Culturally Appropriate Education
Theoretical and Practical Implications

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> *In every school, in every learning community, we can and will find stories of success, if we look for them. We must focus on accomplishment and achievement, we must be tolerant of each other's differences, and we must learn to share our stories from all of our different perspectives. When we do, we will discover that we all have inside of us the mana–the spiritual power, the wisdom of our ancestors—that can guide us to help ignite our students' and our own passion for learning, living, and teaching. This can be hard work. There are no shortcuts. But, by doing this, we will enhance our students' connections to themselves, their families, their communities, and their world. We must learn to talk-story with each other in ways that tap into that part of us, that energy and excitement that looks for the best in us and each other, and then build our educational strategies from that wisdom.* (Culture-Based Education Working Group, 2006, p. 32)

This chapter presents background information and rationale for culturally appropriate education along with some South Asian examples. In the changed national, regional, and global contexts, the concept of culturally appropriate education is drawing much more attention of educationists in curricular reforms all across the globe. The concept has become even more prevalent after the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was adopted by the United Nations' General Assembly in 2007.

Realizing the importance of providing children with a linguistically and culturally appropriate education, UNESCO published *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education* in 1953. In the report's introduction the authors declare, "It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue" (p. 11) and in its general statement, they conclude,

> On educational grounds we recommend that the mother tongue be extended to as late a stage in education as possible. In particular pupils should begin their schooling through the medium of the mother tongue, because they understand it best and because to begin their school life in the mother tongue will make the break between home and school as small as possible.
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> We consider that the shock which the young child undergoes in passing from his home to his school life is so great that everything possible should be done to soften it....
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> The use of the mother tongue will promote better understanding between the home and the school when the child is taught in the language of the home. (pp. 47-48)

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Since then the concept of culturally appropriate education has been debated at both national and international levels. However, it gained greater importance in the 1990s when the need for a new pedagogy was realized by educators to take into account cultural factors and responses arising from with increased levels of cultural diversity in North America, Europe, and elsewhere. Teachers face new challenges of educating children who come from a multiplicity of cultural backgrounds. In addition, the importation of Western educational theories and practices into other parts of the world create new challenges for teachers (Nguyen, Terlouw & Pilot, 2006). In this regard, it is important to note that UNESCO has also reiterated its stand on the use of culturally appropriate educational materials in a 2003 position paper (see Appendix A on p. 38). As it is stated under its principle three, "Education should raise 'awareness of the positive value of cultural [and linguistic] diversity' and to this end: 'curriculum [should be reformed] to promote a realistic and positive inclusion of the minority [or indigenous] history, culture, language and identity" (UNESCO, 2003, p. 33).

Elwyn Thomas (1997), referring to the new challenges that educators face in this highly globalized word, identified two major tasks for educators: (1) to decide what the key elements are in the process of globalization that are likely to affect education and schooling, and to assess which of these elements can be used as part of the core strategy for curriculum planning in schools and teacher training and (2) to decide and deal with the social mores–the fabric of a cultural niche, with teaching and learning that should be more culturally sensitive. This second task is related to the concept of "culturally appropriate pedagogy," a pedagogy that focuses on educational competence in a global context, and which deals with the cultural context of learners and teachers. It is worthy of note that there are many other terms used to denote this type of pedagogy including: Culturally responsive, culturally respective, culture-sensitive, culturally-rooted, culturally relevant, and culturally congruent (Campbell, 1997; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1992, 1994; Yamauchi, 2005). Notwithstanding the differing terms, the underlying assumption is the same–respect for multi-ethnic knowledge, skills, and cultural diversity in educational practices.

Citing the definition of culture by English anthropologist, Edward B. Tylor, "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1924/1871, p. 1), Young Pai (1990) writes:

> Education is an intentional attempt to pass on such a complex whole because it is the design by which cultural contents are transmitted from one generation to another…the structure of educational system, the role of the school, and the teacher-learner relationships reflect the social organization and cultural norms of the society…no part of educative process, neither its contents nor products, is free from cultural influence. (p. 4)

Therefore, it is imperative that educators should acknowledge the fact that teaching and learning processes are entrenched by the core values, beliefs, and attitudes as well as the predominant cognitive and communication styles and linguistic patterns of a culture. Moreover, educational practices (formal and informal) are equally influenced by the socioeconomic status of the learner, peer pressures, the nature of the relationships between dominant and minority groups, and the impact of technology on the society.

Theoretical and philosophical perspectives

As noted in UNESCO's *The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education* (1953) there is strong evidence that the use of children's mother tongue in school will develop a good home-school relationship and relieve students from psychological shock and give them the best opportunity to express their ideas and communicate well if the classroom environment (Cummins, 2000). Too often formal education systems ignore and underutilize the knowledge and experience that ethnic minority children bring to school. Advocates of bilingual education argue that learning in a language which is not one's own exerts extra pressure for children, not only is there the challenge of learning a new language but also that of learning new knowledge and skills. As a result, children find it difficult to cope with the challenges that emerge from the so-called standard language of instruction, which ultimately can alienate them (Banks & Banks, 2010; Gay, 2010; Nieto, 2010; Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar, 2010). Similarly, some scholars have underscored that the role of resistance to cultures of domination in student disaffection from school learning is a fundamental issue in public education in the US, Canada, Australia, Britain, and the rest of Europe (see Banks & Banks, 2010, p. 46).

Children obviously understand their first language best and are most comfortable speaking it. Eventually, education in school can become a burden for them when they have to learn a new language of instruction. McAlpine and Crago (1995) argue that conflict between classroom culture and home culture may make it difficult for children to participate in class or force children to deny their family and heritage in order to succeed in a culturally alien school. That is why successful pedagogy requires that teachers become culturally literate. That is, they must work towards understanding to the best of their ability the culture and home backgrounds of their students. It has been established that culture-based misunderstandings can create tensions between teachers and students. As Lars Anders-Baer, et al. (2008) write:

> The dominant language medium of education prevents access to education because of the linguistic, pedagogical and psychological barriers it creates...most indigenous peoples and minorities have to accept *subtractive* education where they learn a dominant language *at the cost of the mother tongue* which is displaced, and later often replaced by the dominant language. (pp. 3-4, emphasis in original)

According to Jacqueline Jordan Irvine (1990):

> African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, as well as some poor and working-class white students often bring to the school setting a distinctive set of cultural values, beliefs, and norms that is often incongruous with middle-class cultural norms and behaviors of schools. (p.7)

Emphasizing the importance of culturally responsive education to bridge the gap between home and school, she states that when students perceive that the school setting is hostile and incongruous, or when there is a cultural mismatch or cultural incompatibility between students and their school, there inevitable occurs miscommunication; confrontations between the student, the teacher, and the home, leading to hostility, alienation, diminished self-esteem, and eventual school failure. Similarly, referring to the gap between home languages of children and the language of instruction in Nepal, Skutnabb-Kangas and Dunbar (2010) state that "it would therefore be appropriate to educate the children in their mother tongue in order to make the break between home and school as small as possible" (p. 51).

