Why do some westerners seem to have a better relationship with Indigenous people than others? Using a narrative research methodology, the author explores the experience and wisdom of eight such participants to come to an understanding of why. He uses a broad sweep of ideas from anthropology, ethnohistory, multicultural education and cultural studies of science education, together with a model of identity learning.

From anthropology the author traces ‘marginal man’ and ‘middleman’ to modern equivalents, border crosser (and hybrid) and culture broker. He uses a theory of identity learning to look at the response to culture shock as a passage into another culture (or not), a theory which includes both cognitive and affective or emotional components.

The participants’ narratives are examined for early influences which brought them into contact with the indigenous peoples in the countries where they live. Considering that they experienced border crossings when working cross-culturally, they are located within a spectrum of border crossing positions. The participants’ ideas about being culture brokers are explored, along with their experiences in that role. These are organised into five areas leading to a deeper understanding the role of the culture broker. Finally, the participants consider how teachers in particular should behave in cross-cultural settings and the types of experiences they needed to become effective teachers and border crossers.
Working Cross-culturally
Working Cross-culturally

Identity Learning, Border Crossing and Culture Brokering

Michael Michie
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
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FOR LOUISE, RHYS AND CAMILLA

This book originated as my Doctor of Philosophy dissertation at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. Completed in 2011, it is entitled *Working across cultures in Indigenous science education*. I thank my supervisors from the university, Professors Bronwen Cowie and Clive McGee, for their advice then and for supporting its further publication.

I thank the eight participants in the research reported here for continuing to allow themselves be identified.

In the spirit of reconciliation, I wish to acknowledge Indigenous peoples of the world, particularly the Larrakia people of Darwin, Australia, and the Waikato people of Aotearoa New Zealand.
PROTOCOLS

In writing this book and referring to the indigenous peoples particularly from the four settler nations (Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States) I have followed the following set of protocols.

• When I use the term ‘indigenous peoples’ I am referring to indigenous peoples in general, not the indigenous people of any particular nation or area, and I use lower case. The same applies when I refer to indigenous students in general.
• When I refer to the indigenous people of Australia, I used the following terms: Indigenous Australians, Australian Aborigines, Torres Strait Islanders, always beginning the titles with capital letters. Indigenous Australians refers to both Australian Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.
• I usually refer to the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand as Maori; the indigenous peoples of Canada as First Nations people; and the indigenous peoples of the United States of America as Native Americans. I use Inuit for the people from the Arctic regions, usually prefixed with a national identifier. Again I always begin the titles with capital letters. Occasionally Canadian First Nations peoples are referred to as “Aborigines” or “Aboriginals” and I modify the title only if there is cause for confusion.
• When referring to specific tribal or language group names from any location, I begin the titles with capital letters.
• However, I follow the original author’s lead when using a title in a quote.
• I refer to aboriginal education and indigenous education interchangeably and in lower case.
• I generally refer to non-aboriginal or non-indigenous people as westerners, referring to the influence of western culture or worldview on them, rather than as a racial group (i.e. as white).
GLOSSARY OF TERMS FROM INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Balanda  (Australia: Yolngu): a term for white person, derived from Hollander. Originally from Northeast Arnhemland, it is commonly used throughout the Top End of the Northern Territory.

Hangarau  (New Zealand: Maori): technology

Marae  (New Zealand: Maori): ceremonial meeting house

Matauranga  (New Zealand: Maori): knowledge

Pakeha  (New Zealand: Maori): originally meaning foreigner, it is used to describe New Zealanders of western origin

Pangarau  (New Zealand: Maori): mathematics

Powhiri  (New Zealand: Maori): ceremonial rituals of welcome and introduction

Putaiao  (New Zealand: Maori): science

Te reo Maori  (New Zealand: Maori): the Maori language

Whanau  (New Zealand: Maori): extended family

Yapa  (Australia: Central Australia): Aboriginal person
This book is about the group of teachers who teach indigenous students in four western settler countries, namely Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. In particular it examines teachers who work in indigenous communities as well as those who teach indigenous students in mainstream settings. It is a response to the research question: What are the aspects of identity of those who work across cultures in science education? The research question focuses on issues of identity of teachers, about the identity of those who are successful as teachers of indigenous students and those who are less successful. It looks particularly at teaching science, taking into account a belief that science is another culture.

What I wanted to learn through doing the research was to find out why some people seem to have more success than others (including me) at working cross-culturally. There is a broader setting for the study than this: there has been a crisis in indigenous education particularly in these four countries. Much of the emphasis in the research has been on the students and pedagogy but there has been only a limited emphasis on the teachers. So a second aspect of the research is to look at what makes an effective teacher of indigenous students, both those who teach in community schools and those in regional and urban schools. The outcome might be of value to the universities where teachers undergo their training, to educational authorities who subsequently employ the teachers and ultimately to the indigenous students and the communities where they live. Thirdly, I was aware that the idea of ‘teachers as culture brokers’ had been used in science education and I wondered how effectively this could be practiced within indigenous education.

Not only does this research focus on the teacher rather than the students, it focuses on the variability of teachers involved in indigenous education rather than a stereotypical ‘teacher’. In the research I ask: Who are the effective teachers of indigenous students and what are their qualities? The response to this is related to the answer to the research question itself.

This is an international study, in two ways. It makes use of the international literature regarding teachers of indigenous students, particularly from four settler countries. Secondly the research data were collected from interviews with a group of participants from three of those countries, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. These people cover a range of experience in cross-cultural situations, primarily in education. They have worked at all levels of education, some within educational authorities and others in universities; some are highly regarded as experts in their fields and most have some research literature which was also accessed. All the participants are westerners. I once contemplated including non-western participants.
(including indigenous people) but I came to consider that some of the issues of identity that might be raised by non-westerners would be too complex to deal with by me as a westerner.

OVERVIEW OF MY POSITION

In 2002 I was working in an Aboriginal community\(^2\) north of Darwin, in the Northern Territory (NT) of Australia. After a long career as a science teacher and science education curriculum officer, this was my first extended engagement with an Aboriginal community and its school. At the same time I was considering my original topic about teachers as culture brokers in indigenous science education and I was trying to enact culture brokerage in the real world. At the end of six months I left the community feeling that I had not particularly achieved anything except enhancing my own state of despondency. The two situations were obviously related as I thought I had a reasonable theoretical knowledge of culture brokerage, so what was it that allowed some people to work in cross-cultural situations seemingly so comfortably? Did it really have anything to do with culture brokerage? And how was this going to be of any use in understanding about teachers as culture brokers? What was the relationship between culture brokerage and border crossing? The research reported here sets out to find responses to these questions and more which arose over time.

Researcher-as-Participant: “Who are You? Where Do You Come From?”\(^3\)

Below I describe some of my experiences working with Indigenous Australian students, particularly during the six-month period I was working as the teaching principal in an Aboriginal community.

My name is Michael Michie and I identify my origins as Celtic, of both Scottish (2nd generation) and Irish (4/5th generation) heritage. From a middle class background, I was raised a Catholic and after attending schools established by Irish Catholic teaching orders, I have found it easy to identify with social justice issues.

During a teaching career which has spanned over 40 years, I have taught students from many cultural backgrounds, including Aboriginal students. Since 1976 I have lived and worked in Darwin, in the Northern Territory of Australia. Over the past fifteen years or so I have become more interested in social justice issues such as gender equity, environmental education and Indigenous education.

At the beginning of 2002 I was offered the position as the teaching principal at an Aboriginal community on the Tiwi islands north of Darwin. I accepted this position, thinking that it would give me an opportunity to not only live in an
Aboriginal community, as well as to see informally whether there was a role mediating between the Aboriginal community and the white population (i.e. a culture broker), who took on the role and what qualities they had. Particularly, I was interested to see to what extent I had to take that role.

My experiences over such a short period of time (six months) are difficult to interpret; like many cross-cultural experiences there was a period of elation at being in this novel situation, followed by a negative period ('culture shock').

Finally, coming through this make-or-break period with a decision to leave has implications of failure which I am only starting to resolve. My perception of myself as a culture broker is strongly influenced by these negative images.

One incident gave me some insight into the ways people could work as culture brokers, without having to label them (or they themselves) with the title. Realising that I wasn’t participating within the community, I went to the local social club with the intention of trying to break through the barriers which I felt I had surrounded myself with. A large group of Aboriginal men usually gathered around the dartboard and pool table where I had previously declined offers to play these games on the grounds of being unskilled. I was encouraged to join in with the group but on this occasion stayed more or less on the periphery and watched.

On the next occasion a week later, I followed the same routine and was asked if I wanted to play darts. I agreed to play, put up my money and proceeded to justify why I hadn’t played before. On this occasion there was a man present who had spoken to me regarding employment at the school some time previously, and he started to introduce me to some of the other men and talking about the range of things happening in the community.

I was aware through my experience and reading that as a teacher I was also to be a culture broker of sorts. In reflection, there were various ways in which I was expecting myself to be a culture broker

- on a personal level as a member of the community
- between myself and my students, also at a personal level
- through my pedagogy, by planning, teaching and assessing in ways which were inclusive and culturally appropriate
- between the curriculum and my students, as it was mostly a curriculum based on western concepts.

At school, my class (years 5-7) had become fairly much enculturated into the western style of education. Although located on an island, the community had fairly good access to Darwin by plane (up to four flights daily at the time) and television, so there was a strong western influence. Some of my attempts at including local culture and knowledge were met with rebuffs, including “you
can’t teach me how to be Aboriginal” (I didn’t think I was) and “it’s too hot to be outside”.

I found myself becoming increasingly uncomfortable in both my job and living in the community, so I left after a semester in the school. I had been on a contract for the semester and chose not to renew it. I found the loneliness of living away from my family and a feeling of isolation from the community were major factors, although I was experiencing difficulties both in my classroom and my relationship to the other teachers.

