lack of transfer between home and school can be seen in 'problems' such as lateness, poor attendance, and lack of support for homework. These may not be seen as problems by the parents: "you have some parents who have no shame or no reticence about telling you, well, they were sleeping this morning, 'we just didn't wake up...we were tired, we went to bed late'" (O:4). This participant clearly saw parental support of schooling as valuable and necessary for student success. Cummins (1988) wrote of the positive academic consequences of garnering minority parents' support of their children's academic progress.

There was a high level of awareness amongst the participants in this study of cultural incongruity between the school and community. In some cases it is clear that a shift of parents or students towards Euro-Canadian school values is desired by participants, what Crago and Eriks-Brophy (1994) called a "pressure for assimilation" (p.44). Some examples include:

> Homework is another area - they simply haven't been used to their students doing homework, it's just a very foreign concept...I think we should really be working on developing that responsibility early, from the time they start, say in grade one. Grade ones should have some homework, not so much that you're trying to extend what you're teaching them as you're trying to teach them that responsibility, and that school is a part of life and not just from 9 to 4. (PD:2)
>
> School still is not a high priority for some people, and how we're going to change that I'm not sure...parents that come most, the parents of the best students, went furthest in the school system themselves...they've seen the value...most have excellent jobs....(O:1)

> In the South it is very easy to motivate children because the parents have an idea more about education. We're dealing with children, some of the parents haven't had a very long educational background, possibly to grade 4 or 5 or 6, and then the luckier ones to another town...[if they had gone further] they might have a sense of pushing their children, whereas that push that you get from the parents down South to continually be competitive and to try to advance themselves isn't quite as ongoing as it should be up here...other things are more important to them than pushing their child through a White education system. (DD:6)

Implicit in these accounts is participants' appreciation that there were reasons for lack of parental support for Euro-Canadian schooling, as well as the expression of their desires to garner parental support for the schools. In response to this perceived lack of parental support, participants described several strategies to encourage positive parental contact. These included a 'curriculum night', an 'ice cream social', activity nights with parents, inviting parents in for lunch and activities with their children, and making phone calls home to discuss performance and discipline issues. In one case a participant reported that the effort spent in meeting and contacting parents had helped to generate good relationships with parents and support from them, even in times when bad news needed to be delivered.

Another way in which the desire to accommodate students to Euro-Canadian school norms was expressed, had to do with structure:

> ...there's not a lot of structure in the homes, there's not a lot of structure before school, and then they come into school and that's where some of the battles

> start. As soon as you have to discipline a child, parents do become defensive. (SD:8)

This participant noted that a preschool was under consideration to help prepare students for the structure of school. Macias (1987) wrote of a preschool program specifically designed to do this in an American Indian community, while cushioning students from the worst effects of cultural friction.

Ogbu (1992) noted the necessity of parents and students valuing schooling for the success of minority students in dominant-culture schools. It is also generally understood that discontinuity in expectation or experience can lead to conflict. Educators attempts to win parental support, and to decrease discontinuity by preparing children for schooling, can be seen as efforts to increase students' chances of success in schools. Still, the locus of responsibility for change is, in this paradigm, clearly in the community, with the desire that their values shift toward school values. As strategies aimed at increasing student success, they should be considered with this in mind.

## 4.12 Taking the school toward the community.

One participant said:

> ...10 Inuit teachers, including one Inuk administrator, and that's had a big effect on education in the community because it, well, a), it means that many of the teachers can speak the same language as their students, which is a huge bonus. It also means that the community is not viewing the school as some external force being used against them, it's their school, their people are running the school. I

> think that helps a lot. That's another very big factor, is the community. Our teachers are on the radio a lot telling the community what's happening...We are able to bring a lot of Elders into the classroom a lot more because of the Inuit teachers, and then we've also had a program where we've had Inuit Elders in the school just helping...that seems to be helping a lot too, even helping the teachers.... (STP:4)

This participant described a situation where the benefits of having many Inuit staff are much like those reported in the literature (Barnhardt, 1999; Stairs, 1991; Tompkins, 1998), and those predicted by Kirkness (1999), who wrote that parental and community involvement would increase in schools with a "significant presence" of Native Indian staff (p. 57). Having more community teachers increases the community's sense of ownership of the school, makes it less foreign, and helps bring the school to the community: "Nonnative teachers identify primarily with the formal education system and strive to bring the community into the school, while native teachers identify with their communities and strive to make the school a significant part of the students' community life" (Stairs, 1991, p. 288). The one adaptation of hiring many Inuit teachers, then, even in the absence of a report detailing the conscious planning of a shift to community control, has had a profound effect on the community's feeling of ownership of the school according to this participant.

Another example of giving voice to the community occurred when a school invited community members in to consult about the curriculum for the culture program. This involvement, according to the educator who described it, had led to a highly successful program.

It was also reported that a community was consulted during the creation of the discipline code at one school, and that the DEA created a zero tolerance policy at another. There was not enough information provided by the interview to determine at what level the consultation took place, or what motivated the DEAs to adopt Southern-style discipline codes.

Finally, one educator expressed the belief in local participation in curriculum development: "You need people from up here who have gone through the system, people who are trying to teach them now, people who speak both languages. They have to be consulted" (CD:17). Consultation and decision making together with the community is probably the most powerful way to move Euro-Canadian schools toward community culture and ownership.

### 4.13 Discussion.

Why were there so few examples of consultation and power sharing reported? It is possible that my questions/approach tended to focus participants on the day to day business of what goes on in schools, instead of encouraging them to think of initiatives at many levels. Is it possible that it is taken for granted that the schools are already under local control through the power of the elected DEAs, and therefore believed that other consultation is not necessary. It may also be that, in the words of one participant, the "communities aren't really sure what they stand for" due to the recent and rapid changes in Inuit society:

> I don't know if all people in our community want our schools to be that much different than schools elsewhere in the world. I think they want them to reflect some of the values and beliefs of the community, but again I don't think they want them to be any less challenging or effective than schools, say, in Ontario or B.C. or the United States. They want their kids to hope to be on a similar par so that if they do go elsewhere besides the North, that they don't feel their kids are behind. (O:13)

In this participant's perception, there is considerable confusion in the community about what "they" want from the schools:

> what are the values and beliefs of the community with the big changes that are happening and all the other things? Maybe that's where the community is lacking, they're not sure what they really stand for themselves yet. Like in the past maybe they did, but now with all the changes happening it's pretty confusing, and I don't think we can straighten all that out. We need everybody to work on that. (O:13)

He cautioned that with the Ministry of Education wanting schools to be "more Northern than ever before," there is a danger that "if they make them so much 'Northern' that it takes away from standards that are already in place, people are not going to be happy with that" (O:14). He also believed that there is a "distinction between teaching land skills and school skills, and the same with language" (O:15). The community didn't protest, he said, when the culture program was scaled back, and most parents don't choose the Inuktitut stream for their children.

These perceptions are found in the literature involving Arctic (for example Stairs, 1991; Lipka & McCarty, 1994) and other peoples (for example Harris, 1990). Other participants, too, perceived conflicting messages from the community. At one school the demand for the Inuktitut stream is low: "people who come in with grandchildren, even, you know, older Inuit, they say, 'you can't open the Internet and find Inuktitut, these kids need to learn in English'" (O:10). Another participant said that on the issue of language of instruction, the school is "mixed up in the middle", with the community wanting the schools to preserve Inuktitut, but the parents choosing to put their children in the English stream (O:11). Clearly, then, the perception exists that there is some resistance within the communities to adapting the schools toward Inuit culture.

Stairs (1988) wrote that the basis for this type of resistance stemmed from an orientation that the school, as a Southern institution, should prepare students for success on Southern terms, while Inuit culture should be learned in the home. She points to two problems with this position, the fragility of Inuit language/culture as evidenced by its disappearance in Labrador and the Western Arctic, and the problem with dominant-culture institutions (especially schooling) overpowering the indigenous culture. Both of these problems are addressed if the schools are "transformed into a new Inuk form of education" (p.324).

Is resistance within the communities partly why more initiatives to negotiate the direction of the schools with the communities are not in existence and were therefore not reported? If so, perhaps it would be prudent to consider Jordan's argument that dominant groups don't agree on all subjects, and that ethnic groups should not be expected to either

(1988). Rather than let a lack of clear consensus lead to paralysis, it could be viewed as a further sign that open discussion is necessary.

It was reported that one DEA was comprised of one Inuk, with the balance Southerners. In one instance, a community took part in creating a very Southern sort of code of conduct. Consultation, it would appear, becomes less meaningful and is perhaps perceived as less necessary when both sides appear to be making the same choices. Tompkins suggested that "the huge power imbalance between Southerners and Inuit" is rarely discussed in the literature, and may be of central importance in relations between Southerners and Inuit, especially when it remains unacknowledged (personal correspondence, May 1st, 2001). Understanding that this power imbalance exists may help us to realize that we cannot necessarily consider instances of democratically elected bodies, or those populated by a majority of Inuit, as truly representing the desires and aspirations of their Inuit constituents. This may be difficult for some to accept, and may prove harder still to overcome.

This power imbalance may manifest itself partly by the lack of a process which Inuit community members perceive as legitimate, through which they could take part in setting the direction of the schools. Douglas (1994) was unable to comprehend the frame of reference in which the Arctic Bay DEA functioned, and it might reasonably be assumed that Inuit would find it equally difficult to understand the workings of institutions created by Southerners to elicit their input. It is also likely that the recent adoption of western values (Crago, 1992; Maguire & McAlpine, 1996) coupled with the Inuit tendency to accept authority (Annahatak, 1994; Tester & Kulchyski, 1994), make it relatively easy for

Southern educators to sway policy making bodies toward decisions which, like in the case of suspensions, do not reflect the desires of the majority of community members. Kirkness, a Native Canadian, wrote (1998) that aboriginal control of education has been hampered by the desire of policy makers "to have us simply administer the schools as they had in the past", and because Native Canadians have been insecure in taking control of education. It is likely that both of these mechanisms are at work in the Eastern Arctic as well.

Without greater input from the communities, Southern and Inuit educators may be left guessing as to what the Inuit communities expect from the schools. Their conscious decisions to adopt or eschew adaptations which would alter the course of the schools toward Inuit culture, or reinforce their paths as Southern institutions, will be made without the authority that could be conferred upon them by the exercise of community agency.

By successfully soliciting clear input from the communities, we risk finding ourselves in Tompkins "swampy ground", where easy and formulistic decisions cannot be made, and the 'best' way forward may be over unknown ground. Some voices, like Verna Kirkness (1998) who wrote about control of First Nations education, might call for radical changes. She blamed colonial domination for an attitude amongst aboriginal people that accepts "Band-Aiding, adapting, supplementing", and recommended instead the creation of "a unique and meaningful education" (pp. 11, 12). Simon (1996), part Inuk, called for "a system that is not simply adopted from other societies" (p. 71), whereas Kawagely (1993), a Yup'ik Eskimo, felt that the current system should "serve as one of the foundation stones upon which a teacher-student-community collaborative approach can be developed to address the needs of a fast-changing society" (p. 170).

How would 'the system' react if community consensus fell along the lines that one of Stairs (1991) contacts suggested, that Euro-Canadian schools do not change, but that the school day is shortened to leave time for children to learn about Inuit ways outside of schools? This model was also discussed by Henze and Vanett (1993), who wrote that western schools in anything like their present incarnations, would be unable to help students learn their own culture:

> The communities that really want to revitalize their language and culture would do better to turn to their own members: the parents of the children now in school. The school can and should do its part to be supportive, but the limitations of that part must be recognized. (p. 130)

Harris (1990) also proposed a separation of the Aboriginal and Western cultural domains in a process of 'two-way' schooling in Australia. He noted that with true aboriginal control, the way schooling would be structured might be very different from the current Western model, which suggests radical changes. He did, however, envisage the Western domain as following many of its current protocols, implying less change for educators involved in this area.

It is critically important that consultation with the communities takes place to define the role that schools are to play in the future. What is taught, and how it is taught, should flow from the aims of education, once they are clearly defined. In the absence of this process, it can be hoped that strategies aimed at increasing contact with parents, although assimilative in the short term, may create a group of parents who are more comfortable with the schools, and more willing to be a part of consultations, should this process begin. The danger, of course, is that as they are drawn into the Euro-Canadian school as it presently exists, their capacity to advocate for changes to the model may be weakened.