What is culturally appropriate education?

A culturally appropriate education melds instruction to better fit the expectations and cultural patterns of the group being served. The group's language, culture, and its worldview are built into the routines, curriculum, and structure of the school. Apart from improving learning achievement of students, culturally appropriate education is a way to perpetuate and build pride in the students' home culture (Ah-Nee Benham & Cooper, 2000; Cajete, 1994; Cantoni, 1998; Fordham, 1998; McCarty, 2003).

By defining culture as shared ways of being, knowing, and doing, Shawn Kana'iaupuni (2007) argues that culture-based education is the grounding of instruction and student learning in the values, norms, knowledge, beliefs, practices, experiences, and language that are the foundation of a culture. Furthermore, because U.S. society typically views schools through a Western lens—where Western culture is the norm—what many do not recognize is that all educational systems and institutions are culture-based. According to Kana'iaupuni there are five basic elements that comprise culture-based education:

- **LANGUAGE:** Recognizing and using native or heritage language.
- **FAMILY & COMMUNITY:** Actively involving family and community in the development of curricula, everyday learning, and leadership.
- **CONTEXT:** Structuring the school and the classroom in culturally-appropriate ways.
- **CONTENT:** Making learning meaningful and relevant through culturally grounded content and assessment.

- **DATA & ACCOUNTABILITY:** Gathering and maintaining data using various methods to insure student progress in culturally responsible ways. (2007, p. 1)

However, these five elements vary from context to context, depending on cultural ways of being, knowing, and doing. Likewise, Geneva Gay (2010, pp. 31-32) identifies five characteristics of culturally responsive teaching: (a) the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum; (b) bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities; (c) a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles; (d) students to know and praise their own and each others' cultural heritages; and (e) multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools. She further emphasizes that by using these characteristics to improve culturally responsive teaching, would involve considerations to the classroom environment. For example, literature in the classroom would reflect multiple ethnic perspectives and literary genres. Math instruction would incorporate everyday-life concepts, such as economics, employment, and consumer habits of various ethnic groups. In order to teach to the different learning styles of students, activities would reflect a variety of sensory opportunities–visual, auditory and tactile.

The Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN) highlights specific standards to ensure culturally appropriate education practices in their *Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools*. The preface states:

> These "cultural standards" are predicated on the belief that a firm grounding in the heritage language and culture indigenous to a particular place is a fundamental prerequisite for the development of culturally-healthy students and communities associated with that place, and thus is an essential ingredient for identifying the appropriate qualities and practices associated with culturally-responsive educators, curriculum and schools. (ANKN, 1998, p. 2)

The ANKN lists specific standards for schools, curriculum, educators, students and communities for sustaining culturally responsive education practices (see Appendix B on page 40). Similarly, Castagno and Brayboy write:

> The curricular and pedagogical strategies are important, but we suggest that they might become even more powerful and meaningful for Indigenous youth and tribal communities if they were explored and analyzed within the context of sovereignty and self-determination, racism, and Indigenous epistemologies. Without a tight connection to these three themes, culturally responsive curricular and pedagogical efforts will continue to provide only surface-level and compartmental-

> ized opportunities for Indigenous students to see themselves and their communities in schools. Curricula and pedagogy developed with a deep understanding of sovereignty and self-determination, racism, and Indigenous epistemologies will be far more powerful in their ability to provide good schooling to Indigenous youth. These elements—particularly the first and last–are what set CRS for Indigenous youth apart from other educational efforts. (2008, p. 969)

Why do we need culturally appropriate education?

As previously stated, the concept of culturally appropriate education is not new. The importance of the cultural background of students was recognized in the *Meriam Report* in 1928 in the US, in which the recognition of Native American's different world view and incorporation of their traditions, cultures and epistemologies in education were emphasized. The report noted:

> It is true in all education, but especially in the education of people situated as are the American Indians, that methods must be adapted to individual abilities, interests, and needs. A standard course of study, routine classroom methods, traditional types of schools, even if they were adequately supplied—and they are not—would not solve the problem. The methods of the average public school in the United States cannot safely be taken over bodily and applied to Indian education. Indian tribes and individual Indians within the tribes vary so much that a standard content and method of education, no matter how carefully they might be prepared, would be worse than futile. (Meriam et al., p. 347)

Referring to the different world view and perspectives of American Indians, in that report it was stated:

> it is the task of education to help the Indian, not by assuming that he is fundamentally different, but that he is a human being very much like the rest of us, with a cultural background quite worthwhile for its own sake and as a basis for changes needed in adjusting to modern life. Moreover, it is essential for those in charge of education for the Indian to remember that the Indians' attitudes towards society have been determined largely by his experiences, and that these can, wherever necessary, be changed to desirable social attitudes by exposing him to a corresponding set of right experiences in the relationships of home, family, and community life. (Meriam et al., 1928 p. 354)

Referring to the current United States situation, James and Cherry Banks (2010) note that education in the U.S. is not a single, uniform system that is available to every child in the same way. Children of different social classes are likely to attend different types of schools, to receive different types of instruction, to study different curricula, and to leave school at different rates and times.

As a result, when children end their schooling, they differ more than when they entered, and society may use these differences to legitimate adult inequalities. If we understand better how schools can help construct inequalities, we may be in a better position to try to change them.

Today's classrooms require teachers to educate students varying in culture, language, abilities, and many other characteristics (Gollnick & Chinn, 2002). For Irvine (1990), some female students of color and poor white students have ways of doing and knowing that often conflict with and sometimes are even antithetical to the ways in which schools expect them act and know. Thus, to increase student success, it is imperative for teachers help student to bridge the discontinuity between home and school cultures and contexts (Allen & Boykin, 1992). In other words, a culturally responsive instructional environment minimizes the students' alienation as they attempt to adjust to the different "world" of school (Heath, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Likewise, Skutnabb-Kangas et al. (2009) state, "Marginalized peoples who undergo culturally and linguistically appropriate education are better equipped both to maintain and develop their cultures and to participate in the wider society" (p. xvii). Culturally responsive teaching is empowering because it enables students to be better human beings and more successful learners.