Previously I had spent several years working as a science curriculum officer and I was aware of the need to develop curriculum documents and materials inclusive of Indigenous students, as about 35% of students in the Northern Territory are Indigenous (Michie, 1998). In investigating this, I began looking at the research, to Aikenhead’s 1996 paper and the idea of ‘teacher as culture broker’. However, I’ve also heard the term ‘culture broker’ used by other people working with Indigenous people.

I have become further interested in culture studies of science and science education and resolved to look further at the role of teacher as culture broker, particularly in science education.

This vignette outlines my experience and the reason I decided to undertake this research.

OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH

This research revolves around the experiences of a group of eight westerners whom I considered had worked successfully in cross-cultural settings with indigenous people. I undertook a series of interviews as conversations about their perceptions of undertaking border work between western and indigenous people. Each of the participants was chosen because they had specific experiences in which I was interested and as a group they have had a range of experiences which provide a wider picture of how to approach the cross-cultural enterprise successfully.

I also make use of a range of secondary sources to supplement the voices of the participants. I make use of their contributions to the literature about cross-cultural work and indigenous education. There is also a significant literature about the experiences of other people who have worked cross-culturally, often in isolated indigenous communities, and much of it is about teachers rather than other community workers.

The context of this research is within science and science education. I am still a science educator with 40-plus years of experience and my first encounter with the ideas of border crossing and culture brokerage was in the context of science education. I consider that the ideas are more highly developed in the science education literature than in any other subject area. For me, the notion that western science is a culture
in itself is a constant consideration in regard to both teaching indigenous science to western students as much as teaching western science to indigenous students.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The nexus between the two ideas of border crossing and culture brokerage is considered in terms of cross-cultural science education. Aikenhead (1997) brings the two ideas together in teaching First Nations students. Some teachers are apparently effective teachers of indigenous students (Kleinfeld, 1975) yet other teachers have deficit views of their students (Shields, Bishop & Mazawi, 2005). How does this come about?

Geijsel and Meijers (2005) propose a model of identity learning with both cognitive and affective inputs regarding a new professional situation. These can result in an individual either having a positive response leading to identity learning, or a negative response which reinforces previously-held beliefs. I use this identity learning model to examine border crossing as a professional learning experience for people teaching in indigenous communities. I use this to hypothesise that those people who have a positive response become border crossers whereas those who have a negative response are not border crossers. I extend this to teachers in mainstream situations and suggest that effective teachers are also border crossers.

In examining cultural brokerage I realised that it is a role that an individual takes on rather than relating to identity. I use the anthropology and ethnohistory literature to trace the two ideas to their origins, the border crosser to ‘marginal man’ and the culture broker to ‘change agent’ and ‘middleman’. To resolve the differences, I suggest how the border crosser can be considered a cultural hybrid working in the third space between two cultures which I call the ‘border world’ or ‘cultural interface’ (Haig-Brown, 1992; Nakata, 2007), and redefine the culture broker in education as having attributes of change agent, mediator and negotiator.

This work is significantly different to the preceding literature. It uses a model of identity learning (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005) as a theoretical underpinning to border crossing and culture shock, to explain enhanced and static identity learning. The model also allows positive correlation between effective teachers and border crossers. A taxonomy of cross-cultural positions is established, including both positive and negative responses to culture shock: border flee-ers and border liners are negative responses, border crossers, border workers and border mergers are positive ones. In considering border crossing and culture brokerage, it distinguishes between them, considers their origins, and establishes a nexus between them by concluding that an effective culture broker would be a border crosser.

DESIGN FOR THIS RESEARCH

The selection of the eight participants is somewhat eclectic: originally they were to have some cross-cultural experience in science education and research and
some of them do have this. Over time and as I read further, I came across names of people who had reflected on their cross-cultural experiences both personally and academically; three participants were selected in this way. There also appeared to be a need for ‘hands-on’ experience in indigenous communities as well as later leadership experience which could be provided by other participants. Several of the participants had worked in indigenous communities early in their careers and three had subsequently worked in them at a later stage as principals. Some of the participants fit more than one criterion. There was also a practical aspect that they needed to be accessible to be interviewed. Details regarding the inclusion of each participant are given below.

I anticipated that the participants would relate their stories as ‘rich text’ and this seemed to imply that a narrative methodology would be the most effective way of collecting and analysing the data. The richness of human experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) can be retained through qualitative research involving interviewing and the production of narratives.

I refer to the eight people as participants rather than interviewees, informants or other terminologies. This acknowledges their roles in actively engaging with the researcher in the meaning-making process of the research (Hampton, 1995; Stonebanks, 2008), their collaboration with the researcher (Bishop, 1996), their involvement in conversations (Bishop, 1996) or yarning (Power, 2004) with the researcher. This methodology is consistent with methodologies considered appropriate for research with indigenous peoples and I expect that this approach will facilitate access to the research by indigenous peoples.

Data Collection Through Interviews

Interviews were based around a series of semi-structured questions. The questions were prepared as a result of my own experience and reading the literature. They were prepared primarily to consider the participants’ understanding of culture brokerage: how they came to be cross-cultural workers, what they did and how it influenced their work.

Each of the participants was engaged in an interview of about one hour’s duration. Interviews were recorded on audiotape, transcribed by the researcher and returned to the participant by e-mail shortly after the interview for comment. The version returned by each participant is that referred to as excerpts in the data chapters. The questions used in the interviews relate to the three main themes or sub-plots to be researched and around which the data chapters are organised:

– Childhood and early career experiences relating to the initial border crossing (chapter 3)
– Experiences as cross-cultural workers, particularly their understanding of the role of culture broker (chapter 4)
– Advice regarding teachers in cross-cultural settings (chapter 5).
Life histories of the participants are incorporated into the first half of chapter 3 and the analyses can be found there. The individual experiences of the participants are then subjected to paradigmatic analysis (Polkinghorne, 1995) consistent with notions of border crossing in the remainder of the chapter. The analysis in chapters 4 and 5 is more in keeping with analysis of narratives (Polkinghorne, 1995) although the participants often refer to events within the context of their life histories.

I have used the idea of critical incidents in analysing the participants’ early careers (chapter 3), making some use the typology of critical incidents of Sikes et al. (1985). However, I found the distinction between ‘event’ and ‘incident’ not to be of particular value. The participants identified defining moments in their careers, many of which are unplanned – ‘happenstance’ and ‘epiphany’ were expressions used by some of the participants – but for some, the defining moments take place over extended periods and are more subtle than to be described as an incident or an event.

**Verification**

Some possible issues about the way in which semi-structured interviews were carried out. In some ways this can also be seen as addressing issues such as validity in considering the responses. I positioned myself as researcher in this area as a person of some experience within the field and I was able to talk with the participants as an insider and as an equal. I have also worked in an indigenous community and I had a personal involvement in wanting to understand how others had resolved a situation I had found problematic.

Voice refers to how researchers allow their informants to be heard directly, allowing participants to speak for themselves in the texts that the researcher creates (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Voice also includes that of the researcher, allowing them to be located within the text although realising that the authoritarian nature of the researcher’s voice is neither absent nor hidden. The voice of the participants was given high priority by the extensive use of quotations from the interviews and thus into the data chapters. This was augmented by the use of quotations from the participants’ literature, not simply as an attempt to triangulate or validate the interview data, but to further illustrate the ‘facet’ (Richardson, 2000) or idea under discussion. She uses crystallisation rather than triangulation as a way of visualising validity in postmodern research; the metaphor refers to the multiple facets of the crystal as an analytical device. Examining the various stories is similar to looking at the different facets of the crystal, as they tell more about the same idea but from different angles and gives them more dimensions, unlike triangulation which fixes the stories only in same dimensions. Similarly, other authors are referred to or quoted from to enhance the ideas being explored.

In this research I have attempted to minimise any issues relating to abuses of power either by the researcher or the participants (Brenner, 2006). In general the conduct of the interviews was considered to be unproblematic although the participants often talked beyond the brokerage metaphor. In several ways I considered I was undertaking
research with my peers. The difference in age between the participants and me was not significant and our experiences are similar. Several of the participants I had known for some time and had worked with at some stage. I had had the opportunity of talking with the other participants before doing the interview itself; in only one case I interviewed a person whom I had not met previously and in that case we had a chance to talk over lunch before doing the interview. As noted above, I had worked with a number of the participants; in none of these cases was I in a direct line of management above any of them and in fact I had been in a subservient position to two of them. I had also retired and only one of the participants still worked for the same authority. Some of the participants were keen to participate as they considered the research may be of value in their own work.

Verisimilitude or truthfulness is considered by Webster and Mertova (2007) to be an alternative for narrative researchers to validity and reliability, and I considered this to be the case in my research. They suggest there are three aspects of verisimilitude:

– the reporting of events resonates with experience of researcher
– high level of plausibility of the events that took place
– the truthfulness of accounts and reporting results confirmed through like and other events.

I had no reason to dispute what I was being told through the interviews. Webster and Mertova (2007) also suggest that authenticity, through which the researcher provides enough information to convince the reader that the story is told in a serious and honest way, can be part of narrative research. This is enacted throughout chapters 3 to 5 in which I make use of frequent quotations from the participants.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this research are all westerners who come from three of the settler countries – Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Several are science educators or have been at some stage of their careers. All of them have had experience teaching in schools and they have done postgraduate studies. Three have been principals in indigenous community schools. Some have taught and researched at universities. Six are male and two are female.

The following are short biographies of each of the participants as well as the reasons why I have included them in the research. The abbreviations are used to identify their quotations used in chapters 3 to 5.

