Non-Indigenous Researchers in Indigenous Education: Listening and Learning

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Acknowledging Territory

- Traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Tsuu T’ina and Stoney Nakota First Nations
- Metis Nation of Alberta, Region III
- Treaty 7
If there is a respectful role for non-Indigenous researchers in Indigenous education research, how might it look?
Where I come from

- Kingston, Peterborough, Calgary, Thunder Bay
- Teacher of Indigenous students (urban)
- PhD student (topic: non-Indigenous teachers’ relational learning in Indigenous education)
- Settler Canadian (English, Irish, Scottish)
- An oppressive research tradition (Kovach, 2009)
- Seeking wisdom and guidance from Indigenous colleagues and community members
Perspective

- Pragmatic approach, question
- Making extrapolations from multiple fields
Plan for this presentation

1) Address several angles on this question from the academic literature

2) Share a personal research example: “circle of advisors” approach
   - seeking feedback from the audience on this approach
Potential roles
(caveat: overlap and extrapolation)

- No role
- Ally
- Mentee/ Directly guided
- Collaborator/ co-researcher
- Accountable through belonging
- Ethical practice
Angles from the literature: No role

Varying perspectives:
- Cole (2006)
- Gkisedtanamoogk (2010)
- G. Smith (1992)

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Angles from the literature: Mentee/ Directly guided

- G. Smith (1992)
- Davis (2010)
If there is a respectful role for non-Indigenous researchers in Indigenous education research, how might it look?

Angles from the literature: Ally

- Bishop (2002)
- St. Denis (2010)
- Simpson (2010)
  - “alliances”

Accountable through belonging

  - Relational accountability (extrapolated from Indigenous context)

- G. Smith (1992)
  - Adoption model

- Cruikshank (1990)
  - Long term engagement, relationship

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Angles from the literature: Collaborator/ Co-researcher

- Haig-Brown (2001)
  - “collaboration”

- Davis (2010)
  - “partners walking side by side” (p. 5)

- L. Smith (1999)
  - “partnership”
Angles from the literature: Ethical Practice

- Tri Council Policy
  - Respectful relationships
  - History calls for change

- OCAP
  - Ownership, control, access, possession
    - Principles for urban research in public schools?

If there is a respectful role for non-Indigenous researchers in Indigenous education research, how might it look?
Key principles

- Roles change over time (Davis, 2010)

- Certain principles stand out:
  - Listening
    - To history
    - To communities
    - To individuals
  - Learning
    - Being responsive (people, contexts)
    - Flexibility, openness
Circle of Advisors

- My approach given my context
- Developing, changing, expanding as it went
Personal research example: Circle of Advisors

- **Who**: Elder, Indigenous professor, Indigenous master’s classmate, Indigenous teaching colleagues, Indigenous participants (and more)
- **What**: seeking direct guidance on research project (topic, question, approach, protocol)
- **Where**: car drive, home, internet, school/board
- **When**: before, during, after data collection
- **Why**: seeking relevant, respectful topic choice, interactions, analysis

*If there is a respectful role for non-Indigenous researchers in Indigenous education research, how does it look?*
Your Insight on Circle of Advisors Approach?

If there is a respectful role for non-Indigenous researchers in Indigenous education research, how does it look?
References


Thank You

- Circle of advisors!
- Paul Berger: thesis supervisor
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