Empowerment can be described as academic competence, self-efficacy, and personal initiative. For this, students should believe that they can succeed in learning tasks and have motivation to persevere, while teachers should demonstrate high and appropriate expectations and provide support for students in their efforts toward academic achievement (Gay, 2010). In this context, it is worth referring to Ira Shor who characterizes empowering education as critical-democratic pedagogy for self and social change:

> It is a student-centered program for multicultural democracy in school and society. It approaches individual growth as an active, cooperative, and social process, because the self and society create each other. The goals of this pedagogy are to relate personal growth to public life, to develop strong skills, academic knowledge, habits of inquiry, and critical curiosity about society, power, inequality, and change. (1992, pp. 15-16)

For example, Kaiwi and Kahumoku (2006) found that the introduction of a Native Hawaiian approach to analyze literature by acknowledging and validating students' perspectives empowered them. They concluded that students showed a sustained connection to ancestors, greater appreciation for parents and grandparents, and an increased desire to learn.

For some, culturally responsive teaching is also liberating in that it guides students in understanding that no single version of "truth" is total and permanent. For this, teachers make authentic knowledge about different ethnic groups accessible to students. Geneva Gay (2010) states, "The validation, information, and pride" that culturally appropriate pedagogy "generates are both psychologically

and intellectually liberating" (p. 37). This freedom results in improved achievement of many kinds, including increased concentration on academic learning tasks, such as clear and insightful thinking; more caring, concerned, and humane interpersonal skills; better understanding of interconnections among individual, local, national, ethnic, global, and human identities; and acceptance of knowledge as something to be continuously shared, critiqued, revised, and renewed.

It is worthwhile to note that culturally relevant education is also viewed by many as a way to achieve political power and independence. For instance, Mahatma Gandhi when he led the Indian Independent Movement in 1930s used the notion of culturally appropriate education as an alternative to the British educational system, which was also known as Macaulay's education system, (Mehta, 1976). Launching the movement against the British in 1938, Mahatma Gandhi advocated the inclusion of practical knowledge and cottage skills such as, traditional weaving, also known as Charkha Andolan, and agriculture into the Basic Education, by laying stress on integrating education with work experience through "down-to earth" vernaculars (mother-tongues/local lingua francas) and language acquisition with communicability (Khubchandani, 2008, p. 371).

Later, in 1960s, Julius Nyerere applied the same model of culture-based education in Tanzania immediately after its independence. Nyerere is famous for his "Education for Self Reliance" philosophy in which he emphasized the need for mother-tongue education in the local language, Kiswahili. In 1967 Kiswahili was made the sole language of instruction for primary education, and it was planned to extend in secondary education as well. The focus of the program was to establish settlements and allow people to access water, electricity and schools more easily. The Ujamma family villages were to be governed by those living in them, and Kiswahili was made the language of instruction for all seven years of primary schooling. Birgit Brock-Utne (2008) argues that President Julius Nyrere implemented the education policy in Tanzania that revived the Kiswahili language and developed it into a national language, which flourishes today, even beyond Tanzania's borders.

Even today in the U.S., some Native American writers and activists suggest that one key to the regeneration of the political power of their people and culture lies in a reorganization of political structures and educational systems to reflect indigenous knowledge, ways of learning, and ways of being (Alfred, 1999, 2005). Moreover, culturally responsive teaching does not confine to traditional educational practices, but rather it appreciates the cultures and experiences of various groups and also uses them as resources for teaching and learning. For example, the verbal creativity and story-telling that is unique among some African Americans in informal social interactions should be acknowledged as a gift and contribution and used to teach writing skills. Similarly, other ethnic groups of students prefer to study in small groups. Thus, more opportunities for them and other students to participate in cooperative learning can be provided in the classroom. Highlighting the importance of culturally appropriate education, Bowers and Flinders (1990) state, "it is imperative to ground pedagogical practices, as well as curricular decisions, in a more culturally informed manner."

However, they also underscore the fact that not all cultural groups value the same forms of knowledge, and the fact that they "reflect differences in cultural views of reality, brings into the open the political nature of the teacher's role" (p. 27). On the other hand, Peter McLaren noting the work of Henry Giroux highlights the problems that teachers are facing now:

> As cultural sites, schools are contested terrains in which different values, conventions, and knowledges variously intersect, juxtapose, and exclude one another. Teachers and others interested in education must understand how the dominant culture of all levels of schooling functions to disconfirm and, less frequently, to legitimate or celebrate the cultural experiences of students who inhibit subordinate cultures. (1989, p. 200)

Likewise, Etta Hollins (1996) contends that education designed specifically for students of color incorporates culturally mediated cognition, culturally appropriate social situations for learning, and culturally valued knowledge in curriculum content (p. 13), and James Banks (1991) argues that if education is to empower marginalized groups, it must be transformative. For him, being transformative involves helping students to develop the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become social critics who can make reflective decisions and implement their decisions in effective personal, social, political, and economic action.

How to make school culturally appropriate?

For culturally appropriate education, Romaine (2009) has emphasized the need for paradigmatic school reforms in terms of its power structures, interaction between teachers and students, culture, curriculum, extracurricular activities, classroom dynamics, evaluation system, and attitude toward minority languages. Similarly, Richards, Brown and Forde state that reforms must occur in three specific areas to make schools culturally appropriate:

1. Organization of the school—this includes the administrative structure and the way it relates to diversity, and the use of physical space in planning schools and arranging classrooms.
2. School policies and procedures—this refers to those policies and practices that impact on the delivery of services to students from diverse backgrounds.
3. Community involvement—this is concerned with the institutional approach to community involvement in which families and communities are expected to find ways to become involved in the school. (2006, p. 5)

The culture of learning that students and teachers bring to the classroom is a taken-for-granted framework of expectations, attitudes, values, and beliefs about what constitutes good learning (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996, 1999). It is acquired in early socialization patterns and through the internalization of roles and expectations

that students learn at school. It influences a teacher long before he/she was a student and becomes a framework of cultural interpretation that is unconsciously employed in later teaching methods.

In this respect, Erasmus and Ferreira (2002, p. 34) suggest that "teachers in a multicultural school system should be able to meet the needs of learners from pre-industrial, modern and post-modern environments as well as from different cultural, socio-economic and historic-political backgrounds." In this regard, they suggest that it "is as imperative that educators should possess the necessary interpersonal and professional skills" to deal with multicultural challenges. It is clear that the complexity of culturally appropriate education requires relevant teacher education. In other words, the pivotal role of teacher educators in addressing the challenges of diversity should become more forefront than ever before. On the other hand, some scholars have emphasized the need for community involvement in sustainable culturally appropriate education practices. For them, tribal members, elders, parents, and other adults need to be invited in culturally appropriate ways to take active roles in the development of culture-based education initiatives, programs, and school policies and generally should be viewed as equal partners and collaborators in the schooling of their children (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Demmert & Towner, 2003).