Glen Aikenhead (GA)

Glen Aikenhead has been a professor in education at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada since 1971 and is now an emeritus professor there. Glen’s culture studies papers, dating back to 1996, have been very influential in this area of science.
education. Aikenhead (1996) is the first of the papers on border crossing and science teachers as culture brokers and it has stimulated much of the work done in this current research.

I chose to interview Glen for a number of reasons. He has been the primary researcher and writer about science teachers as culture brokers. He extended this work to deal with Indigenous students, including implementation of a project called Rekindling Traditions. Alongside these activities, he has continued to research the nexus between Western science and Indigenous ways of knowing nature, related to enhancing school science with Indigenous knowledge (i.e., new science curricula, science textbook revisions through collaborating with Indigenous Elders, and teacher professional development towards culturally responsive science teaching).

Miles Barker (MB)

Miles Barker is a Pakeha New Zealander who has been a teacher, science educator and researcher for over forty years in Aotearoa New Zealand, for the last fifteen of them at the School of Education of the University of Waikato. In April 2005 he retired from the University although he still holds an honorary lectureship within the School of Education.

Prior to meeting Miles I had been given a copy of his paper outlining his work with the Rumaki class at the School of Education (Barker & Hawera, 2003), where he outlines the culture brokerage in the course as well as the collaborative nature of his work with a Maori colleague.

Celia Haig-Brown (CHB)

Celia Haig-Brown is now a professor in the Faculty of Education at York University in Toronto, Canada, after spending much of her earlier days living, working and studying in British Columbia. She has researched and written extensively about her relations with the First Nations peoples of Canada over the past twenty years, as well as in women’s studies. Her papers on choosing border work (Haig-Brown, 1990, 1992) influenced my thinking about working cross-culturally, and a subsequent paper with Jo-ann Archibald also influenced my thinking (Haig-Brown & Archibald, 1996). I found her statement, “As a nonnative person, I chose to work in this world of borders. Now I find my time in the border world has transformed all my work in education.” (Celia Haig-Brown, in Haig-Brown & Archibald, 1996), a very empowering one for somebody working in indigenous education.

I had been reading Celia’s research literature and considered that she was a person that I should talk to as part of my project, but how to get to Toronto? In a case of true serendipity, it turned out that she was on study leave at the University of Waikato at the same time as I was there.
CHAPTER 1

James Ritchie (JR)

James Ritchie is well known in Aotearoa New Zealand as a commentator on Maori affairs and development. He has had a long association with the University of Waikato where he is an emeritus professor, having been the foundation professor of psychology and deputy director of the Centre for Maori Studies and Research. He is also known for his research on child-rearing in New Zealand. In 1992 his book, *Becoming bicultural*, was published, in which he uses his own experiences with Maori over 40 years to assist Pakeha to understand the implications of Maori life and development.

I read *Becoming bicultural* and became aware of the nature of Jim’s work as a cross-cultural worker. Although he had not worked in the science or education areas, I felt that a person of his background and commitment should not be omitted. (James Ritchie passed away in September 2009.)

Michael Christie (MC)

Originally from New Zealand, Michael Christie trained as a teacher at Hamilton Teachers College and taught in Frankton (Hamilton, NZ) for a year before going to Milingimbi, an Aboriginal community on the north coast of the Northern Territory of Australia in 1972. Having worked there and at Yirrkala as a teacher-linguist, Michael is now a professor of education at Charles Darwin University, Darwin.

Michael is known in science education circles for his paper, “Aboriginal science for the ecologically sustainable future” (Christie, 1991). His research interests revolve around Indigenous knowledge systems (particularly of the Yolngu of northeast Arnhemland) and he is presently looking at digital methodologies for accessing and storing traditional knowledge.

I heard Michael give this paper at CONASTA 5 in 1990 but it was several years later when I was involved in an environmental education project that I made contact with him. In 1999 we were also involved in a local mini-conference associated with Glen Aikenhead’s online workshop on “Culture studies in science education: Students’ indigenous cultures versus the culture of science”. Since then we have discussed aspects of my research on several occasions and I have become more aware of his range of interests, most particularly his work with indigenous people.

Mark Linkson (ML)

After training to be a teacher as a mature-aged student in South Australia Mark Linkson moved to the NT in 1989 to work in the Indigenous community of Wadeye as a primary teacher. He then worked as an adult educator in the RATE 6 program for Batchelor College 7 for a number of years before taking up an office-based position with the NT Department of Education in Darwin, as the writer for the ICCAS and IESIP 8 science materials. In 2000, he moved to the Torres Strait, where he worked in
three island schools, part of the time as a principal. In mid-2002 he moved to Cairns where he was developing materials for and working with RATEP teacher trainees with TAFE Queensland. Since then he has worked in schools in Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates, and has returned to his position in Cairns.

I first met Mark when he applied for the position writing the ICCAS primary science materials and I have worked with him on a number of projects since then. I chose to interview Mark because he has a range of cross-cultural experiences and some of his work has been within the science education field.

David Vickers (DV) (Pseudonym)

David Vickers trained as a teacher in New South Wales (Australia) and taught there for several years, then in Queensland, before moving to the Northern Territory. In the NT he taught at a coastal community before coming to Darwin, where he worked at an Aboriginal secondary school. During 1987 he took up an office-based position with the NT Department of Education where, amongst other duties, he continued working with teachers located in community schools. In 1998 he retired from the Education Department and set up business as a consultant, occasionally working on indigenous projects. He also helped develop some induction materials for teachers moving to Aboriginal community schools, for the Top End Group School. David returned to teaching, as the principal of a Central Australian school from 2001 until retiring again in the middle of 2004.

I have known David for most of the time I have lived in Darwin, originally meeting him when he was teaching there. I also worked with him for some years when he was office-based. Part of the reason for speaking with him was because of his experiences which run through several phases of aboriginal education policy, from assimilation, bilingual education, and self-determination until the present time.

Leonie Jones (LJ)

Leonie Jones trained in general primary teaching at the Canberra College of Advanced Education (now the University of Canberra), and included units on ESL and aboriginal education. She taught in primary schools in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) for 2 years before coming to the NT in 1977. She lived with her family and worked in Maningrida, a coastal community east of Darwin, before coming to Darwin in 1986 and she has had a number of teaching and office-based positions since then. She has taught in several Darwin primary schools as well as filling office-based positions involved with aboriginal education.

She was appointed to her present position as Top End Group School principal in 2001, and in 2002 she had been responsible for the school where I had been the teaching principal. In this role she dealt with many younger teachers as well as more experienced ones. She also has a background in providing cross-cultural professional development.
CHAPTER 1

STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

In chapter 2 I examine the literature concerned with four areas of significance to this book. Firstly I look at culture and how it is defined, ideas about science being another culture and issues about the inclusion in science of indigenous knowledge. I then consider the idea of borders and border crossing. Following this, I examine the literature about westerners, particularly teachers, working in cross-cultural situations with indigenous people. I also look at identity learning, particularly through the impact of culture shock. Then I examine culture brokers to understand both the social position and the characteristics of the culture broker. I also consider the role of culture brokers suggested for educational settings, particularly in science education where it has been suggested that teachers take on the role as culture brokers. Finally I examine the relationship between culture brokerage and border crossing.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are the chapters in which I present and discuss the data. Each chapter serves a different purpose. In chapter 3 I look at the participants’ early life and careers for evidence of their cross-cultural experiences, to determine how they experienced their own border crossings and how they may have varied since then. Then in chapter 4 I consider their understanding of the nature and role of a culture broker. Finally in chapter 5 I examine how they think teachers could be enabled to be border crossers and take on culture brokerage. In each chapter the data are provided primarily as extracts from the participants’ interviews, sometimes augmented by extracts from their writings. The discussion takes into account other narratives, including my own reflections.

In chapter 6 I consider the array of conclusions and suggestions gleaned from the preceding three chapters and synthesise the major findings of the research.

NOTE

1 A definition of the term ‘indigenous people’ is that they are the traditional inhabitants of their lands prior to colonisation by foreigners (Burger, 1990). The settler countries are those which have been relatively recently colonised and have indigenous as well as migrant-descendent populations.

2 I use the term ‘indigenous community’ to refer to any residential area primarily of indigenous people, usually of less than 4000 residents and often much smaller who generally speak their indigenous languages.

3 These are the first two questions you’re likely to be asked when visiting an Aboriginal community, particularly by children in the school.

4 This reflection was originally written in 2004 and is largely unmodified.

5 Conference of the Australian Science Teachers Association

6 RATE or RATEP – Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education Program

7 Batchelor College, now the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, is an Australian tertiary institution for Indigenous students in both higher and vocational education, including preservice teacher training. It is located about 90 km south of Darwin.

8 ICCAS and IESIP: Implementing the Common Curriculum in Aboriginal Schools and Indigenous Education Schools Implementation Program were two consecutive curriculum resource development programs operated by the NT Department of Education in the 1990s.
CHAPTER 2

REREADING THE LITERATURE

This literature review reflects the multidisciplinary and international nature of this research. Source areas for the literature include anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, ethnohistory and applied anthropology. The applied anthropology covers primarily health and educational anthropology. As science education is a focal area, some of the literature is from cultural studies in science education (CSSE), itself located between science education and educational anthropology. As its name suggests, the CSSE literature engages in research in socio-cultural aspects of science education. The research also draws on an extensive international literature on indigenous education and some literature on multicultural education.

This chapter starts with a short review of culture, the concept which underpins this book. As the context of the research is science education I also examine the place of culture in education and the idea that science is another culture. In exploring culture, I come to realise that I have to take a modernist or an ‘essentialist’ perspective that recognises the possibility of incompatibilities between cultures and leads to borders being erected between cultures. The literature provides a theoretical basis for border crossing and ideas about location in the borderlands, contact zone or cultural interface between western and indigenous cultures.