## 4.2 Adaptations to the 'Why' of Education

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Table 4.2 Adaptations to the 'Why' of Education

-Elders in during afternoon to counsel students/ be a presence in halls, encourage respect for elders
-use of Inuit Elder author as role model*
-photos of Elders and Inuktitut writing on walls
-desired: building which reflects Inuit culture*
-desired: encourage highschool teachers to use more Elders in their classes*

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Few examples of adaptations to the 'why' of education were reported, where cultural values were clearly brought into the school to be conveyed to students. In some cases too little information was available to accurately determine whether or not this was the intent of the adaptation.

Bringing Elders into the school certainly has the potential to operate in the realm of 'why'. In one instance, a K-12 school employed Elders who rotated coming in for afternoons. They counselled students who were having problems, as well as whole classes, and sometimes told stories or did cultural activities. The presence of these elders in the school was reported to have motivated the students to listen more and spend less time in the halls, and it was hoped that their presence in the school would help increase students' respect for Elders.

Elders counselling students would appear to belong in the 'how' category, as it is a traditional way of interacting to solve disputes or problems. In this instance, however, the participant explicitly stated that respect for Elders, a traditional value, was meant to be learned. The desirability of having elders in the school was affirmed by many of the participants. Elders were brought in for different purposes, including leading cultural activities, guiding, to help with discipline, to serve as role models, and to translate materials.

Respect for elders is a foundational Inuit value (Boult, n.d., p. 9; BDBE, 1996, p. 9), and "ideally, every classroom, should have elders adding their living wisdom and skills" (BDBE, 1996, p. 15). Inuuqatigiit also recommended having photos of Elders on display in the school, a practice reported in this study.

It is possible that others who reported hiring Elders to guide or lead activities might have encouraged or expected that they would transmit cultural values as they taught or led. In Lipka's (1990) exemplary Yup'ik teacher's lesson, the cultural value instruction was a natural part of the teacher's discourse. It is much more likely that this will occur in circumstances like the culture program described in section 4.4, where community members have set the curriculum to follow the traditional things valued by Inuit, and where the 'lessons' take place with some reflection of Inuit pedagogy.

That so few examples of the teaching of Inuit values in schools were reported may have been a factor of so few of my participants being Inuit. It is also possible that

Southern participants might try to incorporate Inuit curriculum and pedagogy, but would not feel that it was their place to convey Inuit values. It might also be that the culture of the schools is so strong and so foreign to aspects of Inuit culture that the two don't often meet. Whatever the mechanism, if the schools are not teaching or transmitting Inuit values, then they are teaching or transmitting Southern values, and assimilation is taking place.

## 4.3 Adaptations to The 'What' of Schooling

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Table 4.3 Adaptations to the 'What' of Schooling

-use materials students can relate to
-use Inuit literature
-revamping Social Studies 10 as Geography of Nunavut
-year plans showing connection to Inuuqatigiit expected
-curriculum documents 'Northernized' in Yellowknife
-use Inuit games in physical education program
-use cultural activities in physical education program, with local assistance and teacher as facilitator
-resource person collects, translates, and transforms resources
-Inuktitut immersion to and including grade 3
-choice of Inuktitut or English immersion in primary grades
-grades 4-12 get just under or just over one hour of Inuktitut language arts instruction each day
-basic resources provided for students*
-Elders used to translate books for PD*
-desired: hire a full-time bilingual resource person*
-desired: equivalent to WELA in Inuktitut
-desired: more Inuktitut curricula (reduce planning time, help attract Inuit teachers, help increase rigour of instruction)
-desired: more Inuit content
-desired: develop own curriculum (don't buy from Alberta)
-desired: focus on local things, include distant things in a sensitive way to broaden

perspectives
-desired: Nunavut content
-desired: curriculum sensitive to students' backgrounds
-desired: replace Departmental Exam sections with more relevant sections
-desired: create Departmental for Northern students (Southern can then be challenged if desired)
-desired: 'Access Program' like in northern Quebec to prepare students for post-secondary education, instead of Departmental Exam
-desired: equivalency rating like between countries instead of Departmental Exam
-desired: Inuktitut stream should last longer
-desired: English should start earlier*

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A participant reported:

> ...they come to the gym and then there's a place where they can excel, and it's almost all of them excel there, so I think it's good to have phys ed, and a lot of it, so it actually creates some sort of balance where they're not struggling all the time at school...some students might be doing academically poorly and they come into the gym and they're brilliant, so it's a real boost for them, it's something that they really need. (DP:40)

This participant included Inuit games and activities like igloo building in her physical education classes. Crago (1992) reported that "early physical competence of children is more highly valued than the display of spoken language" (p. 500). Content, language, and materials which appear to be adaptations toward Inuit culture are presented here.

### 4.31 Language of instruction.

The most obviously different thing about these Arctic schools is the use of Inuktitut as the language of instruction in the primary grades, although some schools have parallel

Inuktitut and English streams that parents can choose between. The existence of an Inuktitut stream was characterized by one educator as "the best thing that's been good for our students" (SP:1). One participant said that where a choice exists, parents are encouraged to place their children in the stream in which they themselves will be best able to help their children. Several participants indicated their desire to extend the period in which students are immersed in Inuktitut, or to make the transition into English happen more slowly.

Along with immersion in Inuktitut, students in the remaining grades receive some Inuktitut instruction each day, from an Inuit Inuktitut instructor. The importance of using Inuktitut in the schools in order to ensure that it remains a viable language was discussed in the literature review (NWT LASCE, 1982), as were the perceived benefits to children's self-esteem (Wright & Taylor, 1995), and their ability to acquire a second language/culture more easily (Crago, 1992). Models where the first language is used in primary grades and then taught as a subject thereafter can be found in Alaska (Barnhardt, 1999) and northern Quebec (Wright, Taylor, Ruggiero, 1996).

### 4.32 Curriculum and resources.

> We realized that the curriculum in the older grades, especially in social studies was the Alberta curriculum and they weren't interested in it. It didn't grab them at all. Now maybe it's stuff they should learn, maybe the French Revolution has its importance, but they don't get enough geography, and geography is one of the subjects which can be used. Inuit are good at it because it involves what their life

> is about. The land, maps, GPS, rocks, weather, all this sort of stuff is something which comes naturally to our kids but we don't get to teach it. So we thought that this geography course in grade 10 would be a great way to break in. I think ideas like that will help a lot. (CP:3)

Many of the participants expressed frustration with the existing curriculum, stating that it is culturally inappropriate, and/or that it doesn't match the students' abilities. Different initiatives such as the creation of a course called the Geography of Nunavut, described above, were reported. The creation of such a geography course fulfils part of one of the recommendations of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference Sixth General Assembly (1992, p. 113).

Inuuqatigiit:the curriculum from the Inuit perspective, a K-12 curriculum document, is an adaptation noted by several participants, one of whom said that all teachers in their area are expected to make year plans which include connections to the document, "so that they see we are at least making strides in trying to make those connections" (CP:4). This participant also said that ample funds are available to hire guides and Elders to support teaching from Inuuqatigiit, but acknowledged that "it takes a lot of work outside the classroom to organize those things" (CP:4).

One educator felt that many of the curriculum documents in use had already been 'Northernized' to some degree, having come from Yellowknife. Another noted that things like the Canada Food Guide have been adapted for the North. One expressed concern that the Yellowknife modifications "may not be as fitting for our students as [they] could be", but said that "we have been dealing with this for so many years that we are becoming quite good at adjusting curriculum to meet students' needs" (CP:8a). This educator also spoke of needing more Inuit content: "now that we have the Department of Education...they should realize that Inuuqatigiit is just the beginning, you know, we need a lot more" (CD:5).

Many people expressed the desire for more and better curricula in Inuktitut. One questioned why there is no Inuktitut equivalent to the Western Language Arts Curriculum (WELA). More comprehensive curricula in Inuktitut, it was thought, would lead to Inuit teachers spending less time planning from scratch, and an increase in the ability of schools to hire Inuit teachers. Another said that curricula in Inuktitut would help Inuit teachers to teach more rigorously, and would help with the transition into English.

Although the necessity of modifying curricula and resources was frequently cited, and it was suggested that Inuit teachers could translate and use English curricula, there were many who said that new, culturally appropriate curriculum was necessary: "...if it's totally the wrong curriculum and it doesn't fit this culture, then maybe we do need to develop our own stuff" (CD:7); "They cannot modify their current curriculum for the simple fact that it's too culturally specific to the South" (CD:8). More Northern and more Nunavut content was desired, as well as English language arts curricula which includes Inuit legends and stories.

Complaints were made about the general unsuitability of resources as well as curricula:

> ...here I am reading a story about little squirrels jumping from tree to tree and...a lot of these kids don't ever see trees...first of all you have to explain what a tree

> is, then you have to explain what a squirrel is, and by then they've kind of lost the flow of the whole story anyways. (RD:5)

One participant noted that as well as translating resources into Inuktitut, they must be 'transformed' to make them relevant in a Northern setting. Watahomigie and McCarty (1994) claimed that for the success of a Hualapai language program, it was critical that translated English language curriculum had not been used (p. 40). The NWT LASCE (1982) report declared as well that "Native-language teaching material cannot be prepared by merely translating existing English material" (p. 93).

Along with these specific concerns about adapting curricula and resources to the needs of the students, the broader theme of creation and implementation of curriculum was raised. I include it here because of participant feedback which suggested that not all of the resources which might help them seem to have reached them, despite evidence of their existence (for example, Van Meenen, 1994). This participant spoke of the need for continuity between design, resources, and implementation of curriculum:

> I think you have to identify the resources, time, days, and free up teachers. I think the best people to do this are classroom teachers, but you've gotta have commitment from higher up, from the regional boards, and/or Education Nunavut to get this stuff done, and they're going to have to put some dollars out. I sound like a broken record, but I'll say forever that the North, all these little Arctic communities, that they are underfunded and under serviced education-wise in perpetuity, like forever, and until the greater authorities and jurisdictions decide to put some money on education it's going to get worse. (CD:20)

Concerns expressed by participants about the lack of curricular relevance resonate with the literature. Van Meenen (1994) cited a 1971 study which found that students couldn't relate to the teaching materials. In 1973 The Arctic Institute of North America said that new curriculum was being developed, taking culture into account. In 1982 the NWT LASCE report recognized the gap between curriculum conception, production, and implementation (p. 34), and stated that inadequate resources had historically been dedicated to curriculum development (p. 75). They recommended that community members, classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, linguists and language specialists take part in curriculum development (pp. 80, 98), and noted the lack of curriculua in Inuktitut (p. 81). The committee also acknowledged that local teachers "can develop useful programs and teaching materials on their own" (p. 81), and suggested that these be shared and distributed. The necessity of creating resources, and "creating my own path" (CP:11) were mentioned by many participants, although this was a default strategy, rather than one which was reported to be recognized or supported by policy structures.

The desire for culturally sensitive materials is also echoed in the NWT LASCE (1982) report. It recommended the creation by ESL specialists of a library of relevant books in each school (p. 100). Congruent with one participant's suggestion, the report recommends "high-interest, low skill materials which reflect life in the north" (p. 100). Kleinfeld, McDiarmid, & Hagstrom (1985) found teachers in rural Alaska to be similarly seeking "material that would motivate and interest students raised in a unique geographical and cultural environment" (p. 62). The NWT LASCE report also suggested scrutinizing existing materials to determine what can be adapted for use in the north (p.

100). Although they recommended that this be done by ESL specialists and board representatives, many participants reported that teachers currently do this work themselves.

Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) recommended the use of Inuit legends and stories (p. i), and stated that curriculum should not deal exclusively with "traditional and historical information", but should "begin with the life of the child and the community" (p. 14). This is similar to an educator in this study who suggested a primary focus on local and Nunavut content, together with looking outward to broaden students' perspectives. McGrath (1988) recognized the socialization value of Inuit myths and legends. Leavitt (1991) cautions against using Inuit legends as artifacts, but states that Inuit life stories are "being used widely in Inuktitut education" (p. 271). According to participants in this study, students enthusiastically received the inclusion of Inuit stories and writing in English language arts programs.

### 4.33 Departmental exams.

Several participants noted advantages to using the Alberta Departmental Exams. They included giving teachers a standard for which to aim, ensuring equal access to Southern colleges and universities, and the belief that students who graduate feel really good about themselves, knowing that they are on a par with students elsewhere in Canada. The majority of comments concerning these exams were negative, with the most commonly desired adaptation being the discontinuation of their usage. For example:

> They have to be highly motivated and dead serious about getting their grade 12 to stick around and take their Departmentals on the 23rd or 24th of June [with] nobody to coach 'em, tutor 'em. The solution to that is to get away from Alberta. Alberta is a long way from here physically, and a long way from Nunavut in a lot of pedagogical aspects.... (CD:23)

Concern was expressed that the Departmental Exams are culturally insensitive, and biassed against ESL students: "I'm sure the Departmental Exams do not really suit our children because our children are ESL students" (CD:25).