In this regard, Patricia Schmidt (2005) notes, "Research and practice demonstrate that strong home, school and community connections not only help students make sense of the school curriculum, but also promote literacy development." (p. 3). Citing numerous studies, she lists five major challenges for culturally appropriate education practices in the United States:

1. our school population has become increasingly diverse, both culturally and ethnically, our teaching population has mostly originated from European-American, suburban experiences....
2. most current and future teachers have not had sustained relationships with people from different ethnic, cultural, and lower socioeconomic backgrounds. As a result, much of their knowledge about diversity has been shaped by media stereotypes....
3. School curriculum, methods, and materials usually represent only European-American or white culture and ignore the backgrounds and experiences of students and families from lower socioeconomic levels and different ethnic and cultural backgrounds....
4. Many teacher education programs do not adequately prepare teachers for "culturally relevant pedagogy"....
5. When cultural differences are ignored in classrooms, student fears and alienation increase.... Consequently, this disconnect has become a national problem whose influence has been linked to poor literacy development and extremely high dropout rates among students from urban and rural poverty areas.... (pp. 3-4)

What is culturally appropriate pedagogy?

Culturally appropriate pedagogy recognizes and utilizes the students' culture and language in instruction, and ultimately respects the students' personal and community identities (Irvine, 1992) and comprises three dimensions: 1) institutional—it refers to the administration and its policies and values; 2) personal—refers to the cognitive and emotional processes teachers must engage in to become culturally appropriate; and 3) instructional—includes materials, strategies, and activities that form the basis of instruction (Richards, Brown & Forde, 2006, p.1). Teachers need to be aware of their pedagogy, and for this, they can check whether their pedagogy is culturally appropriate or not by using tools such as the checklist found in Appendix C on page 42.

For Geneva Gay (2010), culturally responsive teaching uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students. In other words, culturally responsive teachers teach the whole child. It means that culturally responsive teachers realize not only the importance of academic achievement, but also the maintaining of cultural identity and heritage. In other words, culturally responsive pedagogy helps students clarify their ethnic values while correcting factual errors about cultural heritage by focusing on those elements of cultural socialization that most directly affect learning. For this, students are held accountable for knowing, thinking, questioning, analyzing, feeling, reflecting, sharing, and acting (Gay, 2010).

Similarly, Gloria Ladson-Billings (1992) views that culturally responsive teachers develop intellectual, social, emotional, and political learning by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Ladson-Billings (1994) studied instruction in elementary classrooms and concluded that students performed like members of an extended family-assisting, supporting and encouraging each other. She also observed that students performed much better when they were part of a more collective effort designed to encourage academic and cultural excellence, expectations were clearly expressed, skills taught, and interpersonal relations were exhibited. By promoting an academic community of learners, teachers responded to the students' need for a sense of belonging, honored their human dignity, and fostered their individual self-concepts. As a result, students got engaged in creating relationships, shared resources, and collaborate among themselves and with the teacher to achieve their common learning goals.

However, Ngai and Allen (2007) argue that "in the past, Native students tended to keep their cultures inside. Now many of them have started to express pride in their heritages and confidence in themselves. They have become more comfortable participating in class and they appear to be happier at school" (p. 9). Likewise, Klump and McNeir (2005) emphasize the dynamic nature of the word "responsiveness," and argued that the ability to acknowledge the unique needs of diverse students, take action to address those needs, and adapt approaches as student needs and demographics change over time are crucial for ensuring culturally appropriate education practices. It means that contrary to traditional

education system, culturally responsive education should be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of students in curriculum, content, pedagogy and classroom delivery for the given local situations and contexts.

Why do we need culturally appropriate pedagogy?

It is imperative that teachers explore their personal histories and experiences, as well as the history and current experiences of their students and their families. It means that with knowledge comes understanding of self and others, and greater appreciation of differences. That is why teachers should recognize their "power" and use it wisely in teaching other people's children (Delpit, 1988). Teachers should demonstrate understanding and support for their learners and create a bridge where the curriculum falls short in addressing the needs of all students, and where the system reflects cultural and linguistic insensitivity. For this, teachers need to be culturally responsive, utilizing materials and examples, engaging in practices, and demonstrating values that include rather than exclude students from different backgrounds. Lisa Delpit writes:

> Appropriate education for poor children and children of color can only be devised in consultation with adults who share their culture…members of poor communities must be allowed to participate fully in the discussion of what kind of instruction is in their children's best interest. Good liberal intentions are not enough. (Delpit, 1988, p. 296)

It is important to note that sometimes teachers develop their own ethnocentric attitude towards students of a particular ethnic group and treat them differently, based on stereotyping. In this regards, Pai and Adler (2001, p. 271) have cited an incident when a teacher gave a D on a well written English essay of an Asian American student because of his/her preconceived notion that Asian students cannot be competent writer in English. When the father of the student asked the teacher to explain the reasons for giving a D on the essay to his daughter, the teacher responded, "I thought that someone else had written the paper for her because, being an Asian, I assumed that she would naturally have problems in writing an English essay." This is an eye opening example of stereotyping, since this type of attitude still persists in academia in the US, and other parts of the world. Citing this example, Pai and Adler (2001, p. 171) emphasize the need for educators to be cognizant about other cultural beliefs and practices. As they write:

> It is essential for educators to know how or at what point the values held by the various ethnic groups may come into conflict with school goals. For example, schools reward students for individual competence, achievements, and involvement…. Navajos are said to prize group harmony and hence conformity to the group norm…a Navajo child may be helped to learn function differently in school and in the Navajo community.

Alienating students from their ethnicities and cultural practices diminishes the chances of ever being fully realized their achievement potentiality. Pai (1990, p. 229) categorically emphasizes for cultural awareness of teachers, writing:

> Our goals, how we teach, what we teach, how we relate to children and each other are rooted in the norms of our culture. Our society's predominant worldview and cultural norms are so deeply ingrained in how we educate children that we seldom think about the possibility that there may be other different but equally legitimate and effective approached to teaching and learning. In a society with as much sociocultural and racial diversity as the United States, the lack of this wonderment about alternative ways often results in unequal education and social injustice.

Geneva Gay (2010, p. 36) emphasizes the need for respecting students' diverse cultural backgrounds and ethnic identities, along with academic success in responsive pedagogy, writing,

> Culturally responsive teaching makes academic success a non-negotiable mandate for all students and an accessible goal. It does not pit academic success and cultural affiliation against each other, rather both are developed simultaneously, so that students are obligated to be productive members of and render service to their respective ethnic communities as well as to the national society.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) contend that teachers' values impact relationships with students and their families and that teachers must modify negative feelings towards any cultures, languages, or ethnic groups they may have. Santoro and Allard (2005) carried out a study in Australia to assess the role of social class and ethnicity in learning achievement of children. They explored how student-teachers understand their own ethnicity and social class and how they address the needs of students who are ethnically different from the student-teachers. The study's findings underscore the need for teachers to consider their students' ethnicity and culture when planning for teaching. It is imperative for teachers not only to understand how students' ethnicity shapes their learning experiences, but also how a teacher's own ethnicity shapes and determines classroom practices and how he or she categorizes children.