In the next section I look at border crossing as a metaphorical way of moving between cultures and link this to the identity learning model of Geijsel and Meijers (2005). Elsewhere in the literature it is suggested that westerners who go to live in indigenous communities suffer from varying degrees of culture shock. In experiencing culture shock, individuals revert to an essentialised understanding of culture as a phase of the culture encounter, a ‘we-and-they’ model which incorporates a cultural border. I conclude by identifying border crossers as individuals who are able to cross the border from which point they may exhibit more integrated cultural identities.

I then describe culture brokerage as a strategy for working cross-culturally. A review of the literature shows that culture brokering and border crossing are essentially different; culture brokerage can be traced back to an intermediary role whereas border crossing is related to the ‘marginal man’ (sic), originally someone caught between two cultures and nowadays seen in terms of cultural hybridity.

Finally I consider whether an individual can be both a border crosser and a culture broker because in the literature there is hardly any exploration of the nexus between the two.
CHAPTER 2

CULTURE AND CULTURAL BORDERS

In this section I explore some ideas about culture which inform the understandings of the research. I also examine the definition of culture borders from a cultural essentialist perspective. The literature provides a theoretical basis for border crossing as well as ideas about location in the borderlands or contact zone or cultural interface between western and indigenous cultures.

*What is Culture?*

Culture has been defined by a number of authors, although some of them presume its definition. Geertz (1973) defines culture as:

> an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by which men [sic] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life (p.89).

Goodenough (1976) considers that culture is made up of the concepts, beliefs, and principles of action and organisation that could be attributed to a society. Phelan, Davidson and Cao (1991) conceptualise culture as the norms, values, beliefs, expectations and conventional actions of a group. Aikenhead (1996, 1997) provides a simplified version: “an ordered system of meaning and symbols, in terms of which social interaction takes place” (Aikenhead, 1996, p.8). For my purposes I describe culture as the social environment in which an individual is raised and lives and includes a range of concepts and beliefs that is accepted by individuals as defining their group identity.

Culture is often seen as traditions which are handed down across generations, including knowledge, belief, art, morals, law and customs (Erickson, 2004). Culture as tradition is often seen as being static and is sometimes used to define a particular cultural group according to historical criteria rather than modern social contexts. This interpretation of culture is often associated with indigenous peoples and can be used for political reasons to essentialise them by either inclusion or exclusion. On the other hand western societies may view themselves hegemonically as being civilised rather than being cultures. Culture as cultivation evokes the idea of high culture, with institutions such as museums, art galleries, opera and symphony hall. However, there is also low or popular culture, again with its own institutions (Erickson, 2004).

A number of writers consider there are issues with the nature of culture and identity, some of which are integral to this book. Sen (2006) points out that culture is not the only determinant of people’s lives and identities as other determining factors include class, gender and race interact with culture. Similarly, McConaghy (2000) rejects culture particularly as the determinant in indigenous education. She critiques culture as the defining ideology in indigenous education and she describes four approaches, all of which rely on the modernist philosophy of a cultural binary (i.e. White/Other):
pastoral welfarism, based on indigenous incapacity; assimilationism, remaking themselves in the image of the white; cultural relativism, sensitive to difference and inclusive of cross-cultural expertise and of culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy; and radicalism, inverting colonial power.

Culture is not a homogenous attribute within a social group, nor is it static; it is both heterogeneous and evolving (Sen, 2006). Goodenough (1976) points out that within a culture (the macro-culture) there are many micro-cultures or subcultures in which any individual has certain role-expectations resulting from different social relationships and situations, so that the individual has to discern which is the appropriate behaviour. According to Goodenough, human beings live in a multi-cultural world and develop multi-cultural competence at the macro and micro levels. ‘Propriospect’ was coined by Goodenough to describe each individual’s unique version of culture through their experiences but it has had limited use (Chang, 1999; Goodenough, 1981; Wolcott, 1991). Aikenhead (1996) points out that in any culture there are likely to be many subcultures either mutually exclusive or overlapping, and are often treated as cultures in themselves rather than subcultures. Some overlaps can be between cultural groups, such as the rugby subculture which is inclusive of Maori and Pakeha in New Zealand as well as other disparate cultural groups internationally. Such overlapping subcultures have also been termed ‘competing identities’ (Sen, 2006) or ‘layers of identity’ (Pearson, 2009).

Here I also consider the link between culture and education, as I am particularly interested in the education of indigenous children and science education. As Bruner (1996) suggests:

A system of education must help those growing up in a culture find an identity within that culture. Without it, they stumble in their efforts after meaning. (p.42)

Bruner (1996) talks of a psycho-cultural approach to education, in which there is an “interaction between the powers of individual minds and the means by which the culture aids or thwarts their realization” (p.13). He suggests that systems of education tend to cultivate the beliefs and skills of their host culture according to its world view, without offending some interests who might consider too broad an approach breaches cultural taboos. A major outcome of education is the reproduction of the culture (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) and this can happen in formal, informal and invisible (hidden) ways. Goodenough (1981) considers that “culture is learned and forms a body of tradition in any society” (p.49), and Vickers (1989) suggests that “members of a culture usually learn and express their culture unconsciously – it is something they have grown up with, a matter of habit” (p.198). Erickson (2004) suggests similarly that as we learn and use culture it becomes habitual and thus invisible to us. However, there are issues with teaching a western curriculum to indigenous students which I will consider throughout the research.

I am also contextualising the research in the area of science education. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, I have been a science educator now for over
CHAPTER 2

forty years and in a variety of roles – teacher, resource developer, curriculum writer, consultant and researcher. Secondly, science has often been viewed as another culture. C.P. Snow used the idea in the Rede Lecture at Cambridge University in 1956 entitled ‘The two cultures’ (Snow, 1969), in which he distinguishes between the cultures of scientists and ‘literary intellectuals’. He argues that:

the scientific culture really is a culture, not only in an intellectual but also in an anthropological sense. … there are common attitudes, common standards and patterns of behaviour, common approaches and assumptions. (p.9)

Science can be seen as a tradition, tracing its history back to the Greek and Arabic philosophers, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment (Warraq, 2007). Science can be viewed as both a culture of information bits and a symbol system (Erickson, 2004) in the ways in which science knowledge is produced, monitored and modified through the various scientific methodologies (McComas, 1996). The methodologies of science have had a hegemonic influence on other forms of intellectual pursuit, particularly the social sciences, where:

Underpinning all of what is taught at universities is the belief in the concept of science as the all-embracing method of gaining an understanding of the world. (Smith, 1999, p.65).

Thirdly, the area of science education which I have been engaged in for at least the past fifteen years, cultural studies in science education (CSSE), includes examining the interface between western science, indigenous knowledge and indigenous students. Some of Aikenhead’s early work in this area (Aikenhead, 1996, 1997), particularly on border crossing and cultural brokerage, stimulated my early interest in the field¹ and motivated me to undertake this research.

Related to the ideas about culture is the notion that individuals move both physically and metaphorically between cultures. This book is about people who work cross-culturally and deals with the concept of borders and border crossing between cultures (and subcultures) and culture brokerage. Specifically it is about moving between western and indigenous cultures and between western science and indigenous knowledge, and the ideas of border crossing and culture brokerage.

Borders and Border Crossing

From a modernist perception, borders are framed in the language of universals and oppositions (Giroux, 1992). The notion of borders relies on culturalism or cultural essentialism. Culturalism relies on the primacy of consideration of a cultural identity, “grounded specifically on the assumption of two immutable and oppositional cultures” (McConaghy, 2000, p.8), with associated notions of western hegemony. Chang (1999) considers that the essentialist view makes a number of assumptions regarding culture which are necessary for the existence of cultural borders:
A culture is a bounded system which is separate and distinguishable from others and which is often viewed as a social unit (nation, state, tribe or community).

- Each culture is homogeneous and may be considered as an idealised form.
- A culture is shared by members of a society.

These ideas relate back to the early work of anthropologists, particularly with groups which were then physically isolated, but the modern use of cultural essentialism is often for some political purpose.

Borders are not only used to define what is inside, they also define what is on the outside (Massey, 1994). The post-modernist perspective challenges the hegemonic modernist notion that Eurocentric culture is superior to other cultures and assists those previously described as ‘Other’ in modernism to reclaim their histories and voices (Giroux, 1992). It allows for new ways of knowing and the production of new knowledge, providing an opportunity for traditional knowledges (although not new) to be considered alongside their western equivalent without the threat of being incorporated.

A third way of looking at borders is through the perspective of postcolonialism. It is the interpretation of postcolonialism as ‘beyond’ colonialism by Bhabha (1994) and McKinley (2007) which is used here. As McKinley (2007) suggests, in this view boundaries or borders have become blurred and “takes us beyond the “them and us” ... position commonly found in colonial discourse” (p.201).

There are a number of terminologies used in the literature, including cultural borders, boundaries, barriers, rifts and borderlands, based in the geographical ideas of borders and boundaries. Yuval-Davis (2004) considers borders as surrounding nations, not necessarily the same as the boundaries around ethnic communities who may live near the borders. She suggests that the borders may be attributed different meanings by people on either side. Erickson (2004) distinguishes between ‘cultural boundary’ and ‘cultural border’, suggesting that a cultural boundary refers to the presence of some sort of cultural difference, while a cultural border is a social construct of political origin and involves the exercise of power, and he prefers to use the term ‘boundary crossing’. On the other hand Aikenhead (2006) considers ‘border crossing’ to be a politically neutral phrase, meaning a capacity to think differently in various cultures, with a similar meaning as Erickson’s ‘boundary crossing’.