> They won't graduate if they don't pass English 33 which is an Alberta exam. It's very culturally specific, to the south, and when it's corrected it's corrected by people who aren't even familiar, probably have never heard Inuktitut, and wouldn't know what first language interferences exist to begin with. (CD:26)

As an alternative to getting rid of the exams altogether, one educator suggested replacing culturally insensitive sections (for example, questions about agriculture) with a local add-on section. Another suggested "tinkering a bit" with the exam, and said that rewriting them completely would cost "millions" (CD:28). Weber (1996) noted that Inuit students have been disadvantaged by tests created for other cultures.

One participant stated that "students that are going to stay in the community should not be robbed from passing the Departmental test just because they think that they will eventually go down South" (CD:29). This participant cited Northern opportunities such as Arctic College as alternatives to graduates heading South, and pointed to other, non-scholastic barriers to students relocating after graduation: "So many of them have such a strong culture. Like family ties are so strong, it's very hard to just jump up and go away to university" (CD:30). One solution would be to have a "Departmental for the Northern students that [is] more relevant to the North. Then the students that want to challenge the Southern ones could do so" (CD:31). Ovando (1994) noted a shift in the thinking of some educators of Athabaskan Indians, who are beginning to see and recommend alternatives to college education, rather than blindly focussing on it as the only choice of value.

One person suggested that an 'Access Program' (a one year university preparatory course similar to one in northern Quebec) could be used to replace the Departmentals, while another suggested that instead of the Departmentals, an 'equivalency rating' could be used to rate Nunavut graduates relative to Southern graduates, in the same way that equivalency ratings exist between countries.

It would appear that the Departmentals are completely incongruous with traditional Inuit assessment (Corson, 1992; Eriks-Brophy & Crago, 1994; Kawagely, 1995; Stairs, 1994), as well as being culturally biassed and unsuited to ESL students. For these reasons I perceive attempts to modify, replace, or retire them as movements toward Inuit culture. They join a wide array of current and desired adaptations which move the 'what' of schooling closer to cultural compatibility.

### 4.34 Cultural inclusion programs.

All of the culture programs described by participants involved Inuit as guides/teachers, and in each case at least some efforts were made to reflect traditional

Inuit educational situations. For this reason culture programs will be discussed in the section 4.4 which deals with the 'how' of learning and teaching.

## 4.4 Adaptations to the 'How' of Learning and Teaching

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Table 4.4 Adaptations to the 'How' of Learning and Teaching

-flexible scheduling (may continue highschool 'module' in next semester/ school year)
-work in student-driven review every day*
-copy notes from board and number handouts for absent students*
-always have something for occasional attenders to do
-students 'Excused' rather than 'Absent' when on land*
-schedule most academic work in 1st two semesters, seasonal/ outside units for the spring
-start day relaxed academically, and welcoming
-let students sleep on floor when tired
-incorporate Inuit ways of discipline
-lots of physical education
-inviting parents into school to motivate problem child*
-plan lots of hands-on activities
-pacing with students (change activity every 10 to 15 minutes)
-bring food into class and eat/talk together
-reading program one-on-one with business/government volunteers*
-less structured, more workshop-like activities
-establish rapport and acceptability of making mistakes*
-funds available for guides/Elders to support Inuuqatigiit*
-themes run from Inuuqatigiit (learning integrated)
-use cultural activities in physical education program, with local assistance and teacher as facilitator
-caribou hunt with Inuktitut teacher and guide*
-1 to 11/2 hours/week culture program, class split along gender lines, talk about and make traditional things
-culture program through CTS courses; small, following seasonal activities
-students expected to take extra years before graduation
-grade 7/8 program designed to take 3 years, with a further grade 10 prep year available
-in grade ten offer 16, then 13, then 10 level courses so students repeat grade level but not course, progressing at own speed
-co-ordinator at board level to support Inuit teachers*

-guides/Elders hired to support land trips and cultural activities
-parent teacher interviews evolved to include student with portfolio of her/his work*
-first name basis helps create feeling of being part of same team
-physical contact (pushed in snow by student) in relaxed student/ teacher relationship*
-given more freedom and responsibility
-studying Inuktitut for PD*
-desired: give more opportunity for motion, and going outside
-desired: learn what Inuit teachers do*
-desired: implement evening classes to replace missed classes*
-desired: get more Inuit teachers for senior high*
-desired: get more Inuit teachers as role models*
-desired: increase pay and improve working conditions to attract more Inuit teachers*
-desired: increase guide wage*
-desired: develop coaching locally*
-desired: one week cultural orientation
-desired: one day cultural orientation
-desired: inservice to 'reach these kids'
-desired: look at other communities and emulate successes*
-desired: don't force student to do something*

A participant said:

> Do not discipline someone with the whole class or group of people being aware of it. You would just approach the student or ask the student to come to you and then you would tell them to correct their behaviour or tell them that you are upset with them. You do it one-on-one. You wouldn't do it with the whole class hearing you say a negative thing about that student. (DP:6)

This type of adaptation, which was identified by a participant as emulating the way that Inuit do discipline, is presented in this section. Stairs (1994) called it "the 'how' of learning and teaching—attending to cultural modes of interaction" (p. 73). Regarding discipline, Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) said that "discipline is calm and quietly explained" (p. 27), and that "many 'southern' methods of disciplining are not considered appropriate by Inuit and these differences should be understood by teachers" (p. 11). It did not elaborate on these differences.

### 4.41 Inuit teachers.

Certainly one of the best ways to have teachers interact with students like Inuit would, is to have Inuit teachers. The desire to have more Inuit teachers, as well as barriers including a lack of Inuktitut curricula, and workplace stress, were discussed by participants. As well, one participant elaborated on the many benefits of having Inuit teachers on staff. Those benefits echoed many of Tompkins' (1998), including improving school/community relations, and having teachers who share the same first language as their students.

In 1982 the NWT LASCE report recommended prioritizing the training of Northern teachers, "to improve the teaching of Native languages and to implement bilingual programs of education" (p. 110). Crago (1992) wrote that bilingual teachers teaching in the second language would make the language transition "less abrupt and educationally hazardous" (p. 501), in part because they can use the first language to explain difficult concepts. Many of the other benefits of having Inuit staff in Northern schools are related to their greater ability to teach in culturally compatible ways, the 'how' of teaching and learning, due to their intimate knowledge of Inuit culture.

Despite the obvious advantages, some participants noted community concerns as well as their own reservations about Inuit teachers and the Northern Teacher Education

Program [NTEP]. Delpit (1995) and Lipka (1990, 1991) explained how it is easy for dominant-culture teachers to misunderstand and therefore mis-evaluate minority-culture teachers. As well as the danger of being mis-perceived by administrators and colleagues, Inuit teachers face the problem of teaching within a system which has a culture, including values and practices, that can be radically different from their own. For example, some participants reported that Inuit teachers needed help with assessment. Stairs (1991) wrote that Euro-Canadian school assessment is an extremely foreign concept for a people whose learning is traditionally "monitored by their direct testing of social and environmental reactions" (p. 283). She wrote that consultants and Inuit themselves believed that training in Southern testing and assessment methods would be irrelevant or damaging for students and teachers (Stairs, 1988). Corson (1992) wrote as well that "minority peoples often see this [dominant culture] preoccupation with assessment and evaluation as a strange interest at best, and as a culturally offensive obsession at worst" (p. 491).

It would appear that a dialectic exists with respect to Southern educators' views about Inuit teachers . If they are expected to fit into the culture of Euro-Canadian schools, problems are bound to arise. If their inclusion is expected to help change the schools to better reflect Inuit culture, latitude must be given for this to occur. In the latter instance, the NTEP model should not be seen as a stepping stone to full teacher accreditation programs of a Euro-Canadian nature, or the risk is run that a great deal of the benefit of hiring Inuit teachers will be lost. Lipka and Mohatt (1998) cautioned against alienating minority students by providing them with minority teachers who act White, and Lipka

(1990) cited Labov's study which recommended teachers who did not pass through the formal educational structure, which would have socialized them "into the patterns of mainstream teaching" (p. 20). Eriks-Brophy and Crago (1994) also credited Inuit teachers' abilities to bring traditional patterns of discourse into the classroom, to different selection criteria and a different experience for most Inuit teachers in teacher training programs of northern Quebec. In this light, the pairing of NTEP graduates with Southern teachers, reported by participants in this study, can be seen to be an adaptation which prevents the school from adapting to Inuit culture, if the teaming is meant to help NTEP students learn to plan and teach in the Euro-Canadian way. Thus, while the increased use of Inuit teachers was desired by participants in this study, and while it holds great potential for adapting the schools toward Inuit culture, it should not be taken for granted that an increase in the number of Inuit educators will guarantee this outcome.

### 4.42 Cultural inclusion programs.

> There's always the indication for elders to be part of the school. Most schools have budget for cultural programs, either it be hiring someone on a full-time basis, or putting money aside from their overall budget to hire people for special events. (CP:16)

Culture and cultural activities taught separately, still constitute Stairs (1991) 'what' of schooling. Numerous authors have warned about the limitations of 'adding-on' some cultural content, without teaching from a cultural base (Leavitt, 1991; Lipka & Moffat, 1998; Stairs, 1991; Witt, 1998). Stairs explained:

> Native languages were first taught as cultural inclusion programs–limited components appended to the mainstream curriculum....These programs gradually moved beyond language to include elements of native cultural content, and in certain regions native language spread into lower levels of the standard primary curriculum. With rare exceptions, however, the learning-teaching processes in the education of native children have been unaffected by this inclusion. (p. 281)

She postulated that language and culture "can only be adequately pursued when embedded in traditional cultural values concerning ways of using language, of interacting, and of knowing" (p. 281).

In one of the culture programs described by a participant, splitting of the class on gender lines was congruent with Inuit culture, although no further information was provided about its structure. In both of the other descriptions, conscious efforts to structure the program to be congruent with Inuit cultural norms were reported. Small groups and seasonally appropriate activities, taught by Inuit elders, were design elements chosen to make these courses truly Inuit courses:

> ...we used to have a program where we had a man and a woman, they would take a whole grade 6 class. The man would work with all the boys and the woman would work with all the girls and they were large groups and we found it wasn't working very well. The kids were disrespectful to them and they weren't producing anything interesting, so we said, 'what's wrong with this?', and we said, 'how do elder Inuit really teach?' They don't teach in classrooms large groups of kids, they would be teaching one on one or small groups you know,

> and they'd be demonstrating. So we totally changed our cultural inclusion program, and we actually got community people in to say what they wanted the kids to learn in cultural inclusion. Some men saying what should a boy know by the time he's 10, by the time he's 11 in different fields such as meat preparation, hunting, trapping, carving, all these different things. And we developed a little curriculum so we could have a checklist and we could make sure the kids were learning those things and check it off. And they work in a small group of 4 or 5 kids and we have 5 staff doing cultural inclusion. It costs a lot, so we don't run it the whole year, that's the drawback...and we have one co-ordinator who's coordinating, making sure they cover the curriculum and making sure if someone's not there they can fill the position with someone else, and making sure the kids are well disciplined...it's been highly successful, it means that we take the kids out of the classroom. Four or five are leaving grade 2 say, but that also helps because we have a large variety of learning abilities in the classroom, so that allows the teacher to work more one-on-one with some kids of different groups and abilities. (CP:20)

At one highschool the culture program was partly carried out through CTS courses. It involved land trips:

> We do three land trips a year...the Elders are the main guides, they're the ones who do the main instruction. When we do those field trips it's pretty much all cultural activities, of course using modern technology, but as much culture and language as possible...and those trips are anywhere from 2 to 3 days...we follow

> the seasons, so, for example in the fall...we went to hunt caribou and the kids learned how to cache them which is a traditional thing that's done at that time of year.... (CP:21)

I asked this participant if there were concerns about coordinating guides, and about how much learning actually takes place on the trips:

> I only allowed 8 students to enter the course...that was one of the main concerns that their group be kept small, because having a large group they have less one-on-one with the Elders...and I felt the course had to go throughout the year following the year activities, cultural activities that were relevant to here, because in the past I've been on those trips, the day trips where there was too much money being spent on food, on supplies and gas...and there was nothing much culturally learned...This class is more specific. I have a year plan that I follow. The elders know well in advance what they have to do. For example, in November we went fox trapping for about a month, so there's a fox trapping module developed by the board of education. That module covers the theory on foxes, and how to trap them, and the history of the fur trade in the North, and then we go out on day trips...the elders and guides know well in advance what they need to teach...staff really helped out by suggesting to the guides and elders for the spring trip exactly what to do...they wouldn't be offended by that at all. (CP:22)

This participant said that using different Elders for different activities, but the same one each time that activity was done, allowed the work to be spread around while benefiting the students who built a rapport with the Elder.