In the fall issue of *Teachers of Color* Sara Smith (2010) responds to the question:

> Cultural diversity should be infused in the classroom and school setting. Yet, many academic institutions and school districts keep this vital aspect of education at the bottom of the priority ladder. What routes can be taken within educational settings in order to "climb" to a higher level of understanding and acceptance? Should action be proposed to

> administrators? If so, what should this entail? Or, should more emphasis be placed on teacher training? (p. 26)

In answer, she cites the importance of culturally responsive teaching at all levels of education in the US:

> Culturally relevant practice is important at all levels of school functioning. The critical issue here is acknowledging and exploring the relationship between culture and learning. Learners and teachers need opportunities to share their cultural ways of knowing and learning, to acknowledge and appreciate the differences, and to reflect on the multiple ways of demonstrating what is known. Learning about the connections between culture and learning helps teachers not only to assist their particular learners in accessing and mastering the school curriculum, but also to broaden their own awareness of the various ways that individuals approach and manipulate content, language and literacy. These understandings are important to administrators, too, so that they can make informed decisions about program, policy and procedure across grades and subject areas. (p. 26)

Schmidt (2005) argues, "to get the most from students, teachers must plan instruction for the diverse populations in their classes and make learning relevant to motivate students to do their best." He further stated that "And what seems more apparent than ever before is that culturally responsive instruction is excellence in teaching – excellence in teaching for successful learning" (pp. 30-31).

Some South Asia examples of culturally appropriate educational practices

Today, the notion of culturally appropriate education is gaining momentum in every nook and corner of the world. In this respect, it is important to note that along with the United States, Australia and New Zealand, Canada did not sign the 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (DRIP) though in 2010 Canada reversed its position. Canada's Director General of the Education Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Line Pare (2004) emphasized at the Paris Indigenous Education in The 21st Century: Executive Seminar the need for promoting culturally appropriate education practices in the world:

> Canada believes that, in the case of Indigenous education, the two concepts of "cultural appropriateness" and "learner centered" approaches lead to the same place: namely, a situation wherein Indigenous children feel safe, welcome and respected and thus ready to learn as much as possible on their terms. Recognizing this, Canada announced a year ago $100 million over five years to create a National Aboriginal Language and Cultural Centre to advance Indigenous languages and culture priorities and interests. (Pare, 2004)

Referring to Canadian experience as a model, he stated:

> If the goal is improved education results for Indigenous students, then some of the key ingredients are: a) increased use of Indigenous languages; b) increased presence of Indigenous teachers; c) increased Indigenous content in curricula; and d) development of innovative ways of delivering Indigenous education services based on an effective mix of Indigenous language, Indigenous role models and Indigenous content. (Pare, 2004)

Here, I would like to present some examples of culturally appropriate education practices with special reference to the South Asian region. It is important to consider the historically diverse contexts of South Asian region when we talk about culturally appropriate education practices. Referring to the multiethnic diversity of the Himalayan region, Mark Turin (2007) wrote:

> The greater Himalayan region, which extends for 3,500 km from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east, sustains over 150 million people and is home to great linguistic diversity and many of Asia's most endangered languages. Moving across the region in alphabetical order, Afghanistan boasts 47 living languages, Bangladesh is home to 39, Bhutan has 24, China 235, India 415, Myanmar 108, Nepal 123, and Pakistan 72. The entire Himalayan region is often described as one of the ten biodiversity 'mega centers' of the world. This stretch of mountainous Asia is also home to one-sixth of all human languages, so the area should be thought of as a linguistic and cultural 'mega centre' as well, and an important site for the common heritage of humanity. (p. 1)

Following are some examples of culturally appropriate education practices, in terms of teacher training of India, teaching materials of Nepal and cultural awareness program of China. In India, the concept of culturally appropriate education practices came into vogue along with its independent movement in the early 1920s and 30s, when Mahatma Gandhi emphasized for inclusion of local knowledge and skills to be incorporated in the place of the then British education system (Mehta, 1976). In 1986 India's *National Policy of Education* recognized the need for culture-based rfuvstion. However, for sustaining the culturally appropriate education practices. Previously, the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) was established in 1979 (see http://ccrtindia.gov.in/). Now, the CCRT functions as an autonomous organization under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Its main thrust is to make students aware of the importance of culture in all development programs by conducting a variety of training programs for in-services teachers, teacher educators, educational administrators and students throughout the country. It conducts a variety of in-service teacher training programs by covering broad areas of interlinking education with culture, for development of the child's personality–particularly

in terms of helping the child to discover his/her latent talent–and to express it creatively. It also conducts various academic programs on Indian art and culture for foreign teachers and students. The center has adopted its motto to develop consciousness of the "Indian Cultural Heritage" through the utilization of local resources and community interaction. As it is stated, "for education to be effective and result-oriented, it has to be culture based, and it must take into account the cognitive, emotional and spiritual needs of the student.... Knowledge of culture plays a prominent role in democratic thinking: a democratic citizen is known for his ability to sift truth from false and he/she is more receptive to new ideas" (The Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, New Delhi. 2010).

A local tribal culture-based education project, Janshala was launched in nine Indian states as a joint program of the Government of India and five United Nations agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO and ILO) for the universalization of primary education among educationally underserved communities. The Program covered nearly three million children, and 58,000 teachers in 18,000 schools. Out of 139 blocks more than 75 blocks had substantial tribal population. The proportion of tribal children was 33% of the total target group children in the project area. However, in a survey study, records collected in schools in the Janshala program areas indicated continuing high "dropout" rates among tribal children. A major reason for that was that in most states the medium of instruction was the regional language. Most tribal children did not understand the textbooks, which were generally in the regional language. The appointment of non-tribal teachers in tribal children's schools was another problem as the teachers did not know the children's language and children did not understand the teacher's (Gautam, 2003).

Recently, the *Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education of India* (2006) has emphasized cultural appropriateness. The framework comprises four clusters of competencies encircled by four supportive themes. It suggests that each teacher is allowed to interpret the framework within his or her context and personal approach to pedagogy. One of the four themes, Context and Culture, identifies factors that must be considered in infusing technology into the teacher education curriculum. This theme includes the use of technology in culturally appropriate ways and the development of respect for multiple cultures and contexts, which need to be taught and modeled by teachers (*Curriculum Framework,* 2006). Likewise, in a project serving 200 schools started in 2007 in the Indian state of Orissa for Indigenous ("tribal") children from ten language groups, students are being taught through their mother tongues in the primary grades with materials collected from children, parents and teachers. Sixteen more languages were added in 2008 (Muthukumaraswamy, 2009, p. 5).