Another perspective on borders relates to the reaction of individuals to them. Pillsbury and Shields (1999) suggest that it is not the borders per se which are problematic but rather the construction of them as barriers where “the inflexibility and tenacity with which they are created and asserted that creates problems” (p.412), seemingly a culturalist perspective. They suggest that a sense of community can exist when the borders between difference are not considered as barriers between we and they. Geijsel and Meijers (2005) consider that at such a boundary each individual has the potential for increased cognitive and affective growth. However, they also suggest that the outcome of such a boundary incident is more likely to be negative because the individual experiences conflict and negative emotions. This is because
the individual “encounters a situation in which one is unable to function adequately because one cannot fully identify with the new situation and its exigencies” (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005, p.424, their emphasis). The implications of borders becoming barriers when individuals fail to identify with the Other (the they of Pillsbury & Shields, 1999) is significant in the discussion of culture shock and considered in more detail below. The ‘fall-back’ to a culturalist or cultural essentialist perspective will be examined in the context of culture shock.

In much of the border crossing literature (Aikenhead, 1996, 1997; Malcolm, 2007; Phelan et al., 1991) there is a commentary which describes borders and border crossings of different levels of potential difficulty. Phelan et al. (1991) set out to distinguish the various subcultures that are part of the life of students, the interactions between them and how these affect students’ engagement with learning. I suggest this is also applicable to adults. They also consider the nature of boundaries between these subcultures and how students move from one to another. They distinguish four distinctive patterns as students migrate between subcultures in which the movement between different types of worlds (subcultures) results in different types of crossings: congruent worlds – smooth transitions; different worlds – boundary crossings managed; different worlds or transitions – boundary crossings hazardous; borders impenetrable – boundary crossings insurmountable.

Costa (1995) and Aikenhead (1996) both use the boundary/border crossing metaphors similar to Phelan et al. (1991) when dealing with the borders between the student’s world and the subculture of science that they may cross when they are learning science. Some border crossings are seen as everyday events (Aikenhead, 1996, 1997; Malcolm, 2007) which fit the smooth transitions of the typology. I do not doubt this but I have chosen to confine the discussion to the western/indigenous border rather than a myriad of other possibilities. Malcolm (2007) criticises border crossing as an essentialising process in which borders are constructed as being sharp; as noted above, this view is accepted here as a starting point and I examine how individuals can move away from the essentialist position (or not).

There are a number of implications about border crossing, particularly for teachers. One is that teachers are able to recognise where and when the borders exist for their students and another is that they know how to make a border crossing. This can be overcome by using what Giroux (1992) calls ‘border pedagogy’. This is among the challenges he saw from a postcolonial perspective “calling for new ideas, pedagogical strategies and social movements capable of constructing a politics of difference” (Giroux, 1992, p.21). Existing borders are challenged and redefined. Students become border crossers to understand otherness in its own terms and create borderlands where they fashion new identities.

Borderlands, Contact Zone and the Cultural Interface

...not only are borders being challenged, crossed, and refigured, but borderlands are being created in which the very production and acquisition of knowledge
is being used by students to rewrite their own histories, identities, and learning possibilities. (Giroux, 1992, p.30)

There are a number of ways used to describe metaphorically the border region where two cultures meet. ‘Borderlands’ is used by Anzaldua (1987) to describe the place where she as a *mestiza*, a Mexican woman of mixed heritage, was able “to be an Indian in Mexican culture, to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view... to juggle cultures” (Anzaldua, 1987, p.79). Anzaldua points out that it is a pluralistic position, a synthesis that is greater than the sum of its parts, creating a new mestiza consciousness. Such a position would be described by anthropologists as a ‘marginal [wo]man’ (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937) and in recent times as ‘hybrid’ by cultural theorists (Bhabha, 1994; Webber, 2008).

Haig-Brown has used the terms ‘border world’ (1990) and later ‘borderlands’ (1992) in describing her relationship with First Nations Canadians, and describes working there as being a border worker. She (Haig-Brown, 1990) suggests that three categories of people are border workers; indigenous people, particularly in the settler states, are located there; non-indigenous people who visit the border for a variety of reasons; and non-indigenous people who choose to remain in the border world. She also sees that when working with indigenous people, being invited into the borderlands is an important part of becoming a border worker. However, it is not the only way and there is need for acceptance by the indigenous people as well (Haig-Brown & Archibald, 1996).

Educators, including teachers, are among the groups of cross-cultural workers who may find themselves in cultural borderlands of one type or another (Haig-Brown, 1992), between themselves and their students, their students and other student subcultures, or on a larger scale between their own culture and a different culture (e.g. in indigenous education). However, I disagree with Haig-Brown’s proposal above that all non-indigenous people who visit the borderlands for a variety of purposes are necessarily border workers and I justify this below.

Pratt (2008) uses the term ‘contact zone’ which she defines as the social space “where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other” (p.7). She sees the contact zone as a place where transculturation – “how subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant or metropolitan culture” (p.7) – takes place. Somerville and Perkins (2003) identify the contact zone more as a contact space where all their team members work and meet and hybrid knowledges are produced.

Nakata (2004, 2007) makes use of the metaphor of a cultural interface to locate Torres Strait Islanders and other indigenous peoples, rather than consider it as the intersection of two cultural domains, western and indigenous. Nakata, who identifies himself as a Torres Strait Islander, describes the cultural interface from an indigenous perspective as the discursive space where:

- traditional forms and ways of knowing, or the residue of those, that we bring from the pre-contact historical trajectory inform how we think and act and so
do Western ways, and for many of us a blend of both has become our lifeworld.  
(Nakata, 2004, p.27)

In this way Nakata’s cultural interface is much like Haig-Brown’s borderlands.  
Furthermore, the idea of blending or hybridity is a recurring theme in Yolngu philosophy of knowledge from Northeast Arnhemland (Marika, 1999; Watson-Verran, 1992; Yunupingu, 1991, 1994, 1999). In the analogy of the mixing of fresh and salt water in a pool, the fresh water represents the Yolngu knowledge, the salt the western. Although the result is brackish water, it represents a mixture or a blend of the two. The basic identities of the people who access the knowledge—which whether they are Yolngu or westerners—are unchanged, as suggested in this statement by Marika, a Yolngu woman and educator.

Water is often taken to represent knowledge in Yolngu philosophy. What we see happening in the school is a process of knowledge production where we have two different cultures. Balanda and Yolngu working together. Both cultures need to be presented in a way where each one is preserved and respected. (Marika, 1999, pp.112-113)

Yunupingu considers the need for balance or harmony as being a necessary outcome of the mixing of Yolngu and western knowledges.

But for us the sight and smell of brackish water expresses a profound foundation of useful knowledge—balance. For Yolngu Aboriginal people brackish water is a source of inspiration. (Yunupingu, 1994, pp.8-9)

Comments such as these reinforce the notion that indigenous people are more comfortable than westerners at being at the cultural interface and melding western and indigenous ideas.

My understanding of the cultural interface as a westerner differs from the perspective of an indigenous person. Whereas western culture is virtually ‘in the face’ of most indigenous peoples particularly in settler societies, westerners have the luxury of determining their proximity to the cultural interface by either avoiding indigenous cultures or if participating at the border somehow managing the extent to which they will blend the two. Haig-Brown (1990) suggests a number of ways in which non-indigenous people find themselves at the border or visit the border world—self-selection, desperation, happenstance and invitation. Among the self-selectors she identifies missionaries, romantics and scientists, while those who come in desperation are misfits in their own world. Some arrive by chance such as the teachers who happen to have indigenous students in their class. I suggest that locating westerners in the border world is more complex than Haig-Brown (1990) describes, as I show in the next section.

James Ritchie (1992), a westerner, also considers himself to be at the cultural interface with Maori and indicates some of the implications of him being in that position. “In the Maori world I am an outsider, a visitor, and always will be” (p.51).
He identifies with ‘the other’: “I now feel no urge to argue for a common identity, for if I do I only emphasis ‘otherness’” (p.51).

**IDENTITY LEARNING AND BORDER CROSSING**

Here I look at border crossing as a metaphorical way of moving between cultures and link this to the identity learning model of Geijsel and Meijers (2005). It is suggested in the literature that westerners who go to live in communities suffer from varying degrees of culture shock. I use the literature to explore individuals’ responses to culture shock using Geijsel and Meijer’s model. In experiencing culture shock I suggest that individuals revert to an essentialised understanding of culture as a stage of the culture encounter incorporating a cultural border. I identify in particular a group whom I call cross-culturalists who respond positively to living in the community and teaching the children. As the majority of teachers do not teach indigenous students in community schools but rather in mainstream schools in urban or regional settings, I examine the literature on effective teaching in cross-cultural contexts. It provides evidence that in the mainstream warm demanding teachers are most effective in teaching indigenous students. I look at parallels between cross-culturalists and effective teachers whom I categorise as border crossers and border workers. I conclude by identifying border crossers as individuals who are able to cross the border from which point they may exhibit more integrated cultural identities. Other individuals do not cross the border and maintain or even reinforce an essentialised cultural identity.

*Identity Learning and Culture Shock*

Geijsel and Meijers’ (2005) theory of identity learning is the underlying theory used in this research and I use it to explain the nature of positive and negative responses to culture shock as examples of identity learning.

*Identity learning.* Geijsel and Meijers (2005) understand identity as “the ever-changing configuration of interpretations that individuals attach to themselves, as related to the activities they participate in” (p.423). They argue that learning by teachers is both a process of social construction and of individual sense-making. Identity as a learning process is constructed culturally with intellectual and emotional inputs, and the emotional input can be more significant than currently considered in other identity-forming learning processes. Geijsel and Meijers (2005) suggest that identity learning starts when an individual has a boundary experience where they reach a limit of their self-concept. Although Geijsel and Meijers suggest that sometimes this can be an enhancing experience with associated development and growth, they also suggest that it is more likely to be “an experience of conflict, shortcoming or inability, and of uncertainty, which is coupled with negative emotions” (p.424). The outcomes are not only cognitive, such as not having the required knowledge.
and skills, but also emotional, as the current identity configuration does not fit the situation. According to Geijsel and Meijers (2005), resolution of the conflict requires two interactive types of inputs:

- discursive meaning giving, looking for concepts that give “an explanation that is logically and emotionally satisfactory for all who are involved ... [resulting in] ... mutual understanding and shared values” (p.425). This is mainly cognitive learning preceding emotional learning.
- intuitive sense giving, a reflective process of making sense on a personal emotional level for the individual so that they are motivated and able to act. Put another way, the experience needs to make sense in their life story.