Due to their structures it would appear that both of these programs provide the possibility for culturally congruent patterns of interaction to occur. In the latter, although the curriculum has been determined by outside agents, stress has been placed on appropriate activities at appropriate times, in appropriate groupings. This greatly increases the likelihood of culturally congruent interaction between participants.

Two of the participants spoke of problems with culture programs which had arisen and had been successfully addressed, including spending too much money for too little gain, and creating uninteresting products. In the literature, Oakes (1988) detailed some problems facing cultural inclusion programs which included too little dedicated time, differences of opinion in families within a community, the production of products which are obsolete in today's Inuit culture, and the problem of finding Elders "that can adapt to teaching large classes with set time limits" (p. 44). The latter again illustrates fundamental inconsistencies between traditional Inuit culture and Euro-Canadian school culture, but would appear to have been successfully overcome in the accounts given here.

### 4.43 Lateness, absence, and tired students.

Students with frequent absences, and those arriving to school late or tired were often mentioned by participants:

> In terms of attendance in the lower grades...it seems like every morning I walk in (and this happens just about every morning), there's maybe 8 or 10 kids there - there's supposed to be 22 in my class. Within the first 5 to 10 minutes after the

> bell you get a couple more dribble in. By quarter to ten or so you have maybe 12-15 in my class - by noon hour you have close to 18. Then people even come at afternoon recess for the last hour or so, so you're pushing 20 by the end. (DP:13)

A number of different approaches were reported to these 'problems'. Traditionally Inuit children learned when they chose to, and as long as their interest held (Boult, n.d.). Whether motivated by a sense of powerlessness to change the situation, or by trying to accommodate children's rights to prioritize their lives, several participants described approaches which diverge from normal Euro-Canadian school policy. They did so by attempting to work around the 'problem' of lateness, rather than by trying to change it.

One participant said that she scheduled most of the academic work in the first two semesters, and tried to be outside doing seasonal things in the later spring when many children are absent with their families out on the land. This participant also noted that she starts the day relaxed academically, and makes sure that students feel welcome, despite arriving late. Lipka (1991) noted that a successful Yup'ik teacher, respecting the autonomy of the individual, did not reprimand late students. Tompkins (1998) described a program where the students spent two weeks in the spring doing outdoor activities with half of the teaching staff. This had the added benefit of allowing staff to plan the next year's themes before the end of school.

Another participant said that tired students sometimes fall asleep on the floor, and reported that she lets them sleep. One said that teachers always have something for students to do when they do come to school, in order to encourage them and keep them from being totally lost. Flexible scheduling was also reported:

> the kids in highschool...we let them work on modules and if they don't get finished their whole grade 11 social studies 23 course by the end of this year, they can start in August working on the next module...we let them work at their own speed basically and it seems to work the best....It is hard in some courses like science where they're doing experiments to let everyone work at their own speed - it's easier in some other subjects. (DP:14)

Maguire and McAlpine (1996) noted of Inuit students that:

> They come from a culture where precision in time is not a valuable commodity. Yet punctuality is a frequently articulated topic at assemblies, in teachers' classrooms, and in staff room discourse, and it is an explicit, expected institutional social convention. (p. 231)

In 1982, the NWT LASCE found attendance to be a common concern, but looked upon it as a "symptom of the problem, not the problem itself" (p. 77). Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) sets out as a responsibility of the parents that they "do their best to ensure the child is well-rested and well-fed" (p. 25). Paradise (1994) described the flexibility of a Mazahua child's principal and teacher, who encouraged a child to come to school two days a week rather than drop out due to financial concerns. This, she felt, did not compromise the academic value of schooling, while it reflected the life circumstances of the student.

In Harris' two way schooling model, the Western domain would function with Western norms, including emphasis on attendance (1990). This is necessary for two reasons. Attendance is important for achievement in Western schools, and if teaching Western values is a goal of the Western domain, punctuality and attendance rank among the highest of these values. The majority of wage-labour jobs in Arctic and mainstream communities, so the argument goes, are based on Western values. It could therefore be argued that if the school is to prepare students for participation in the world of Western work, it must inculcate the values of punctuality and attendance in them. Harris also believed that Aboriginal control, and effective teaching, would both increase student attendance.

It is clear that there is a wide gap between the Inuit and Euro-Canadian school cultures' valuing of time, and it is likely that no easy solution will be found to mesh the two. Harris (1990) anticipated that with Aboriginal control of schooling "what happens in terms of time and attitudes to time might be quite surprising to Western observers" (p.140). As long as there is high unemployment in many Nunavut communities, and many families' schedules are not organized around waged-labour, it is likely that lateness, poor attendance, and tiredness will remain 'problems' in the future (personal communication with Joanne Tompkins, 2001).

### 4.44 Timing/Pacing.

Timing was reported as being adapted in two ways, with flexible modules, letting students work at their own pace, and with accommodations which allow more years to graduation without failure. In one community:

> ...the grade 7/8 program is designed to be a three year program. Although some

> kids are able to complete it in two years, the majority stay in that stream for three years. Also, when they get out of the JH stream, they can either go directly into grade nine or into a grade nine prep program, so there's even an additional year where they can catch up, mainly in math and English literacy, so they can successfully challenge the highschool credits. (SP:8)

In another:

> ...once they get into grade 10 you can offer the 16, the 13, or the 10 level courses. Someone who's weak in the subject might decide to go into the 16 level course and then the next year they continue with grade 10, they go into the 13 level class. We use grade 10 because there's more flexibility in the curriculum there...we do tend to have a lot of kids repeating grade 10, but they're not repeating everything. (SP:9)

Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) stressed that children learn at their own pace, and in traditional Inuit culture children observed (learned) as long as their interest held, then did something else (Boult, n.d.). Thus it would seem like flexibility in timing serves to fit schools to the students' culture.

The concept of pacing, expressed by one teacher, seems also to correspond to the idea of children learning 'while their interest holds':

> ...with Inuit students you should not give any activity for more than 10 to 15 minutes without completely changing it and doing something totally different, and if it means a fun thing in the middle of something boring then do the fun thing and then go back to the boring...show something on tv - if they move after

> 5 minutes, start activities changing at 5 minute intervals, if it's 10 minutes, 10. You must pace yourself with your students. (PP:9)

### 4.45 Creating relationship.

Food is important in one participant's class:

> Eating together is very important...every time we have birthdays I make a cake. I don't go more than a week without bringing in some kind of interesting food...to have a nice chat time and eat time together, I think that's very important - it relaxes the students.... (PP:10)

Another participant said that using first names helped to foster a 'team' feeling between staff and students, and a teacher named building rapport with her students as being important. Stairs (1991) wrote that in a traditional Inuit idea of education, personal relationships between teachers and learners are important, and the teacher should be seen as part of 'the team' (p. 284). Lipka (1990) described a successful Yup'ik teacher who had created a "familiar and comfortable environment" (p. 30), and Clifton and Roberts (1988) found that "effective teachers of Inuit students create emotionally warm and personable classroom environments" (p. 332). The sharing of food is also a traditional Inuit practice that created community and symbolized interdependence (Minor, 1992; Tompkins, 1998).

### 4.46 Hands-on activities and freedom.

Planning lots of hands-on activities was reported as a strategy for avoiding behaviour problems. Another participant reported using less structured, more 'workshop-like' activities. One respondent said that students are given more freedom and responsibility, "...that is, really little kids. If they need a new book, they just go and find it" (TP:4). Giving students more of an opportunity to move around and be outside was desired by two educators:

> To take them from hopefully being outside a lot during their normal life and all of a sudden for these many hours you're going to sit here and do paperwork and just no kind of blending of the two, it must be quite a shock! (PP:5)

Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) provides support for the idea that learners should be free to move around more than in traditional Euro-Canadian settings, stating that "learning involves the whole body" (p.14), and, "participation and being actively involved will hold a child's interests longer than sitting at a desk doing sheetwork" (p. 24). Minor (1992) also noted that freedom was encouraged in the Inuit culture, and Hinds (1958) commented that it is "necessary for lessons to include as many practical exercises as possible, otherwise talking and bookwork are almost meaningless to [Inuit students]". For her these took the form of games, which "revise and test lessons...and also provide activity" (p. 103). Stairs (1994) also noted that indigenous students often have an increased tendency towards physical movement, and Weber (1996) wrote that in her experience many Inuit learned well through hands-on activities.

### 4.47 Theme teaching.

Two participants described using Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) to:

> ...run a lot of themes and hit a lot of your different objectives in language arts and science and social studies...in the older grades where we have Inuit teachers say teaching Inuktitut, or we have an Inuit teacher teaching grade 7, they use the Inuit curriculum a lot. (CP:5)

Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) was designed to be used for theme teaching. Leavitt (1991) stressed that Inuit children learn best when things are in context, not fragmented. Moving away from fragmentation is one of the ideas behind theme teaching. Barnhardt (1999) documented the use of themes by Yup'ik in Alaska.

### 4.48 Orientation/inservicing.

Many participants noted the need for an orientation and inservicing:

> There's a big need for some kind of ...an inservice, I don't think it's in existence. We need something to train the teachers to get to these kids. The kids say, "we don't read", "we don't talk", "we don't sing", so how do we get to them, there's got to be a way to get to them? (PDD:6)

> One thing that we need to go back to is an orientation. That was very successful. It was mandatory for us to come for at least a week before school started. Somebody would meet us, get us set up; each day something was planned. We met people, went to schools, pronounced kids names. We were briefed on things to avoid, and went out on the land for a fish fry and tented for several days. Here's a connection to what life is like in the north...we haven't done it for years now...it hasn't been on the agenda...that's unfortunate. (PDD:8)

> You walk into the classroom the first day - what do you do? You're not prepared for this kind of stuff, and there's no book and there's no guide. Most of the kids haven't got a clue what you're talking about. (PDD:11)

While it may never be possible and perhaps not even desirable for Southern teachers to act like Inuit, an orientation to culture and inservicing to help Southern teachers understand their students was recommended by many. One favoured an orientation: "by somebody who has been up here for 10 to 15 years or more...somebody that's been here, somebody who knows the culture, somebody who knows what the problems are. That's a necessity" (PDD:12).

The literature is replete with calls for an adequate orientation and ongoing inservicing to ensure that Southern teachers in the North have some understanding of Inuit culture and sound teaching approaches for use with Inuit students. In 1973 the Arctic Institute of North America reported that the teachers in the North were not properly prepared to do their jobs, and called for an extension of the 2-3 week orientation period. In 1982 the NWT LASCE report recommended that "a teacher orientation program shall be established immediately" (p. 109), the previous 'inadequately long' program having been entirely abandoned in the interim. It cautioned that

> disciplinary problems may also occur in conflicts of will between persons of different cultures, as might happen when a new teacher arrives without proper preparation in a small community....Southern teachers come to northern schools with little or no knowledge of the Native cultures, little or no training in cross-cultural education, little or no understanding of instruction in a second language,

> and unable to make use of a classroom assistant. Turnover among these teachers is high and interrupts the continuity of education programs." (pp. 29, 31)

Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) also recommends the "appropriate inservicing and orientation of all partners in Inuuqatigiit" (p. 24). Stairs (1991) noted that in the absence of a Southern teacher orientation to student learning expectations, it is the students who suffer the consequences of the rift between their prior learning experiences and the ways they must learn in school. In culture-based native education programs, she wrote that teachers

> have as their first priority to establish classroom processes of learning and teaching which connect with the patterns of adult-child and child-child relationship expected by their students and the community....their ways of teaching are as important as the knowledge itself." (p. 287)

For Southern teachers this is a formidable task, and is untenable without a solid orientation and continuing support through inservicing.