Similarly in China, culture awareness is also stipulated as one of the integrated language capabilities in current reforms in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) national curriculum. China's Ministry of Education in 2003 called for the Basic EFL curriculum to include cultural knowledge, cultural perception and cross-cultural communication awareness and competence (Ministry of Education, China, 2001, 2003 cited in Muir, 2007, p. 39). However, research shows

that educators in the teaching practice have not yet realized this profoundly, or some just mistake speech acts which are embedded in different cultures for culture awareness. However, Nguyen, Terlouw and Pilot (2006) cited an article in *The Economist* ("Roll over Confucius" 25 January 2003) reporting that innovative schools with modern US–Western-based learning are being shunned by parents in favor schools that retain traditional educational methods" (p. 3). In this regard, UNESCO (2010) states, "Linguistic and cultural barriers to education, often combined with geographic isolation, are major factors of exclusion of minority children. UNESCO is advocating for linguistically and culturally appropriate education and the Beijing Office is cerebrating International Mother Language Day in China annually. In China, two UN Joint Projects are being implemented under the UN Spanish MDG Funds supporting the education of ethnic minorities and life skill training for young migrants."

Like its large neighbors, India and China, Nepal has also recognized the importance of culturally appropriate education practices in its diverse sociocultural contexts. In this respect, it is worthwhile to refer to Turin (2007) who states:

> In Nepal, linguistic and cultural identities are closely interwoven, and many of the country's indigenous peoples define themselves in large part according to the language they speak. Language is often used as a symbolic badge of membership in a particular community, and is a prominent emblem of pride in one's social or ethnic identity. (p. 27)

Below are examples of teaching materials from an English textbook that not only help us to comprehend the nature of culturally appropriate education practices, but they also give us some perspectives in terms of various cultural practices of indigenous communities of Nepal:

> In Nepal if you ask someone about Terai festivals they will probably mention Holi or Chhath. But I like Sama Chakewa best. It's a festival which is celebrated in the month of Kartik. When the full moon comes out in the sky, here on earth, women and girls come out of their houses carrying flat baskets on their head in

> which which there are dozens of different birds made of clay, so beautiful and real, they look as if they are ready to fly. Cranes, herons, ducks and many others, among them Sama-Chakewa, the loving birds. And among the birds, there is also a bearded character, called Chugla. Some baskets also contain rice, fruit, flowers and betel. Small dios twinkle in the baskets and the innocent, beautiful faces of the women are reflected in their

light. They ask Sama-Chakewa to give their blessing to their brothers and the sweet notes of their song fill the tranquil night air: D-e-e-p is the river and forceful's the current Sama might be drowned Chakewa is d-y-i-n-g of crying, O God ! Come back Sama, p-l-e-a-s-e....

Have you ever seen Chandi Naach? If you are lucky, you might see it at Tundikhel, Kathmandu. But if you want to experience its real flavor, you have to go to the eastern hills of Nepal. It's a festival which is celebrated by Rai people on Baishakh Purnima. They celebrate it with the help of their priests who perform rituals to worship their ancestors. Men and women, old and young, everybody participates and enjoys the occasion. First they form a circle by holding each other's hands. With the beating of the drum people start dancing, at a slow pace in the beginning but faster as the drum beats more quickly. The festival provides an opportunity for young Rai men and women to meet and get to know each other. Their song and dance reflect their simple life.

Possible student activities include:

(a) Write a couple of paragraphs about a festival which is celebrated in your village or town or by your community.

(b) Write a letter to your pen friend describing any one of the following festivals: Gaura, Christmas, Ramjan, Gaijatra, Chhatha, Losar, Holi, Bhaitika

(Source: *Grade 10 English Textbook*, pp. 60-61, Curriculum Development Centre, Government of Nepal, 2000)

It is important to consider the diverse social and cultural contexts of Nepal, to understand the above given examples of culturally appropriate educational materials for teaching English language to Nepalese students. Basically, Nepal is a small country, but it is very diverse in every respect as there are more than 30 different languages being spoken and so many communities live together in harmony and practice their own cultures and traditions. In other words, culturally, Nepal is a mosaic of many different cultures, languages and religions. The last 2001 Nepal census reported more than 101 ethnic groups, nonetheless, more than 90 % of the nation's population, is Hindu.

Festivals in Nepal generally begin with religion but end as social events. There are more than 50 major festivals by various social groups and ethnic communities celebrate in Nepal, in a year. Although most of these festivals are religious, some have historical significances, and others are seasonal celebrations only. The dates of most festivals are fixed by famous astrologers after consulting the lunar calendar. Popular festivals include Dashain, a celebration of the Hindu Goddess Bhagawati's (Goddess of power) victory over devil, Mahisashur; and

Tihar, a celebration of lights, dedicated to the Hindu Goddess Lakshmi (Goddess of wealth). They fall mostly in the months of September and October. It is not hard to catch colorful processions in different streets of the nation, almost every other day of the week. That is why, it is said that Nepal is a country which is based on "unity in diversity and diversity in unity principle."

It is important to note that cultural acts of dances and songs are integral parts of some celebrations, while some celebrations are just quiet family gatherings. Some of the grand celebrations like Ghode Jatra and Gai Jatra (mostly in Kathmandu valley) entertain participants and spectators every year in the month of July or August. Furthermore, Nepal is also the birthplace of the Lord Gautama Buddha. So the anniversary of the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and death, is observed on the full-moon day in May every year. People celebrate the occasion by paying homage to Lord Buddha. Gai Jatra is an eight-day carnival of dancing, singing, mirth and laughter. The festival usually falls in July or August and as part of the festival family members of (Newar communities) those who died in the past year send people (mostly children) dressed as cows to parade on the streets.

In the contexts of multiethnic communities and cultural diversity, the given examples of English textbook materials (the story of Sama Chakewa is a cultural practice of an indigenous community, Tharu in the Terai region; whereas, the story of Chandi Nach is a cultural practice of another indigenous community, Rai in the hilly region of Eastern part of Nepal) clearly show that how local cultures in the forms of various festivals like Holi, Chhath, Sama-Chakewa, Teej, Chandi Naach and Baisakh Purnima, which are representatives of different ethnic groups of Nepalese societies, are being incorporated to promote culturally appropriate educational practices. However, this does not mean that all cultures are equally represented in teaching materials, which are almost impossible to do. As Geneva Gay writes:

> Responsive teaching requires tapping into a wide range of cultural knowledge, experiences, contributions, and perspectives… to make curriculum and instruction more reflective of and responsive to ethnic diversity. However, every conceivable aspect of an ethnic group's culture is not replicated in the classroom. Nor are the cultures included in the curriculum used only with students from that ethnic group. (2010, p. 34)

It means that culturally appropriate pedagogy aims at generating interests, sense of cooperation, community, and interconnectedness by bringing cultural awareness among students. It is important to note that raising awareness towards Indigenous languages and cultures is crucial in Nepalese contexts. As Turin (2007) warns, "In Nepal, a disturbingly large number of the country's ethnic mother tongues are severely endangered, and will likely be reduced from communicative vernaculars to symbolic identity markers within a generation" (p. 5).