However, the two inputs proceed at different paces and time and space need to be allowed for personal sense-making.

There are two possible outcomes regarding identity construction (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). In the first, identity is enhanced when new elements are given a place and are related to previous experience. On the other hand, the new ideas cannot be related to previous experience and are not personalised, so they do not become part of the identity configuration.

Geijsel and Meijers also suggest a strategy to facilitate identity learning which I apply later in the context of overcoming culture shock and facilitating border crossing.

**Culture shock and intercultural literacy.** Culture shock applies to any social situation where an individual has to adjust to an unfamiliar social system where previous learning informing identity no longer applies (Pedersen, 1995), and is particularly used where they go into a different culture. Although some earlier researchers saw culture shock as an illness, more recently it has been considered to be more about learning and personal growth (Adler, 1975; Heyward, 2002; Pedersen, 1995), caused by difficulty in justifying the reality of community life in contrast with the visitors’ previously-held conceptions.

Pedersen (1995) conceptualises culture shock as being a learning process, conceding that the stress a sojourner can go through might cause disease-type symptoms. His model of culture shock incorporates five stages:

- Honeymoon stage (detachment): feelings of fascination, adventure and excitement about the other culture are followed by disappointment, inadequacy, alienation and self-blame. Interpretations are similar to a tourist, insulated in their own culture.
- Disintegration (self-blame): the intrusion of the host culture in unexpected and often uncontrollable ways leads to a sense of confusion and disorientation. The sojourner becomes withdrawn and depressed, often avoiding contact with the host culture and embarrassed at being so different to the host culture.
– Reintegration (hostility): the anger previously directed inwardly at being inadequate is now directed outwardly, and particularly at people in the host culture, who become “the scapegoats for all real or imagined inadequacies” (p.134).
– Autonomy (synthesis): the sojourner becomes more self-assured and increasing warm in relations with others. They are increasingly culturally competent and relax and enjoy the host culture, often overestimating their competence and considering themselves as ‘expert’ on the host culture.
– Interdependence (bicultural identity): being “equally comfortable, settled, accepted, and fluent in both the new and old cultures” (p.245). Petersen describes this as being “a state of dynamic tension” where new perspectives can be formulated, rather than seeing it as an endpoint.

Petersen sees the third, reintegration stage as being the point at which the sojourner either regresses or progresses. He suggests that rejection of the host culture leads to the sojourner’s regression to the more superficial honeymoon phase rather than progression to the fourth stage where the conflict is resolved. He also sees that identity is being modified through cognitive and emotional experiences with the new culture.

Heyward (2002) uses the term ‘intercultural literacy’ rather than culture shock although he indicates that his model is derived from previous culture shock models and aspires to the same outcome, intercultural literacy. He suggests that without intercultural literacy, sojourners “living and working in international settings risk misunderstandings and intercultural blunders that can be extremely costly to both individuals and organizations” (p.11). I suggest in this research that this sentiment applies also to people working cross-culturally with indigenous people. Heyward develops a multidimensional framework for the development of intercultural literacy with five stages:

– Monocultural level 1: Limited awareness – unconsciously incompetent
– Monocultural level 2: Naive awareness – unconsciously incompetent
– Monocultural level 3: Engagement-distancing – consciously incompetent
– Cross-cultural level: Emerging intercultural literacy – consciously competent
– Intercultural level: Bicultural or transcultural – unconsciously competent

He suggests that the final stage, intercultural literacy, may not be achievable by all sojourners and he refers to culture shock itself only as an event in monoculture level 3.

Heyward uses six characteristics to develop his framework for intercultural literacy: understandings, competencies, attitudes, participation, language proficiencies and identities. These characteristics are similar to the bicultural competencies developed by LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993). Heyward considers aspects of each of the characteristics across the stages, some of which are of value in this book. For instance, for the participation characteristic he considers that at monocultural level 1 there is no particular awareness of the other culture, at monocultural levels 2 and 3
he uses the term ‘living alongside’, whereas at the cross-cultural level he uses ‘living with’ and the intercultural level, ‘living in’.

Petersen’s (1995) and Heyward’s (2002) models have several similarities as well as differences but overall they are fairly compatible, as both models relate to personal growth. Heyward’s monocultural level 1 does not have an equivalent in Petersen’s model as it is pre-stage 1. Heyward’s monocultural level 2 is equivalent to Petersen’s stage 1 – both authors use the term ‘honeymoon phase’ to describe it – and Heyward’s monocultural stage 3 describes both stages 2 and 3 of Petersen. Heyward’s crosscultural and intercultural levels are more-or-less equivalent to Petersen’s stages 4 and 5. An important similarity is that both authors consider that the sojourner may not necessarily reach the final stage and both consider that it is at the third stage that further development may not proceed. Heyward’s monocultural level 3 is identified by characteristics which are shared with the disintegration stage in Petersen’s culture shock model and the subsequent cultural antagonism (stages 2 and 3). Petersen (1995) considers they revert to his stage 1 whereas Heyward (2002) suggests that an individual may remain at monocultural level 3, consciously culturally incompetent and ‘living alongside’ rather than ‘living with’ the host culture.

It is probable that by this stage most sojourners have reverted to, if they had ever passed, an essentialist modernist perspective of culture, accentuating the ‘we-and-they’ dichotomy (Pillsbury & Shields, 1999). Moving beyond this phase may lead to a more-inclusive understanding of culture. On the other hand, if there is no further development then individuals will remain as cultural essentialists and maintain their western cultural hegemony.

Heyward and Petersen discuss changes in the sojourner’s identity as part of the learning process. Heyward (2002) suggests at monocultural levels 1 and 2 that cultural identity is firstly unformed then characterised by stereotypic comparisons with other cultures, similar to the ‘we-and-they’ notion of Pillsbury and Shields (1999). Heyward’s model continues with culture shock affecting people during the monocultural level 3, particularly causing them to re-examine their identities. If the sojourner passes this level, Heyward (2002) suggests they become aware of multiple cultural identities at the crosscultural level and consciously shift between them at the intercultural level. On the other hand, Petersen (1995) considers that at the reintegration level, “The rejection of host culture patterns becomes the foundation for a new identity based on cognitive and emotional experiences with the new culture” (p.134). Geijsel and Meijers (2005) consider that identity learning takes place where there is identity enhancement, which is consistent with Heyward (2002).

There are two possible outcomes of identity learning (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005) which I suggest here explain the two responses to culture shock.

– In the first, identity is enhanced when new elements are given a place and are related to previous experience (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). In this option, the response to culture shock is positive, matches the individual’s life experience and they can move on to Heyward’s (2002) cross-cultural level of emerging cultural competence or Petersen’s (1995) autonomous stage.
On the other hand, the new ideas cannot be related to previous experience and are not personalised, so they do not become part of the identity configuration (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). In this option the individual’s response to culture shock is negative, their ideas and attitudes remain static and they remain at Heyward’s (2002) monocultural level 3 or seemingly Petersen’s (1995) stage 1.

Pillsbury and Shields (1999) also consider that what they called ‘precipitating events’ could lead to the creation of either more flexible or more rigid boundaries, in much the same way as described above in Geijsel and Meijers’ model. All of the models discussed suggest that a positive response leads to identity learning whereas the consequence of a negative response is for the individual’s identity to remain static.

Impacts on Westerners Living in Indigenous Communities

Next I am going to use examples from the literature to demonstrate how positive responses to culture shock by people, mainly teachers, living and working in indigenous communities can lead to them becoming border crossers.

There is evidence that generally westerners who go to live in indigenous communities, including teachers, suffer from culture shock or some adjustment to the other culture (Heyward, 2002; Loman, 2005; Pedersen, 1995; Richards, 1996; Ryan, 2008) and it seems to be most severe when the perceived difference between the cultures is considerable. On the other hand, Trudgen (2000) suggests culture shock is scarcely acknowledged in the domestic situation, especially with relation to indigenous communities, but its description in international settings, particularly regarding teachers, also seems to be limited in the literature. It is not my intention to analyse culture shock but rather to document insights the literature provides into its impact on westerners living in indigenous communities and its effect on schooling. The literature I am using is skewed towards teachers but actually it seems to be limited in scope for other groups or individuals.

Moskowitz and Whitmore (1997) listed a number of professional and personal challenges facing teachers new to the Northern Territory (Australia). Some of these challenges are common to all non-indigenous newcomers and are caused by “physical and cultural isolation and multicultural living” (p.51), while others are explicitly linked with teaching. The newcomers are often isolated from their natural support group of family and friends. They may be living in a community with different social mores (culture) where the people may also speak a different language. The accommodation which is provided is variable and they may have to share with strangers (but usually not the indigenous residents). New teachers spend a lot of time developing lesson plans and teaching materials, teaching and in meetings with other school staff. They may have unrealistic expectations of their students, as well as inadequate and inappropriate classroom management skills. Their students probably grew up speaking another language, so their command of English is not
good, and often the teacher has not had any training in teaching English as a second language.