Even if Southern teachers are not able to emulate Inuit discourse styles, it is beneficial for educators to learn about those patterns (Douglas, 1992; Crago, 1992). Crago (1992) viewed the learning of a second language as synonymous with the learning of a second culture, and wrote that "school becomes a form of secondary socialization where the pragmatics of the first language interfere with the learning of the second language" (p. 488). For instance, she reported that a parent apologized at an interview when the teacher said that the son was "talking well in class" (p. 496). Being socialized not to speak too much to adults is a cultural, rather than a purely linguistic factor, which slows Inuit children's acquisition of English. Crago's study pointed to teachers who misperceived their students' reticence to speak as a language difficulty. She worked with teachers from the Kativik School Board to help them understand and interact with their students more productively. Kawagely (1993) wrote that "teachers must be willing to learn at least the rudiments of the Native language and culture in order to do an effective job of teaching" (p. 162).

Crago (1992), Leavitt (1991), Roberts, Clifton & Wiseman (1989), Watahomigie and McCarty (1994), and Williamson (1987) all mentioned the necessity of an orientation or of inservicing for successful teaching in minority cultural settings. In one community in Nunavut, Tompkins (1998) ran orientation sessions to help her Southern staff learn about Inuit culture. While an orientation and continuing support would not ensure that teachers would be able to respond appropriately to Inuit students, the lack of them virtually guarantees that misunderstandings and frustrations will occur, and successful responses to the 'how' of learning and teaching may remain, for these teachers, an elusive goal.

## 4.5 Non-Adaptations to Inuit Culture

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Table 4.5 Non-Adaptations to Inuit Culture

-Kigavik House as an alternative to suspension for disruptive students
-send students to a room to think about lateness*
-remove students until next semester if they have no possibility of passing a course due to poor attendance/lateness*
-reward system for motivating students
-draw once/month to reward those who arrive on time*

-code of conduct emphasizing respect and safety
-use of detentions/ suspensions
-students returning from suspensions get counselling*
-zero tolerance policy for teasing and fighting
-separate noisy students*
-student writes letter of intention to behave*
-retain students with poor English skills or very poor attendance*
-grade 2,3,4 ability streamed for language lessons (English and Inuktitut)*
-desired: support 'problem students' with program*
-desired: implement consequences for bad behaviour*

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This section describes strategies aimed at increasing student performance or well-being in the Euro-Canadian school. They are not adaptations toward Inuit culture, but may be considered to address certain goals of educators or communities.

One participant said:

> I think while there might be some cultural considerations to discipline, I largely think that kids are kids and school is a foreign institution anyway, and we're talking about an institution that brings a large number of, in this case, Inuit children together for the duration of the school day. And so all of the things that would normally govern traditional Inuit culture and discipline are already disregarded by having this foreign institution of the school, and bringing large numbers of people together to function all day. So I think we get into, we get into a lot of enabling, we enable a lot of poor behaviour when we try to find cultural outs for basic questions of common decency and good conduct....if kids fought or swore at each other or at teachers they were removed from the school for a period of time. It was a very hard line, but I think that kids are quick

> studies, and they will adhere to whatever line you draw. If you want to have learning going on in an institution you need to have order. If you have swearing and fighting and disrespect and kids running around - it's not to say that kids can't have fun at school, I think they should have a great time - but they should have a great time feeling safe and secure and knowing that they're not going to get, you know, biffed in the back of the head or their books knocked out of their hands...any of those kinds of aggressive behaviours, I think they should be dealt with just like they'd be dealt with in any other school in Canada, and that is, totally unacceptable. Whatever consequences a principal wants to put in place, whatever works...there needs to be consequences for bad behaviour. (O:17)

I asked this participant whether educators try to understand bad behaviour by looking at possible cultural influences, or whether he has experienced educators justifying a lack of response to bad behaviour by blaming cultural influences?

> Well, I mean, dealing with discipline in a very firm way carries with it some potentially very large costs. You have to face the parents, you have to face the community, you have to face the DEA, all sorts of negative or potentially negative responses, and so the cycle goes like this. The teacher tries to employ codes of conduct and common decency, runs up against one or two of these incidents, is so shattered and shaken by them, that they erode their own standards. You do that over a period of a year or two and suddenly you're comfortable with a class that's completely crazy. (O:18)

It may be that suspension draws the anger of Inuit because it seems to skip over the steps in traditional strategies of maintaining harmony, ending with the second worst, ostracization. A zero tolerance policy, reported by one participant, invokes suspension for teasing, which is a traditionally used socialization practice. This would seem to confuse traditional modes of discipline to an even greater degree. It is interesting to note, however, that this policy was developed by an elected District Education Authority, a point I will return to later.

Another discipline related non-adaptation is the Kigavik House Behaviour Management Program. It is a non-adaptation in that it is a transplanted Southern system, though it in fact could also be considered an adaptation. It is an alternative to suspension for disruptive students, and therefore adapts the Euro-Canadian practice of suspension towards the reported wishes of some Inuit parents. It provides a smaller group size than the classroom, which is more consistent with traditional Inuit education, and it also met with DEA approval.

One participant described sending students to Kigavik House to learn one skill, such as 'not throwing desks'. She said that the student would get the same work as the other students, and would have a nearly one on one student-teacher ratio while there, though s/he would miss movies, gym, and other fun class activities. Once the student had demonstrated consistent attendance, and had learned the required skill, s/he would be readmitted to the regular class. This participant reported increased attendance and improved learning for her students once two students who were intimidating others had been removed to Kigavik House:

...a non-attender, since the other two were removed he found that he was able to

> attend. He now attends 100%. He was a grade two level, and I'd say he's come around and is bordering on a grade four level, because he's so confident in himself, he knows he's not going to get hurt at school, and that's a big thing. The rest of them, those who had problems last year have really improved because the ones they were scared of are now not there in my class, and that means a lot you know. You have to come to school and be safe.... (DP: 10)

It may be worth considering that the Inuit had evolved ways to settle disputes which were superbly fitted to the environment in which they lived, and which served to maintain harmony within the group. In the foreign environment which is a Euro-Canadian school, might the goal of achieving harmony be worth the price of cultural incongruity, and are there better ways to achieve this? The reader is encouraged to consider Tompkins' (1998) adopted philosophy of "Catching 'Em Being Good", and the discipline policy which followed from it (p. 137). This policy represents a different approach to discipline, was reported to be successful, and could also be considered as a non-adaptation to Inuit culture, since praise and acknowledgement were not traditionally used in Inuit education (Stairs, 1994).

Three participants mentioned the use of rewards for motivation. One described her system as "a complicated point system, but it absolutely works" (PP:8). She detailed how students would earn stars for listening to instructions, remembering things they had learned, or "just did something good because they wanted to do it". For every two stars earned, the student's name would go on the board, and on "Friday they get a candy for every star they get" (PP:8). The reasoning behind the system is that: "I found that unless there's a real challenge that they can see that is concrete in front of them, they won't work" (PP:8). This participant also called praise 'number one in teaching'.

Stairs (1994) claimed that in a traditional Inuit concept of education "direct praise and rewards for accomplishment are rare" (p. 67). Crago, Eriks-Brophy, Pesco and McAlpine (1997) wrote that when praise occurs in Inuit teachers' classrooms in northern Quebec, it is almost always directed to the whole group and not individuals. Henze and Vanett (1993) pointed out that vast conflict can ensue when students are exposed to conflicting values, such as rewards for motivation in schools, which, they wrote, was in complete contrast to traditional ways. Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996), on the other hand, said that children "were praised for their progress" (p. 14). It may be relevant that Inuit students are thought to be more present-oriented than Southern students (Clifton & Roberts, 1988), while Euro-Canadian schools are future-oriented (Clifton & Roberts, 1988; Stairs, 1991). In the past, mistakes were more critical for Inuit children than they are in a "protected learning situation" (Stairs, 1991, p. 282), which might serve to prevent students from attempting things they don't feel confident with. Thus, while extrinsic rewards may not be culturally congruent, they may help to increase student performance by providing the 'something concrete' that Inuit youth would traditionally have had as they learned through authentic tasks and received immediate feedback from their environments (Stairs, 1991). Whether this increased performance is worth the cultural incongruity, is an open question.

## 4.6 Adaptations to the ESL Environment, and Sound Pedagogy

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Table 4.6 Adaptations to the ESL Environment, and Sound Pedagogy

-don't assign too much work or work not at students' level
-student support teacher used to help students who are far behind*
-Kigavik House used as quite place to work*
-modify things to meet class where they're at
-do something different every day to keep school exciting*
-make food available to supplement breakfast/soup program ("you can't teach a hungry child")*
-choose vocabulary carefully
-use more repetition
-avoid too much teacher talk
-limit higher level questioning*
-analyse stories for easier things like plot/character*
-read aloud to class, go back to explain words
-use three novels concurrently for different student abilities*
-do things in small steps/ scaffold
-give model test first, then follow format exactly*
-prepare for Departmentals by giving and explaining questions from past exams*
-explain things more to students
-relate WWI history to local examples*
-one rule, "be kind to each other"*
-focus on reading/writing
-adjust expectations
-create own path through curriculum
-use curriculum as source of ideas and resource for teacher
-focus on developing language
-teach grammar (to overcome first language interferences)
-adjust curriculum to meet students' needs
-enhancements from Nunavut Highschool Project to help with course delivery*
-enrichment activities at lunch hour, including school paper*
-teachers go to PD, then come back and give workshop*
-principals supported by the board through meetings, tele-conferences, and allowing input*
-staff supported by principal encouraging openness/input*
-staff supported by principal through letters of recognition*
-cumulative files provide outline of material covered*
-choosing principal from staff led to smooth transition*

-conferences put on by people here usually best, for example by principal of a bilingual school*
-desired: teaching vocabulary and grammar
-desired: high-interest, low skills curriculum
-desired: ESL curricula
-desired: look to northern Quebec for ESL sensitive curricula*
-desired: get continuity between design/ resources/ implementation/ inservicing and follow-up
-desired: resources for curriculum development
-desired: change Departmental Exam timing to fit school year*
-desired: a new school*
-desired: government decision standardizing written Inuktitut*
-desired: more staff to reduce class size*
-desired: more staff for student support*
-desired: more staff to run more programs*
-desired: hire second language specialists*
-desired: hire translators for each class to help Southern teachers determined how much is being understood*
-desired: more flexibility in scheduling*
-desired: shorter day/longer recess*
-desired: more planning time for teams*
-desired: structures which support teacher collaboration*
-desired: educate Southern hires to ESL nature of job so they do not think the students are unintelligent
-desired: ESL/culture orientation by longtime Northern teacher
-desired: more money to bring people up or fly out*
-desired: increased Internet bandwidth*
-desired: more money for team travel*
-desired: more flexibility in the PD conference year*
-desired: ESL training
-desired: 'SRA-like' readers with relevant stories/questions*
-desired: dictionaries, encyclopaedia, atlases, computers*

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An educator said:

> They call their Skidoos 'machines' or 'Skidoos'. I used the word 'snowmobile' one day and one of my brightest students said, 'what's a snowmobile?'....You have to modify things and you have to meet your class where they are and try to get them along from there. If you're coming in expecting to meet them at a

> regular grade two level or grade five level or grade seven level, then you're just going to be butting your head against the wall all year, and wasting their time and wasting your time, and making them develop into all kinds of behaviour problems that happen in junior high, 'cause they're just completely out of their league in what they're able to do. (DP:9)

The most common types of adaptations reported by participants do not directly move the schools toward Inuit culture, but often reflect the reality of Northern schools as (primarily) ESL schools, and schools where educators try to improve their students' learning and well-being using their "teacher radar" (Paradise, 1994). The pedagogy quoted above, to 'meet the students where they are at', may seem like a truism, but will in reality take courage to employ in situations where initial expectations are far different from 'reality' (Kawagely, 1995), and in the absence of legitimization in policy. Tompkins (1998) noted that misjudging students' language and cognitive abilities, aiming work 'too high' or 'too low', and consequently facing severe discipline problems, is a common problem of Southern teachers in Northern schools (p. 96).

Many teachers expressed frustration at the inadequacy of curriculum, resources, and training for them as educators in an ESL environment. They named a number of strategies which are primarily teaching ESL strategies, but which sometimes coincide with traditional Inuit cultural practice. Repetition, speaking slowly, speaking less, choosing vocabulary carefully, explaining more thoroughly, reading out loud to the class, scaffolding, and teaching grammar were all mentioned.

Stairs (1994) wrote that in indigenous teachers' classrooms there is "more efficient use of talk-less elaboration and thinking out loud" (p. 68). Inuuqatigiit noted that "short, verbal instructions were used" in traditional Inuit education, that children learn in small steps, and that repetition is important (p. 14). The NWT LASCE (1982) report declared that reading aloud and giving time for students to read were two of the most important classroom activities (p. 100). The participant who mentioned teaching grammar acknowledged that it has fallen out of favour to do so in the south. Delpit (1995), however, supported the usefulness of teaching with this approach when students don't have a home environment which familiarizes them with the unstated rules of standard English discourse.