Effectiveness of culturally appropriate education

Referring to the success stories of culturally appropriate education, with reference to American Indian education, Ngai and Allen (2007) state, "Indian education not only increases students' understanding of Montana tribes; it also lays the foundation for continuous development of the intercultural competence required for effective and meaningful participation in our increasingly diverse society and the interconnected world" (p. 12). Similarly, Klump and McNeir (2005) describe some exemplary culturally responsive educational programs for Indigenous youth in the US, including the Russian Mission School in rural Alaska, which integrates Native knowledge with academic standards through a hands-on curriculum centered around subsistence activities indigenous to the local community. Students engage in learning experiences related to real activities that are of high interest to the community and draw on local resources, materials, and knowledge:

> Traditional knowledge is carefully integrated with academic standards. A unit on berry picking, for example, asks students to study and identify five types of berries, learn where those berries are traditionally harvested, and then use the berries to create traditional Yup'ik foods. The berry picking activity incorporates benchmarks from science, health, and personal/social skills standards. Students then demonstrate what they have learned through writing assignments and using technology to create a PowerPoint presentation about making traditional foods. (Klump & McNeir, 2005, p.12)

However, the notion of culturally appropriate education practice is still strongly criticized by some social and political leaders. Despite the diversity of student population in today's schools, students from non-mainstream communities are still expected to adapt to the monolithic Euro-American culture that schools disseminate (Corson, 2001). Although researchers and educators now know more about the intersection of students' background (including language) and schooling, in reality, these students operate from two worldviews and often have two or more cultures to contend with. The gap between these cultures can create tensions and difficulties for students from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, there is an urgent need for accommodating discourse and cultural learning styles, it is an empowering and practical strategy for teachers to show that all their students are equally valued (Egbo, 2001; Erickson, 2001; Ogbu, 1992; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Likewise, Peter Muir (2007) argues that "there is culture-based instruction for high achievement in classroom acquisition of the target culture. It deems the systematic permeation of cross-cultural communication aiming at developing cross-cultural awareness is one of the most effective step toward cultural appropriateness in authentic communication" (p. 38). Referring to the effectiveness of culturally appropriate English language teaching in China, Muir states, "In many investigations, Chinese learners of English have fewer pragmatic failures

when they employ the expressions from the texts to express themselves, but in a different circumstance…they actually don't know how to apply the materials to their daily use" (2007, p. 41).

On the other hand, in a study of Indian schools in the Persian Gulf region, Joshi (2007) found that students in these schools strongly value "peaceful coexistence with people from other cultures" and "pride for the country, the anthem, the flag" as over 90 percent of respondents rated them very high. According to the researcher, responses to "peaceful coexistence with people from other cultures," which received rank one in the study (65% of the respondents strongly agreed). The study also found that 86 percent of respondents stated that students show "respect for elders while interacting," follow "dress culture" (85.0%) and have "awareness and respect for traditional dance and music (83.0%). Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that "In the present day, in any society, there is an urge toward the spirit of coexistence, tolerance, and mutual respect among individuals" (Joshi, 2007).

In their study of "Global Cultural Flows and Pedagogic Dilemmas of Australian teachers" Parlo Singh and Catherine Doherty (2004) found that while most teachers expressed a need to be culturally sensitive or culturally appropriate, the pedagogic strategies articulated in their talk and enacted in classroom practices ranged from acultural technocratic, bald cultural assimilationist, and more tempered compromising approaches (p. 15).

A recent ground-breaking Hawaiian study of culture-based education by the Kamehameha Schools Research and Evaluation Division used survey data from 600 teachers, 2,969 students, and 2,264 parents at 62 participating schools, including conventional public schools, charter schools, schools with Hawaiian-immersion programs, and several private school campuses and found,

> First, culture-based education (CBE) positively impacts student socio-emotional well-being (e.g., identity, self-efficacy, social relationships). Second, enhanced socio-emotional well-being, in turn, positively affects math and reading test scores. Third, CBE is positively related to math and reading test scores for all students, and particularly for those with low socio-emotional development, most notably when supported by overall CBE use within the school. (Kana'iaupuni, Ledward & Jensen, 2010, p. 1)

Conclusion

In the past two decades, significant economic and political changes have occurred all across the globe. Consequently, cross-cultural contact is at an all time high in human history. The identities of all societies are evolving as social and political boundaries are shrinking day-by-day. It is challenging to explore innovative perspectives to educate humankind for future universal citizenship, where global cooperation is the social norm. In an era of globalization, a society that has access to multilingual and multicultural resources is advantaged in its ability to play an important social and economic role on the world stage. The

challenge for educators and policy-makers is to shape the evolution of national and global identity in such a way that the rights of all citizens (including school children) are respected, and the cultural, linguistic, and economic resources of the nation are maximized (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). The issue of how best to deliver just and inclusive educational programs for all students will remain a widely debated issue in contemporary diversified societies. The diversity of children brings challenges to teachers in that there are no easy solutions for catering needs of diverse children. Nevertheless, the diversity children bring to schools enriches the learning environment, both for the teachers and the children. So there is an urgent need for respecting diverse culture and heritage of minorities and immigrants and treating their children with respect and dignity, by giving them a sense of belongingness in the 21st century.

In the end, I would like to quote Lindsey, Roberts and CampbellJones (2005, p. xv) to conclude this chapter:

> Cultural and social diversity is certainly not a new issue facing us as humans. It has always existed, and we remain challenged by it. However, the burgeoning complexity of our times calls upon us as educators to face this challenge more directly, to value diversity, honor it with integrity, and to preserve the cultural dignity of our students.

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Appendix A
UNESCO (2003) Guidelines on Language Education

Principle I

UNESCO supports mother tongue instruction as a means of improving educational quality by building upon the knowledge and experience of the learners and teachers.

(I) Mother tongue instruction is essential for initial instruction and literacy and should 'be extended to as late a stage in education as possible': 'every pupil should begin his [or her] formal education in his [or her] mother tongue'; 'adult illiterates should make their first steps to literacy through their mother tongue, passing on to a second language if they desire and are able'; if a given locality has a variety of languages, ways and means should be sought 'to arrange instruction groups by mother tongue'; 'if mixed groups are unavoidable, instruction should be in the language which gives the least hardship to the bulk of the pupils, and special help should be given those who do not speak the language of instruction'.