These challenges are in common with other regions in the settler states, particularly northern Canada (Brody, 1975; Harper, 2000; Stonebanks, 2008; Taylor, 1995; Wolcott, 1967) and reservation schools in the USA (Kincheloe & Staley, 1983). Some of the challenges are confirmed by the principal of the school in Queensland visited by Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist (2003, 2004):

“In their first six months here, the new teachers are in shock. There is culture shock; they are in the desert, it’s hot, dry, dusty, they are isolated away from their own culture in a strange community, plus the fact that they are still learning to teach – most are first year out. It’s not until maybe the second year that they settle down to teach.” (Principal, in Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2004, p.69)

Similarly Loman (2005), who went to Papua New Guinea with no prior experience as a teacher, considers that she suffered in two ways. Culture shock combined with crises in classroom management made it impossible for her to focus on her teaching until after several months. McAlpine and Crago (1995) describe the experiences of ‘Nellie’ in her first year as a teacher in a small Canadian Aboriginal community. Her experiences are described in terms which although not using culture shock per se as a mechanism, are recognisably similar. ‘Nellie’ referred to her early positive time as ‘the honeymoon period’, the term also used by Petersen (1995) and Heyward (2002). Furthermore, Stonebanks (2008) describes his experiences in a northern Canadian community in terms of culture shock, structuring it on Pedersen’s five-stage model (1995).

Green (1983) considers that he and his family suffered from culture shock shortly after their arrival in an Australian Aboriginal community in 1966. Sickness, delays to their supplies and luggage, and “missing the familiar cues of city life” (Green, 1983, p.46) are given as reasons. Similar circumstances are reported by Gallagher and Gallagher (2004).

Green (1983) also bemoans his ineffectual teaching, even though he had four years of experience teaching in mainstream schools:

What was wrong with my teaching? I was more than puzzled – I was frustrated and dismayed. Had I arrived at Warburton direct from college, the children’s failure to respond – and I saw it then as the children’s failure – would have totally crushed my confidence. ... I was losing. I was getting nowhere and becoming both culturally and psychologically disorientated. (Green, 1983, p.42)

For teachers in particular, the impacts come from both the community and the classroom, as well as missing the necessities of urban life and maybe family. As an experienced teacher, Green was able to reflect on what he was doing: “... to analyse my failures; ... apply teaching strategies that were more appropriate to children in
a desert school” (Green, 1983, p.43). This signals that culture shock can impact on experienced teachers as much as on inexperienced ones.

When westerners initially go to indigenous communities their early contact with the indigenous culture may be a naïve awareness or honeymoon period, where they are aware of the different nature of the other culture. Considered from Heyward’s perspective of learning and personal development (Heyward, 2002), they are learning new things about the people and the community. Once the euphoria wears off and the honeymoon period ends after a few weeks, the individual becomes aware of the cultural differences and they start to see different aspects of the indigenous culture, and the realisation that there is some sort of conflict between their previously-held beliefs and their new learning. It is this conflict that constitutes culture shock. This time can be described as a ‘make-or-break’ period when the newcomer can decide on a course of action.

In particular, physical conditions in some communities can lead teachers, especially younger teachers, to feel as if they are on the defensive (Moskowitz & Whitmore, 1997). Green (1983) describes the presence of two-metre-high mesh fences topped with barbed wire as “developing a siege mentality” and ultimately causing “the physical and mental stress that such an environment imposes” (p.123). Structures such as these have been installed because facilities such as schools and teachers’ housing are vandalised, particularly during vacations (Folds, 1987; Green, 1983; Heslop, 2003; Shaw, 2009) and the incursions of intruders at night (Green, 1983; Jordan, 2005). It has been suggested that these facilities are often not regarded by community members as belonging to them or under their control (Folds, 1987; Wax, Wax & Dumont, 1964). Negative images created by these situations contribute to the overall feeling of culture shock that is experienced.

My own experience of culture shock when working in the community on Melville Island caught me unawares. I had worked with Aboriginal people in the past although I had not lived in a community for any length of time. After living there for five or six weeks I found the tensions building and I started to wonder whether I should be there at all. It was not just the community, I was having troubles at work, both in the classroom and as the principal. Being both teacher and principal was a major problem and I was also missing family, friends and the normalcy of life back in Darwin, similar to Green (1983). At one stage I went as far as writing a letter of resignation which eventually I never submitted but I chose not to renew my contract. Subsequently reading the literature allowed me to identify with other people’s experiences.

One aspect I did not anticipate was how I would relate to the Aboriginal people in the community. I had worked with Aboriginal people for a number of years and written about aboriginal education from what I considered a postmodern or even postcolonial perspective. Yet I experienced feelings much as Pedersen (1995) describes as the disintegration and reintegration stages as I went through the culture shock experience. I started to think of the locals in terms of the ‘we and they’ of the modernist dichotomy. Although I chose not to stay, by the time I left I was becoming
CHAPTER 2

more relaxed with the host culture, apparently moving into the autonomy stage and away from the ‘we and they’ dichotomy but not reaching the interdependent stage as an endpoint (Pedersen, 1995).

Responses to Culture Shock: Courses of Action

The literature on westerners working in indigenous communities indicates that they generally experience some form of culture shock (not always identified as such) early during their community experience but there are differences in their medium to long term experience. In this section I am going to look at how people respond to culture shock by considering the courses of action they take. Personal narratives about culture shock are limited; negative responses tend to be personal and not documented, whereas positive responses to moving to a new culture often do not necessarily mention the notion of culture shock. I have used the literature to devise four categories which are characterised by the people’s courses of action: the cross-cultural group, the expatriate group, the short-term stayers, and the non-conformist group.

The cross-cultural group. People in the cross-cultural group respond to the culture shock in a positive way. They realise there is a need to understand the culture of their indigenous hosts in more depth and so they develop deeper understandings and a greater respect for the other culture. They are making the transition to becoming culturally competent and are engaged in border crossing. As Heslop (2003) suggests:

Non-Aboriginal teachers should be mindful of the complexity of Aboriginal society and respectful of the opportunities given by community members to establish relationships. (Heslop, 2003, p.231)

This is the time at which they start making forays into the other culture. They may start to learn the local language spoken in the community and take part in the social activities (Chudleigh, 1969; Heyward, 2002; Mitchell, 1969; Taylor, 1995) such as joining sporting teams (Harper, 2000). Tompkins (1998) suggests that these people have a good sense of themselves which enabled them “to reach out, to ask questions, to check out situations, and to start to explore the community and the culture and find its differences and richness” (p.103), so that they found living and teaching in the community rewarding. A number of cases have been referred to above. These people are ‘living with’ rather than ‘living alongside’ the community and eventually they may be ‘living in’ the community (Heyward, 2002). They become integrated with the indigenous culture through the removal of social barriers, usually a slow process, while still retaining their own cultural identity (Cooper & Cooper, 1990). Kincheloe and Staley (1983) suggest that the “successful reservation teachers have become aware of the traditions and how they make an impact on the educational setting” (p.19).

Members of this group understand that their earlier perceptions of their roles in the community may have been patronising and placed the indigenous people in a
subordinate power position. For example Jordan (2005) reflects on her changing perceptions in her first six months after a newcomer arrives:

I had changed. Now I thought that our good intentions were patronising, and that our underlying assumptions about Aboriginal people reinforced their passive position and our right to make decisions on their behalf. ... Speaking to Jodie [the newcomer] reminded me that in my first six months, my illusions had disappeared as I had struggled to make sense of the reality of community life. (Jordan, 2005, p.149)

Green (1983) became a cross-culturalist through a significant event, what some would call an epiphany and others a critical incident (Sikes, Measor & Woods, 1985; Tripp, 1994). He took his students swimming at a flooded billabong, a significant event in itself in a desert community, which created a situation where:

It was a sharing of experiences that recognised the knowledge that each of us brought to a new situation, and I wondered how I could apply this principle to my classroom teaching. (Green, 1983, p.50)

Here is recognition that the children’s culture had something of value which was later utilised appropriately in his classroom. After this, Green was invited to observe some special men’s ceremonies, a recognition of his acceptance into the community.

The expatriate group. The expatriate group find life in the indigenous community is incompatible with their belief systems (Brody, 1975; Heyward, 2002) but decide often for ulterior reasons to stay in the community. They may isolate themselves from the community except when they do their jobs, and they may leave the community on weekends and usually do so at holiday times (Brody, 1975; Green, 1983; Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2004; Taylor, 1995). They often form or become part of a western community within the indigenous community, an expatriate community ‘living alongside’ (to use Heyward’s term) the indigenous one within their own country. They are encapsulated within their own ‘cultural bubble’ (Cooper & Cooper, 1990) and Brody (1975) found the ‘White sub-community’ in northern Canada to be quite structured, with unwritten rules for the behaviour of the Whites/westerners and strong potential for ostracism (being ‘bushed’) for breaking the rules. On the other hand, Hughes (2007) suggests that some ineffectual teachers choose to remain in community schools where their poor teaching practices can go unobserved, and perhaps they move on to another community once their poor teaching has been detected.

The expatriate group often live in a western enclave in much the same way as some sojourners often do when working overseas, reflecting qualities attributed to many international expatriates in the literature. Richards (1996) examines the behaviour of expatriate workers in international situations and one of his respondents who had worked in Ghana and Nigeria identifies two types of expatriate response. He describes one group which operated in a fortress or enclave mentality, referred
to host country citizens as ‘them’, had no local citizens as real friends and socialised with like-minded expatriates. Ryan (2008) describes expatriate behaviours in Port Moresby as demanding “exclusive and guarded enclaves [which] contribute to obvious segregation between the haves and have nots” (p.11). She considers that there was neither a real relationship between the expatriates and the Papua New Guineans nor a sense of ongoing obligation, responsibility or renewal, and these are consistent with neocolonial attitudes. These attributes are shared by members of the expatriate group living and working in indigenous communities in their own countries; there is a sense of irony in using the term ‘expatriate’ to describe groups of westerners living in their own countries.