"I think what I need is probably a little help on ESL, because I started to teach like I was teaching in the South and it's not possible" (PPD:5). The NWT LASCE (1982) report recommended that funding be made available for the development of ESL programs, resources, and to increase the number of professional development days to provide in-service ESL training (p. 19). The report warned that few teachers had any training in teaching ESL, that resources had primarily been intended for EFL speakers, and that "teaching English, and only English, as if it were a Native child's first language is detrimental to learning" (p. 97). Participants' views seem to suggest that little has changed in the past twenty years:

> I was not prepared for what I found when I came up here, and that was basically that these students are being treated as if they don't speak Inuktitut as a first language. Right now I'm being paid to teach English Language Arts - what I'm doing is creating my own path as I go through this curriculum....they've

> introduced the new curriculum this year, the WELA program, and there's no recognition whatsoever that these kids speak Inuktitut....I cannot follow the curriculum, they just can't do it. (CP:11)

The NWT LASCE report went on to state that if teachers are untrained in ESL, they "may mistakenly regard some children as retarded and in need of remedial work" (p. 98). Sharp (1994) echoed the concern that indigenous people are labelled as "handicapped" by dominant culture teachers who don't realize that the problem is of an ESL nature (p. 10), a concern expressed by one participant in this study:

> We really have to stress to teachers who come up to our community, these are ESL students, they don't speak in English as their first language and they're not dumb, it's just that you have to realize that English is their second language, so you have to explain to them a little bit more for them to understand. (PDD:10)

The NWT LASCE (1982) report also stated that "teachers of every subject must, in some sense, be regarded as teachers of English as a second language" (p. 98). This sentiment was also expressed by a participant:

> You know I have a grade 5 health and a grade 5 social studies [curriculum]; I may look at that and get ideas from it, but I certainly cannot teach the concepts, they simply don't have the vocabulary....you can use ideas from health and science and social studies as sort of springboards from which to teach the English. Whether you teach sentence structure using a story about a little bird or whether you are developing English using science ideas, that's really secondary to making sure whether you're teaching English, social studies, health or

whatever, that your main focus is the development of the language. (CP:13)

Corson (1992), however, cautioned that a prime focus on literacy can serve as a disincentive to minority language learners. Freeman et al. (1994) and Shearwood (1987) noted resistence to literacy, or at least western essayist literacy, in some indigenous cultures. Van Meenen (1994) wrote that ESL materials were created for use in Eastern Arctic classrooms, and yet many participants commented on their total absence. If such ESL materials or programs exist, many participants in this study were not aware of it.

Another area mentioned by several participants as important in the success of certain students, was participation in extra-curricular sports. The ability to travel to sporting events is hampered by the cost of flying in the North, and one participant wished additional funds were available to give more students this opportunity. One described returning students as being "upbeat and positive", and said that the privilege of travelling is tied to class expectations. He said that "struggling students get a boost", and that teacher involvement as chaperones and coaches means that teachers get the benefit of the doubt from the community later, "in a crunch" (DP:38). Another described students who were 'on the fringe' before becoming involved in sports and travelling to a competition. Now "they feel good about themselves and the other kids see them as leaders now...now they have the one thing that makes them feel good about school" (DP:39).

Some of the strategies named here are valuable for their potential to increase student performance or well-being. For the most part, they will achieve this without aligning the school or classroom more closely with Inuit culture. Other examples of adaptations to the traditional 'transmission' style of Euro-Canadian education, currently recommended for use in the South and found in the literature but not in this study, include experiential learning, inquiry learning, and authentic or 'real-life' context learning (Leavitt, 1991; Stairs, 1994; Kawagely, 1995).

## 4.7 Adaptations to the Effects of Cultural Dissonance

Table 4.7 Adaptations to the Effects of Cultural Dissonance

-counsellor helps with problems coming from the home
-non-academic Monday morning program to ease students back after potentially traumatic weekend
-breakfast served before school*
-soup served after morning recess*
-desired: hire child psychologist
-desired: identify learning disabilities*
-desired: spend more time making kids feel safe*
-desired: throw away curriculum and help students feel good about themselves first
-desired: better implementation of the soup program
-desired: ability streaming should start earlier to compensate for students with learning difficulties
-desired: social services to train school staff about dealing with problems/effects of abuse, etc.
-desired: speech and language therapist*
-desired: more staff for special projects*

An educator said:

> ...because so many children come off horrendous weekends with drinking and abuse, or witnessing it if they are not part of it themselves, and so Monday mornings from 9 o'clock until 10:20 ...everybody in the school took a small group, and it was from grades 1 to 4, all integrated. Some kids square danced,

> some did butterflies, some did beadmaking, all different things. Some did drama. They just loved that time, and it gave them a time when they could come in and just feel safe and not have to think about anything academic, just do something fun...we never, ever had any discipline problems during that time. (PP:34)

Several participants described or desired changes that would help the schools deal with the effects on students of problems in their homes. Communities everywhere have problems in varying degrees, but in the Eastern Arctic some problems seem acute as Inuit struggle with the radical changes in their life circumstances which have taken place since contact with Southerners and Southern culture. Witt (1998) blamed the education system itself for some of the problems in indigenous communities:

> The tendency to devalue Native culture by grounding the education in a framework that gives preference to western values will weaken self-esteem instead of promoting it. Emphasis on western structures and values in the education system offered to Native people has now had the effect that the violence done to Native people is sometimes continued by Native people themselves raised to fit into western society. (p. 269)

The participant quoted above described a program to help children ease back into the school environment. Several voices called for the discarding of the present curriculum:

> ...there's too many children in the North...that need to have their hearts fixed before you can start working on their brains. They just come in and they shut right down the minute they come in because they know they're safe here, and a

> lot of their time at home they're not safe. And I think we have to accept that and we have to throw away the curriculum and not, you know, say you have to have an hour of science every day. You have to get the kids feeling good about themselves...because they're incapable of learning a lot of them, anything, because they're going through such unbelievable things at home....we have to teach to the students not the curriculum. (CP:6)

One participant, worried about the high incidence of fetal alcohol syndrome, called for streaming, and another called for early streaming:

> I think we need to start streaming early. I mean it's no secret, right off the bat in kindergarten you can see which ones need extra help, and I think if they're put with regular stream kids, none of them benefit, they're all being lost.... (SD:6)

The involvement of social services was desired by one educator, to help the school deal with issues such as alcohol problems and abuse of children within the community (SD:9), while another participant wished to get access to a child psychologist to help the school in dealing with behaviour problems which might be rooted in problems in the child's home (SD:10). Following Cummins (1988) work, it would be imperative that professionals were specialists in Inuit culture and ESL environments, to avoid prescriptive measures which might be based on misinterpretation, and which might be harmful to the students. Using a school counsellor to help students was another strategy in use at one school.

Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez (1992) noted a tendency for teachers to have misconceptions about working class students' households. In Northern settings, where there is generally little contact between Southern teachers and the households of their students, beliefs about the nature and the extent of problems in the home might in some cases be exaggerated. Following Crago's work (1992) analysing discourse patterns, it is also possible that the 'shutting down' of some students upon their return to school Monday morning may in part be a cultural phenomenon, which helps the student deal with the discontinuity between their home and school environments. Nonetheless, participants asked for help, and reported success with initiatives to help students make the transition from school to home. Hanze and Vanett (1993) reported social problems in small Alaskan villages with similar histories of colonization, and cited alcohol, drug and suicide problems as stemming from changes brought by Western influences.

# CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Along with a great variety of strategies to increase the performance and well-being of students, some prominent pictures emerged from this research. While the former may immediately be used by teachers and principals looking to increase student performance and well-being, the latter suggest directions to move in at all levels to address the same goals. These are presented as recommendations.

## 5.1 Community Ownership of Schools

Perhaps the most significant finding was the narrowing of the gap between school and community which was described by one participant. The presence of many Inuit teachers was said to have changed the relationship of the community to the school. This is reason for great optimism. That community members were included in the creation of curriculum for that school's cultural inclusion program, and that this program was consciously structured using Inuit pedagogy, is also encouraging, especially in light of the participant's perception that the program was extremely successful.

More study would be valuable to assess whether community members feel more ownership of the school following these changes. One way to approach this would be through a longitudinal study of one of the more salient indicators of parental support, such as the problems of attendance, lateness, and students arriving at school tired. These were reported to be problematic in the school, despite the community's greater feeling of ownership. As the dramatic increase in the number of Inuit staff was a recent event, it may be that support for the school, manifested in increased parental concern about attendance, lateness, and tiredness, and a resultant improvement in these indicators, will experience a time-lag, and will be noticed at a later date.

Attempting to measure a community's perception of its own agency in this way, may, however, be dangerous for two reasons. First, in communities with high unemployment rates, where family life is not organized around a waged job, these indicators may not reflect parental support to the same extent as they would in other settings (personal communication with Joanne Tompkins, May 1st, 2001). Second, as these indicators represent Southern values, it may be possible that parental support of the school could increase without any significant change in these indicators. It may be more helpful to engage other methods of determining the extent to which the community in question feels greater ownership of the school.

## 5.2 Lack of Community Consultation

Few participants reported initiatives intended to involve the communities in helping to set the direction of the schools. In light of colonial history, the desirability of Inuit controlling Inuit education, and literature suggesting the necessity of community support for student success (Darder, 1991, Ogbu, 1992), this is a cause for concern. That elected DEAs have considerable control over the schools, yet were not reported as spearheading efforts to contextualize the schools, deserves further exploration.

Regardless of the mechanisms at work here, be they colonial legacy, the lack of a valid process, or the Inuit tendency to defer to authority, it would seem prudent to investigate the processes by which the Yup'ik in one area of Alaska, and the Inuit of northern Quebec have pursued greater community involvement and control, through the AOTE and *Satuigiarniq* processes (Barnhardt, 1999; Armstrong et al., 1997). Lipka's work with the Ciulistet, involving indigenous teacher groups in consultation with community Elders, should also be examined (Lipka & Ilutsik, 1996; Lipka & McCarty, 1993). Of interest would be follow-up studies, which attempt to determine if community involvement in negotiating the direction of the schools in those regions had resulted in greater parental support of the schools, and increased student performance, as hoped.

The true involvement of Inuit in setting the agenda for Northern schools might result in 'schooling' which looks very different from the current model. Some of the current stakeholders' roles might be diminished or even discontinued if a model based on Inuit values was created. At this time in history, when a predominantly Inuit government has recently assumed control in the territory, the conditions may be conducive to making radical changes, if these are indicated. These prescriptions, however, are unlikely to come from processes initiated or controlled by stakeholders who have vested interests in the continuance of the system as it now exists. They should, therefore, come from the ministry level, and include consultation with all those who are or will be involved in the process of change.

## 5.3 Participant Awareness of Cultural Issues

A finding that bodes well for the future was that Southern participants recognized that problems arise from the clash between school and Inuit cultures. Whether they responded by trying to move the parents' beliefs toward valuing school culture, or by moving their own practice toward Inuit ways, the awareness and desire to help children learn and succeed was strongly and often eloquently expressed. The soil in which the seeds of larger change will be able to take root, may therefore be fertile.

If a path of meaningful community consultation is pursued, current educators and administrators will need to be ready, as mentioned previously, for the possibility of extreme change. They will need to be able to live without neat, prepackaged solutions, and will need to "possess a high tolerance for ambiguity" (Kawagely, 1993, p. 161). It is my belief that participants in this study have, by and large, already accepted uncertainty and a move away from pat solutions, as evidenced by their own divergences from Southern norms in trying to teach effectively. Thus, at least some of the current Southern teaching complement will be assets in the change process.

Philips (1983) expressed concern that teachers were too busy to create the changes needed for successful bicultural education. This study found that many teachers are nevertheless actively involved in creating change, and will be assets in the change process. In trying to generalize this finding, however, caution is in order due to the potential bias introduced by the participant selection process, toward those supportive of change. One educator, when introduced to the study, said, "I'm not sure that we should change", and did not volunteer to be interviewed. Thus, while this study found teachers who are and will be supportive of change, it cannot be assumed that all educators share this goal.

Teacher attitudes are crucial in any attempt to change systems (Postman & Weingartner, 1969). In bicultural education, the attitudes of the dominant-culture teachers are perhaps even more crucial than they ordinarily would be. Reflection on one's own values and beliefs, and an openness to other cultures, are prerequisite for respectful teaching in bicultural settings (Darder, 1991, Tompkins, 1998). I recommend that hiring policies for teachers and principals follow Kawagely's guidelines (1993, pp. 161, 162), as well as Tompkins' criteria, in both cases prioritizing attitudes over academic qualifications. In this way 'the system' will become staffed with educators more able to work together, be flexible, accept, and facilitate positive change.