(II) 'Literacy can only be maintained if there is an adequate supply of reading material, for adolescents and adults as well as for school children, and for entertainment as well as for study': The production and distribution of teaching materials and learning resources and any other reading materials in mother tongues should be promoted.

(III) With regard to teacher training and mother tongue instruction: 'All educational planning should include at each stage early provision for the training, and further training, of sufficient numbers of fully competent and qualified teachers of the country concerned who are familiar with the life of their people and able to teach in the mother tongue.'

Principle II

UNESCO supports bilingual and/or multilingual education at all levels of education as a means of promoting both social and gender equality and as a key element of linguistically diverse societies.

(I) 'Communication, expression and the capacity to listen and dialogue [should be encouraged], first of all in the mother tongue, then, [if the mother tongue is different from the official or national language,] in the official [or national] language in the country, as well as in one or more foreign languages' through: 'the early acquisition… of a second language in addition to the mother tongue'; the introduction of 'the second language… as a subject of instruction' the amount of which 'should be increased gradually' and which should not become the medium of instruction 'until the pupils are sufficiently familiar with it' 'further education in this second language at primary-school level based on its use as a medium of instruction, thus using two languages for the acquisition of knowledge throughout the school course up to university level; intensive and trans-disciplinary learning of at least a third… language in secondary school, so that when pupils leave school they have a working

knowledge of three languages – which should represent the normal range of practical linguistic skills in the twenty-first century'.

(II) 'International exchanges of primary- and secondary-school teachers [should be promoted] for teaching their subjects in schools in other countries, using their own languages and thus enabling their pupils to acquire both knowledge and linguistic skills'.

(III) Emphasis should be given to the formulation of 'strong national policies designed to promote… language teaching in cyberspace [and the strengthening and extension of] international support and assistance to developing countries to facilitate the development of freely accessible materials on language education in the electronic form and to the enhancement of human capital skills in this area'.

Principle III

UNESCO supports language as an essential component of inter-cultural education in order to encourage understanding between different population groups and ensure respect for fundamental rights.

(I) Measures should be taken 'to eliminate discrimination in education at all levels on the basis of gender, race, language, religion, national origin, age or disability or any other form of discrimination'.

(II) The 'educational rights of persons belonging to … minorities, as well as indigenous peoples' should be fully respected, through: the implementation of 'the right to learn in the mother tongue' and the 'full use of culturally appropriate teaching methods of communication and transmission of knowledge'; the teaching of and through, not only the mother tongue, but also the national or official languages, as well as global languages of communication, so that minority and indigenous peoples have the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the larger community.

(III) Education should raise 'awareness of the positive value of cultural [and linguistic] diversity', and to this end: 'curriculum [should be reformed] to promote a realistic and positive inclusion of the minority [or indigenous] history, culture, language and identity'; the cultural component of language teaching and learning should be strengthened in order to gain a deeper understanding of other cultures; 'languages should not be simple linguistic exercises, but opportunities to reflect on other ways of life, other literatures, other customs'.

From the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 2003 *Education in a multilingual world* (UNESCO Education Position Paper). Paris, France: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, pp. 31-33 with footnotes deleted. Retrieved Dec. 3, 2010 at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001297/129728e.pdf

Appendix B

Cultural Standards (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998)

Cultural Standards for Students

Culturally-knowledgeable students:

1. are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community.
2. are able to build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.
3. are able to actively participate in various cultural environments.
4. are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.
5. demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.

Cultural Standards for Educators

Culturally-responsive educators:

1. incorporate local ways of knowing and teaching in their work.
2. use the local environment and community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of the students.
3. participate in community events and activities in an appropriate and supportive way.
4. work closely with parents to achieve a high level of complementary educational expectations between home and school.
5. recognize the full educational potential of each student and provide the challenges necessary for them to achieve that potential.

Cultural Standards for Curriculum

A culturally-responsive curriculum:

1. reinforces the integrity of the cultural knowledge that students bring with them.
2. recognizes cultural knowledge as part of a living and constantly adapting system that is grounded in the past, but continues to grow through the present and into the future.
3. uses the local language and cultural knowledge as a foundation for the rest of the curriculum.
4. fosters a complementary relationship across knowledge derived from diverse knowledge systems.
5. situates local knowledge and actions in a global context.

Cultural Standards for Schools

A culturally-responsive school:

1. fosters the on-going participation of Elders in all aspects of the schooling process.
2. provides multiple avenues for students to access the learning that is offered, as well as multiple forms of assessment for students to demonstrate what they have learned.
3. provides opportunities for students to learn in and/or about their heritage language.
4. has a high level of involvement of professional staff who are of the same cultural background as the students with whom they are working.
5. consists of facilities that are compatible with the community environment in which they are situated.
6. fosters extensive on-going participation, communication and interaction between school and community personnel.

Cultural Standards for Communities

A culturally-supportive community:

1. incorporates the practice of local cultural traditions in its everyday affairs.
2. nurtures the use of the local heritage language.
3. takes an active role in the education of all its members.
4. nurtures family responsibility, sense of belonging and cultural identity.
5. assists teachers in learning and utilizing local cultural traditions and practices.
6. contributes to all aspects of curriculum design and implementation in the local school.

Adapted from the Alaska Native Knowledge Network's 1998 *Alaska standards for culturally-responsive schools* adopted by the Assembly of Alaska Native Educators. Retrieved Nov. 28, 2010 at http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/publications/standards.html

Appendix C

Culture-Based Education
Checklist for Teachers in Cross-Cultural Schools

	Yes	Some	No
1. Does the culture of my classroom reflect the language and culture of the community?	0	0	0
2. Do instructional materials: • Portray Aboriginal people as diverse peoples with a rich heritage? • Portray Aboriginal people in an authentic way? • Recognize and value contributions of Aboriginal peoples to present Canadian society? • Present positive images of Aboriginal people in contemporary settings? • Receive evaluation for stereotyping, bias, racism and other inaccuracies?	0	0	0
3. Do I use a variety of teaching methods to accommodate the diverse learning styles of my students?	0	0	0
4. Do I encourage students to take pride in their culture?	0	0	0
5. In my classroom, do I observe community celebrations and important cultural events?	0	0	0
6. Do I use community resources (people, materials) when appropriate and possible?	0	0	0
7. Are my evaluation tools sensitive to cultural bias?	0	0	0
8. Do I take time to learn more about community culture?	0	0	0
9. Do the parents of my students feel welcome in my classroom?	0	0	0
10. Do I contact my students' parents with positive messages about their children?	0	0	0
11. Am I aware of the way culture affects styles of communication and ways of interacting with others?	0	0	0

Adapted from Saskatchewan Education's 1995 *Assessment Checklist in the Indian and Metis Staff Development Program*, p. 243. Retrieved from http://www.newteachersnwt.ca/culture_based_education2.html