This recommendation, of course, flows largely from my 'Southern analysis'. It is entirely possible that Inuit might decide, for example, on a two-way schooling model, and desire only Southerners with high academic qualifications to staff the Southern domain, and only the most respected Inuit elders to staff the Inuit domain. Without negotiating the direction of the schools with the communities, this recommendation remains an outsider's work.

## 5.4 The Need for an Orientation and Inservicing

Another clear picture which emerged from the study was that many educators don't feel that they have all the tools that they require to do their jobs well. The lack of an orientation to Inuit culture, the lack of appropriate curricula and relevant resources, and the lack of training for teaching ESL students were all cited repeatedly. In some ways it seems strange that it should be this way. Some participants reported the creation of curricula and resources, as well as ESL materials. Where are they? The inadequate preparation of teachers for Northern teaching assignments and the consequent necessity of an orientation to Inuit culture and appropriate teaching is a theme which has been repeated many times in the literature. Why is there no orientation of this type?

Perhaps the latter is a question of resources. It has been suggested that communities may not want to invest time and energy in showing Southerners their culture when they know that most Southerners only stay for a year or two. Perhaps the school boards or their current day equivalents don't feel that money will be well spent on an orientation for the same reason. It seems likely, though, that this investment would pay off in reducing teacher turnover (which saves a lot of money), as well as by increasing teacher effectiveness, student learning, and well-being on both sides. I strongly recommend that an orientation period and inservicing to prepare and support Southern teachers for their work in schools with ESL Inuit students be instituted. Properly programmed, these would become selling features for potential teachers from the South, many of whom are interested in teaching in the North for the experience of learning about a different culture.

In the current climate of teacher shortages in the South, it would appear likely that well qualified Southern teachers will be even harder to find for Northern schools than they have been in the past. The draw of an orientation and ongoing support, while likely to attract more appropriate candidates, will also serve to compensate for the probable lack of extensive multicultural and ESL training in applicants' backgrounds. Inservicing is also imperative in order to address the frustrations of educators who currently teach in the North, but who feel that they are less effective than they would like to be.

An immediate impediment to expanded orientation and professional development activities is cost. Several models could be considered to minimize cost and maximize benefit from these programs. For new hires, I do not believe that it would be unreasonable to require that they arrive in their communities one week before the start of school to take part in cultural activities and learning about Inuit culture. Upon being hired, they could be provided with textual or visual resources to begin their orientation, so that they would arrive primed with basic knowledge. Some of the activities would be led by Inuit, some perhaps by seasoned teachers or administrators (Inuit or non-Inuit), and a portion of the week by an itinerant consultant specializing in ESL Inuit education. New teachers could be encouraged to bring a parent, friend, or partner to take part, thereby emphasizing the rewarding nature of the process.

Another model might see all new hires meeting for a week of activities together on the land in the central hubs of their respective regions. This would simplify the involvement of the consultant, and would serve to forge relationships between starting teachers which could later be facilitated through tele-conferences or Internet meetings, supported by release time. The differing start dates of schools in different communities might complicate this model.

Inservicing will be needed to support these brief orientations. A program of ongoing inservicing will be more effective than one-time events (Spillane, 1999). A part of the cost of inservicing stems from the need to free-up teachers to take part, and the payment of specialists to instruct. A suggested response to this is the approach taken by Tompkins (1998) in approaching the DEA for early closures. Stairs (1991) reported an Inuk's idea to run the Southern school for half days, leaving more time for students to learn of their own culture outside of school times. By committing to frequent half-day closures, the DEA would be supporting all educators' needs to learn more about the special environment in which they teach. This time could be used by students for cultural or other activities. My experience with grade seven students was that they enjoyed the free time realized by early closures, but were generally sorry when the school closed for whole days.

During these inservices, staffs could draw on the strengths of their members for learning about Inuit culture, and successful teaching strategies. School operations centres and the Ministry of Education could support staff efforts of this nature by providing itinerant consultants with extensive ESL or Northern experience to lead inservicing, or they could send staff members South, to Alaska, to northern Quebec, or to other communities with the intention that they return to teach their peers. The strategy of insevicing by a staff member who has travelled to a conference was already reported as being in use in one community. The involvement of Southern and Inuit staff, working together in meaningful ways, could benefit all and increase the staff's sense of being part of a team.

In an age of budget cuts and under funding, effective orientation and inservicing are too important to neglect, if the goal of bicultural education is to be realized. Creativity may go a long way toward reducing costs, but, ultimately, capital will be required. This should be a priority.

## 5.5 Curriculum and Resources

Many participants were unsatisfied with the lack of availability of relevant, culturally sensitive curriculua, both in Inuktitut, and of an ESL nature in English. Many related the necessity of heavily modifying curriculum, as well as creating their own curricula and resources.

Where are the resources that could help teachers cope with bicultural ESL classrooms? Ten months ago I was told of a booklet called Promising practices: Ideas that work in Inuit classrooms. When I was in the communities to do interviews for this study, I asked many people if they had a copy for me to look at. No one had heard of the booklet. Three months ago I called the Nunavut Ministry of Education, Culture and Employment to ask where I could get the booklet. No one knew of its existence. This leads me to believe that the creation and existence of quality resources means little if there are no effective mechanisms in place to distribute them and ensure that educators are aware of their existence. Ideally, resources would be coupled with effective inservicing, and each school would maintain a library of theoretical materials relevant to bicultural education in Northern settings. This could include some of the materials referenced in this thesis.

Along with orientation and inservicing to increase the understanding of effective ways to teach in ESL Inuit environments, and along with resources to further these goals, a major emphasis on the development of culturally and ESL sensitive curricula and resources in both languages should be undertaken. As a teacher in Nunavut, I used to wonder why structures weren't in place to facilitate the sharing of teacher-generated resources within schools and regions. Since most of what I used I had either created myself, heavily modified, or borrowed from colleagues who had created it, and since I knew immediately if it had been a success or a failure, it seemed sad to think of isolated educators across Nunavut reinventing wheels that could effectively be shared for the benefit of all. I propose, then, that concurrent with ministry and board level efforts for curriculum and resource development, that release time be provided to all educators who apply for it for the purpose of polishing their best resources. These would then be sent to a publishing centre, catalogued, reproduced, and made available to all educators in Nunavut. Thus, a resource base would grow which was created and tested at relatively low cost at a grassroots level. The ready availability of relevant Northern ideas would reduce time spent searching for and modifying currently available resources, and would allow all educators to draw on the strengths and successes of all who chose to participate.

Ultimately, the best path to follow with respect to curriculum and resources will depend on the direction set for the schools through the consultative process. If, for instance, the transmission of Inuit values became a priority, then Inuit curricula and resources, as well, perhaps, as English language curricula and resources, would need to reflect that goal.

## 5.6 Best Practice Methods

Many educators shared strategies that were predominantly ESL or 'best practice' strategies. This can serve to remind us that much of what is currently considered good pedagogy for dominant-culture classrooms often resonates with current prescriptions for minority-culture classrooms:

> We know that students learn best when new ideas are connected to what they already know and have experienced, when they are actively engaged in applying and testing their knowledge to real-world problems, when their learning is organized around clear goals with lots of practice in reaching them, and when they can use their own interests and strengths as springboards for learning...We also know that expert teachers use knowledge about children and their learning to fashion lessons that connect ideas to students' experiences. (Darling-Hammond, 1998, cited in Barnhardt, 1999, p. 101)

I recommend that along with exploring ways to make teaching more compatible with Inuit culture, educators continue to pursue 'best practise' growth. Teachers, as they broaden their knowledge of "new" educational trends such as cooperative learning and experiential education, may increase student well-being and performance. Simultaneously, many of these practices may move classrooms towards Inuit culture, although Lipka and Mohatt (1998) cautioned that, for example, Southern 'cooperative learning' is not identical to the way indigenous people may use group work. Administrators, working as Tompkins (1998) did to improve her school through the application of current leadership theory, will similarly reap performance benefits, as well as creating conditions in which human interactions become more valued. This type of school culture will invariably be more responsive to student needs, a likely precursor to any significant changes toward culturally compatible education.

In the best case, communities would be integrally involved in considering the application of 'best practice' methods. In the event that all educators become more aware of issues involved in bicultural education, through orientation and inservicing, in the absence of community consultation they will still be better able to assess the potential impacts of these methods on their students, and thus able to make more informed choices about whether or not to implement them.

### 5.7 Educators Taking Risks

Another picture that crystallized from the data was one of educators discarding curriculum (as well as modifying it) in preference for meeting their students' needs. This, as noted earlier, takes courage in a system that is driven by measurement and expectations, when no explicit policy structures were reported which support such divergences. Teachers, too, can be creatures of habit. Kawagely reported that "my own early teaching showed the same proclivity to conformity to the way I was taught" (1995, p. 100). Many of the educators in this study were able to 'break out of the box' of standard teaching practice, to their great credit. I recommend that teachers be officially encouraged to respond flexibly to student needs instead of to status quo ideas about what school should be.

Tompkins (1998) wrote that "the teachers who were really trying to meet the kids where they were at were...in the swampy ground" (p. 121), by which she meant away from the safety of applying abstract rules to decide courses of action, in a place where much more judgement had to be exercised, and where mistakes were made. She felt that this was essential, and supported her staff by noticing the positive changes, and sometimes bending the rules. This willingness to risk, and the ability of administrators to be supportive and open, were found in this study, and are signs of hope for positive change.

Cummins (1988) noted that individual educators who challenge the status quo of institutionalized racism, by, for example, allowing more student interaction, risk censure from mainstream educators. I recommend that policy statements be drafted at the ministry and 'board' levels, which encourage principals and teachers to be flexible and creative, and to exercise their professional judgement in prioritizing the meeting of student's needs.

## 5.8 Inuit teachers

While a process begins to solicit community involvement in the direction of the schools, sponsored at the board or ministry level, I believe it is necessary to immediately recognize the potential of Inuit teachers to transform schools toward Inuit culture, and to take schools toward community acceptance. In order to do so, they need to be supported in remaining Inuit in their communication of Inuit values, and their ways of interacting with students. This should remain the case until or unless communities decide that they should adopt Southern ways.

Part of this support will involve educating Southern educators to be aware of cultural differences which they may (mis)perceive as ineffective teaching or lack of control in the classroom. The creation of teamwork amongst staff would help greatly in this process. Providing Inuit teachers with the opportunity to meet together in a forum to discuss common concerns and successes, would also help to facilitate their growth and confidence. Special inservicing which seeks to inform Inuit teachers about the role that other indigenous teacher groups are playing in reconceptualizing schooling (Lipka & McCarty, 1994), would help to empower Inuit teachers, and encourage them to remain Inuit in the foreign environment of the schools.

Finally, Inuit educators should be asked how they view their roles in the schools and communities, and what they need to be effective as Inuit educators. The burden placed on Inuit educators as bridges between Euro-Canadian school culture and community culture must be recognized. As members of both the school and the community, it seems likely that Inuit educators will figure prominently in the process of consultation which needs to take place in determining the direction of schooling in the communities.

# CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

I began this study looking for adaptations of Euro-Canadian Schools *to* Inuit culture. The language I used during the interviews, if a participant was confused, was to ask "what is done differently here than it would be in the South, to better 'fit' the school to the students and their culture?" My assumption, in asking, was that people would describe ways in which the schools had changed *toward* Inuit culture.

There is a subtle but important difference in the words *to* and *toward*. Adaptations of Euro-Canadian schools *to* Inuit culture tells nothing about the direction of the change, only that a response has been made. Consciously creating a demanding classroom atmosphere, for example, would be a response *to* Inuit students' reported passivity, but would move away from cultural congruence (Clifton & Roberts, 1988). On the other hand, adaptations of Euro-Canadian schools *toward* Inuit culture will include only those things which make the two cultures more congruent.

I began the study without this distinction being clear. I believe that is fortunate, in that if I had only found and reported on adaptations *toward* Inuit culture, I would have missed a great number of strategies which were reported as effective in increasing student performance or well-being within the Euro-Canadian school model. As it seems likely that the current model will not quickly be changed, some of these strategies might have immediate application for Nunavut educators. These strategies, however, are not enough, and they will need to be used cautiously and conciously. What is needed is negotiation of the direction of schooling (Kawagely, 1995; Lipka, 1989; Lipka & Stairs, 1994; Ogbu, 1992; Stairs, 1994), a true move *toward* Inuit control and therefore *toward* present day Inuit culture. As discussed earlier, if the people in the communities do not feel that they have some control, that they are in important ways stakeholders in the schools, it is extremely unlikely that they will support the values and goals of the schools. Without this support it is unlikely that their students will succeed (Ogbu, 1992).

With the recent advent of Nunavut and a new Ministry of Education, the time for changes which would support the forging of links between school and community has arrived. Looking to the processes for encouraging community involvement in Alaska and northern Quebec is indicated (Armstrong, Bennet & Grenier, 1997; Barnhardt, 1999). Once community partnership in directing the schools has been forged, educators will have the mandate to chose adaptations that further the goals which will have been set together. This might mean consciously choosing strategies which are opposed to traditional Inuit culture, or ones which are congruent with it. Either way, when the decisions are made by and with Inuit, Inuitisation of the schools will have taken place.

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# APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

What changes have been made at the classroom, school, and board levels, to help the school better 'fit' the community?

- in curriculum?
- in scheduling?
- in discipline?
- in teaching strategies?
- in community/school contact?
- in structure?
- in professional development?

What changes would you like to see made at the classroom, school, and board levels, to help the school better 'fit' the community?

- in curriculum?
- in scheduling?
- in discipline?
- in teaching strategies?
- in community/school contact?
- in structure?
- in professional development?

# APPENDIX B: FINDINGS SUMMARY

| Issue/Topic | 'Adaptation' |
|---|---|
| Discipline: Current Adaptations | |
| Different Expectations: | -pursue positive parental contact<br>-empathy (when dealing with parents) |
| Discipline as an Academic Problem | -don't assign too much work or work not at students' level<br>-must motivate students<br>-student support teacher used to help students who are far behind<br>-Kigavik House used as quite place to work<br>-modify thing to meet class where they're at<br>-Kigavik House as an alternative to suspension for disruptive students |
| Lateness and Poor Attendance | -flexible scheduling (may continue highschool 'module' in next semester/ school year<br>-always have something for occasional attenders to do<br>-do something different every day to keep school exciting<br>-work in student-driven review every day<br>-copy notes from board and number handouts for absent students<br>-draw once/month to reward those who arrive on time<br>-students 'Excused' rather than 'Absent' when on land<br>-schedule most academic work in 1st two semesters, seasonal/ outside units for the spring<br>-start day relaxed academically, and welcoming<br>-send students to a room to think about lateness<br>-remove students until next semester if they have no possibility of passing a course due to attendance/lateness |
| Tiredness | -10pm siren to remind parents/ students to go to bed<br>-let students sleep on floor |
| General | -Elders in during afternoon to counsel students/ be a presence in halls |

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| | -make food available to supplement breakfast/soup program ("you can't teach a hungry child")<br>-code of conduct emphasizing respect and safety<br>-detentions/ suspensions<br>-students returning from suspensions get counselling<br>-lots of physical education<br>-opportunity to travel through sports<br>-incorporate Inuit ways of discipline like one-on - one<br>-zero tolerance policy for teasing and fighting<br>-one rule, "be kind to each other"<br>-separate noisy students<br>-counsellor to help with problems coming from the home<br>-inviting parents into school to motivate problem child<br>-student writes letter of intention to behave<br>-plan lots of hands-on activities |
| Discipline: Desired | |
| General | -learn what Inuit teachers do<br>-support 'problem students' with program<br>-implement evening classes to replace missed classes<br>-hire child psychologist<br>-identify learning disabilities<br>-implement consequences for bad behaviour |
| Pedagogy: Current Adaptations | |
| Relevant Resources | -use materials students can relate to<br>-use Inuit literature<br>-use of Inuit Elder author as role model |
| ESL | -choose vocabulary carefully<br>-use more repetition<br>-avoid too much teacher talk<br>-limit higher level questioning<br>-analyse stories for easier things like plot/character<br>-read aloud to class, go back to explain words<br>-use three novels concurrently for different student abilities<br>-do things in small steps/ scaffold<br>-give model test first, then follow format exactly<br>-prepare for Departmentals by giving and explaining |

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| | verbatim questions<br>-explain things more to students |
| General | -reward system for motivating students<br>-pacing with students (change activity every 10 to 15 minutes)<br>-bring food into class and eat/talk together<br>-retain students with poor English skills or very poor attendance<br>-non-academic Monday morning program to ease students back after potentially traumatic weekend<br>-reading program one-on-one with business/government volunteers<br>-homework to put responsibility onto parents<br>-homework to develop student responsibility<br>-less structured, more workshop-like activities<br>-teaching to use basic supplies<br>-establish rapport and acceptability of making mistakes<br>-relate WW1 history to local examples |
| Pedagogy: Desired | |
| General | -teaching vocabulary and grammar<br>-develop homework responsibility early (school is part of life)<br>-spend more time making kids feel safe<br>-give more opportunity for motion, and going outside |
| Curriculum: Current Adaptations | |
| Northernizing Content | -revamping Social Studies 10 as Geography of Nunavut<br>-year plans showing connection to Inuuqatigiit expected<br>-funds available for guides/Elders to support |
| Inuuqatigiit | -themes run from Inuuqatigiit<br>-focus on reading/writing<br>-curriculum documents 'northernized' in Yellowknife<br>-adjust curriculum to meet students' needs<br>-use Inuit games in physical education program<br>-use cultural activities in physical education program, with local assistance and teacher as |

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| | facilitator |
| Academic Adjustments | -adjust expectations<br>-create own path through curriculum<br>-use curriculum as source of ideas and resource for teacher<br>-focus on developing language<br>-teach grammar (to overcome first language interferences) |
| Culture Programs | -caribou hunt with Inuktitut teacher and guide<br>-1 to 11/2 hours/week culture program, class split along gender lines, talk about and make traditional things<br>-small group culture program with community developed curriculum<br>-culture program through CTS courses; small, following seasonal activities |
| General | -enhancements from Nunavut Highschool Project to help with course delivery<br>-enrichment activities at lunch hour, including school paper |
| Curriculum: Desired | |
| Curricula in Inuktitut | -equivalent to WELA in Inuktitut<br>-more Inuktitut curricula (reduce planning time, help attract Inuit teachers, help increase rigour of instruction) |
| Culturally Sensitive Curricula | -more Inuit content<br>-develop own curriculum (don't buy from Alberta)<br>-focus on local things, include distant things in a sensitive way to broaden perspectives<br>-Nunavut content<br>-high-interest, low skills curriculum<br>-curriculum sensitive to students' backgrounds |
| ESL Curricula | -ESL curricula<br>-look to northern Quebec for ESL sensitive curricula<br>-local participation in curriculum development of bilingual educators |
| Implementation/Design | -get continuity between design/resources/implementation/inservicing and follow-up<br>-classroom teachers to design curriculum<br>-resources for curriculum development |

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|---|---|
| Departmental Exams | -change timing to fit school year<br>-replace sections with more relevant sections<br>-create Departmental for Northern students (Southern can then be challenged if desired)<br>-'Access Program' like in northern Quebec to prepare students for post-secondary education, instead of exams<br>-equivalency rating like between countries instead of exams |
| Self-Esteem Curriculum | -throw away curriculum and help students feel good about themselves first |

Structure: Current Adaptations

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|---|---|
| Language Streams | -Inuktitut immersion to and including grade 3<br>-choice of Inuktitut or English immersion in primary grades |
| Inuktitut Instruction | -grades 4-12 get just under or just over one hour of Inuktitut language arts instruction each day |
| Ability Streaming | -grade 2,3,4 ability streamed for language lessons (English and Inuktitut) |
| Breakfast/Soup Program | -breakfast served before school<br>-soup served after morning recess |
| Timing | -students expected to take extra years before graduation<br>-grade 7/8 program designed to be 3 years, the further grade 10 prep year available<br>-in grade ten offer 16, then 13, then 10 level courses so students repeat grade level but not course |
| Other | -co-ordinator at board level to support Inuit teachers<br>- District Education Authority helped with discipline policy<br>-principals supported by the board through meetings, tele-conferences, and allowing input<br>-staff supported by principal encouraging openness/input<br>-staff supported by principal through letters of recognition<br>-cumulative files provide outline of material covered<br>-basic resources provided for students<br>-photos of Elders and Inuktitut writing on walls<br>-choosing principal from staff led to smooth transition |

### Structure: Desired

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|---|---|
| Language Streams | -Inuktitut stream should last longer<br>-English should start earlier |
| Ability Streaming | -should start earlier |
| Other | -pre-school program to prepare students for school structure<br>-social services to train school staff about dealing with problems/effects of abuse, etc.<br>-a new school<br>-better implementation of the soup program<br>-'Access program'<br>-building which reflects Inuit culture<br>-government decision standardizing written |
| Inuktitut | |

### Staffing: Current Adaptations

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|---|---|
| Northern Teacher Education Program(NTEP) | -NTEP to get more Inuit into teaching<br>-NTEP graduates paired with southern teachers for planning support |
| Inuit Teachers | -many Inuit teachers has positive impact |
| Other | -resource person collects, translates, and transforms resources<br>-staff involvement in community creates balance<br>-staff stability due in part to communications technology<br>-guides/Elders hired to support land trips and cultural activities |

### Staffing: Desired

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|---|---|
| NTEP | -raise standards of those accepted<br>-lengthen program from two years<br>-focus more on assessment |
| Inuit Staff | -get more Inuit teachers for senior high<br>-get more Inuit teachers as role models<br>-increase pay and improve working conditions to attract more Inuit teachers<br>-more Southern trained Inuit teachers for the primary grades |
| More Staff | -to reduce class size<br>-for student support<br>-child psychologist/ speech and language therapist |

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| | -for special projects<br>-to run more programs |
| Other | -increase guide wage<br>-develop coaching locally<br>-encourage highschool teachers to use more Elders in their classes<br>-hire a full-time bilingual resource person<br>-hire second language specialists<br>-hire translators for each class to help Southern teachers determined how much is being understood |
| Schedule: Current Adaptations | |
| General | -school year shifted to accommodate spring camping/goose hunting<br>-early dismissals once/month to team plan (made up in evening contact time)<br>-school opens early to accommodate working parents |
| Schedule: Desired | |
| General | -more flexibility<br>-shorter day/longer recess<br>-more planning time for teams<br>-structures which support teacher collaboration |
| Professional Development: Current Adaptations | |
| Structure and Flexibility | -two years individual choice, one year regional conference<br>-almost automatic PD approval |
| Descriptions | -conferences put on by people here usually best<br>-teachers go to PD, then come back and give workshop<br>-studying Inuktitut<br>-scientific conferences<br>-Elders used to translate books |
| Professional Development: Desired | |
| Orientation | -one week cultural orientation<br>-one day cultural orientation<br>-educate Southern hires to ESL nature of job so the do not think the students are unintelligent |

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| | -ESL/culture orientation by longtime Northern teacher |
| General | -more money to bring people up or fly out<br>-more flexibility in the conference year<br>-English upgrading opportunities for Inuit staff<br>-ESL training<br>-inservice to 'reach these kids'<br>-look at other communities and emulate successes<br>-training in assessment and standards |
| Community/School Contact: Current Adaptations | |
| General | -parental contact to prevent prejudice<br>-ice cream social at start of year (positive contact)<br>-phone calls when problems arise<br>-parents in for lunch/activities/checking about concerns they might have<br>-school activity nights ('Just mom and me'/'Just me and my Dad')<br>-curriculum night early in year to meet and discuss expectations<br>-contact through school teams/activities<br>-school building used by community<br>-notes sent home by teacher<br>-parents invited in at any time<br>-Inuit teachers go on radio to inform community about 'what's happening'<br>-parent teacher interviews evolved to include student with portfolio of her/his work |
| Community/School Contact: Desired | |
| General | -more parental involvement<br>-more assemblies |
| Teacher/Student Relationship: Current Adaptations | |
| General | -first name basis<br>-feeling of being part of same team<br>-physical contact (pushed in snow by student)<br>-given more freedom and responsibility |
| Teacher/Student Relationship: Desired | |

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|---|---|
| General | -don't force student to do something |

Resources: Current Adaptations

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| General | -basic resources provided<br>-great physical resources |

Resources: Desired

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|---|---|
| General | -dictionaries, encyclopaedia, atlases, computers<br>-increased Internet bandwidth<br>-'SRA-like' readers with relevant stories/questions<br>-more money for team travel |