Members of the expatriate group often have ulterior or mercenary motives for teaching or working in indigenous communities. Working in remote communities often attracts financial benefits including allowances, subsidised accommodation and the possibility of extra tutoring which, when combined with not being able to spend their wages, offers a situation that facilitates saving (Harper, 2000; Heslop, 2003; Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2004; Taylor, 1995). Teachers can use periods of service in community schools to facilitate a more favourable placement subsequently (Martinez, 1994; Taylor, 1995) and often principals find themselves taking their first principalship in a community school for the same reason (Heslop, 2003; Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2004).

Other than working in the community school, most of the expatriate group’s interactions are with each other (Folds, 1987; Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2004; Jordan, 2005; Martinez, 1994; Taylor, 1995). In the Aboriginal community they visited in Queensland, Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist (2004) observed that:

The teachers socialised among themselves, made few or no friends at a level of equality in the community, did not socialise with the local adults, and left the community every Friday to spend the weekend in the nearest urban centre, four or five hours drive distant. They were clearly outsiders who, feeling isolated, strange and uncomfortable, had no intention of staying. (p.69)

Often young, inexperienced teachers are attracted to this group as it offers them professional as well as social support. Taylor (1995) identifies a white group who formed a supper club where the participants “had a chance to maintain their universe – they could reminisce about home and the way things ‘should be’” (p.229).

Members of this group do their work, probably without consideration of the culture of their clients and are often critical of them because of the perceived differences. They do not consider the values in the indigenous culture apart from the superficial, and their work is based on assimilationist practices. Often they express beliefs that the indigenous cultures are dying out (Green, 1983; Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2004) which conform to their assimilationist attitudes.

Group members typically have negative views of their indigenous hosts – stereotypical, prejudicial and discriminatory (Heyward, 2002; Tompkins, 1998). Martinez (1994) refers to ‘Brian’ making denigrating comments about the Aboriginal
people. Brody (1975) suggests that the criticism comes about because the westerners hold a stereotypical view of the identity of the indigenous people as the ‘noble savage’ but what the westerners observe does not match the stereotype. Wolcott (1967) includes extracts from letters from past teachers which are negative towards the native community and students. Tompkins (1998) suggests that they also resent other white workers who did not socialise with them, levelling the accusation that they had ‘gone native’ or were ‘bushed’. Stonebanks (2008) refers to a colleague who made comments about the resident Cree and referred to them paternalistically as “nos enfants” (French, meaning “our children”, p.111). Stonebanks and his wife also chose to no longer go to dinner with some of the other western teachers because of racist comments that were made at a dinner they attended; this can be seen as them breaking away from a group of expatriate teachers.

Expatriate teachers disapprove of fraternisation between themselves and the indigenous community (Martinez, 1994) although there is evidence that this is the case for the wider community or at least for educational authorities. Taylor (1995) recalls that when he was teaching in one reserve school (in Canada), the superintendent suggested he was getting too involved with the community and questioned his friendships with indigenous individuals and families. Goulet (2001) describes an instance where advice was given by the superintendent not to mix with the indigenous people being given to a group of teachers, including paradoxically to ‘Roxanne’, an indigenous Dene woman working in her home community. Recent reports from Canada now recommend that teachers should reach out to and have open relationships with the Aboriginal community (Bell et al., 2004; McBride & McKee, 2001).

Another feature of teachers in the expatriate group is their negative attitudes toward their indigenous students as well as the community and they often complain about what’s happening, usually to other like-minded people. Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist (2003, 2004) report on negative comments and attitudes of some more experienced teachers in the school, and they also report on the lack of an Aboriginal focus in the curriculum and in how the school was decorated.

The short-term stayers. For a small minority the impact of the culture shock experience causes them to leave shortly after their arrival or in some cases, to retreat into a world of their own. For some, the impact of culture shock is so severe that the individuals cannot live in the host culture (Oberg, n.d.; Pedersen, 1995). Heslop (2003) considers that some teachers became so frustrated they left the community “with low regard for their [own] teaching skills and holding negative attitudes towards Aboriginal people” (p.210). Georgina (in Daniels, 2007) suggests that “the experience of living in a community can be so confronting that the average stay of teachers is ... six weeks” (paragraph 6). Collins and Lea (1999) also find the duration for many teachers to be short but there appears to be no official statistics. As many of the teachers going to indigenous communities were also in their first year of teaching, leaving the community may affect their feelings of competence.
as teachers and they may be lost from the profession (Heslop, 2003). Green (1983) suggests that if he had been a neophyte teacher rather than having several years of experience, his confidence would have been totally crushed (above); even so, he found his first weeks in the community school difficult. A positive experience with his students gave him the confidence to stay on.

Some short-term stayers display some characteristics of the ‘escapists’, a term used by Cooper & Cooper (1990) and Taylor (1995), who either escape by leaving the community or by retreating into the confines of their own world. This is a group of people for whom the reality of the community is too contradictory to their world view. Their usual course of action is to leave the community because they cannot reconcile between their old ideas and the new environment.

The nonconformist group. At the other extreme, there is a small group of people who may try to assimilate into the indigenous culture. Such an action may be premeditated by the westerner but it may not be acceptable to the indigenous hosts (Waldrip, Timothy & Wilikai, 2007). Some may come because of desperation, these being described by Haig-Brown (1990) as misfits in their own world. On the other hand Price and Price (1998) feel that ‘misfits’, some of whom would fit into this group, were accepted at least by some Aboriginal people although the authors did not explain why. Schwimmer (1958) considers as ‘dissenters’ the group of European who lived among the Maori. The nonconformists may be considered to be inclusive of the transculturites (Hallowell, 1963), the beachcombers or Pakeha Maori\(^1\) (Bentley, 1999; Milcairns, 2006; Nicholson, 2006) as they are not strong in their own culture and perhaps believe that ‘white man got no culture’\(^2\). The nonconformists have not developed any cross-cultural competence but are probably incompetent in their own culture as well.

It is important to distinguish this group from those people who have extended careers in indigenous communities and who are cross-culturalists. Townley (2001) explains the term ‘misfits’ as a self-ascribed label used by some professionals with extensive experience and influence and status in Aboriginal communities, but they are not nonconformists. Intermarriage with an indigenous person does not necessarily imply that a person automatically becomes a nonconformist but doing so can result in establishing influence and status. There is also concern expressed about westerners being in a community for an extended period of time and ‘going native’ as if one implied the other (Harper, 2000, 2004). In reality the concern would seem to be about the Canadian north ‘getting into one’s blood’ and then not being able to resettle in the urban south, a feature of reverse culture shock mentioned above (as stage 5, Heyward, 2002). Tompkins (1998) identifies that ‘going native’ is a term used as a pejorative by teachers who excluded themselves from the community (i.e. expatriates) regarding others who probably have better relationships with the indigenous people (i.e. cross-culturalists).

Concluding remarks. So far I have focused on the experiences of people who have worked in indigenous communities with the idea of using their experiences as a
sort of a benchmark. From the literature regarding western teachers (and others) living and working in these communities, I have suggested that they all suffer from culture shock to some degree during the initial period of their stay and that there are a number of possible outcomes for the cross-culturalists, the expatriates, the short-term stayers, and the nonconformists.

Of these four groups it is the cross-culturalists who become part of the indigenous community, living with the indigenous people and taking part in their social and cultural activities. They understand that there is something of value about the other culture and as they develop a deeper understanding of the indigenous culture they also develop respect for it and the people. Those who are teachers develop an understanding of the needs of their students both within their community and within the world at large and they strive to help fulfil those needs. It is this group that I continue to focus on in the following section.

**Effective Teachers of Indigenous Students**

I now examine how the experiences of western teachers working in cross-cultural situations in urban and regional schools may parallel those teaching in indigenous communities. Haig-Brown (1990) considers many westerners first visit the border world by 'happenstance': “The teacher or professor accepts a job and just happens to have First Nations students in her class.” (p.232)

I suggest that teachers in urban and regional situations are less likely to experience culture shock or if they do, it would be to a lesser degree. The consequences of culture shock in mainstream situations are less likely to be recognised. I examine another group, effective teachers, who are described in the literature as working both in indigenous communities and with indigenous students in mainstream schools.

The exploration of effective teachers of indigenous students seems to have been initiated by Kleinfeld (1975), who considers that there are two main characteristics which discriminate the effective teacher from the ineffective one. The first of these is “the effective teacher’s ability to create a climate of emotional warmth that dissipates the students’ fears in the classroom and fulfils their expectations of highly personalized relationships” (Kleinfeld, 1975, p.318). Kleinfeld observed about forty teachers teaching Alaskan Indian and Inuit students, undertook some videoing, as well as interviewing them. Her criteria of effectiveness relate to pupil growth such as classroom attentiveness and amount of academic work performed (rather than achievement tests). She contrasts personal warmth with professional distance, the latter often considered as the appropriate mode of teachers relating to students but often interpreted by indigenous students as disinterest in or even hostility towards them.

The second characteristic of effective teachers is active demandingness, where teachers demand high levels of academic work, compared with passive understanding. According to Kleinfeld (1975), this demandingness is initiated only once personal rapport has been established and involves “articulating cultural assumptions underlying the learning tasks in Western classrooms” (p.328).
Kleinfeld (1975) uses these two characteristics to create a typology of teachers, identifying four teacher types which she characterised using classroom-based ethnographies:

- The *traditionalists* concentrate on the academic subject matter and ignore the interpersonal dimension of the classroom.
- The *sophisticates* prefer discussions where “students can discover intellectual concepts for themselves” (p.331), but they maintain “sophisticated reserve”.
- The *sentimentalists* “tend to be warm, kindly people who find it difficult to make demands on any students” (p.334)
- The *warm demanders* achieve a warm relationship with their students who are concerned with what their students learn and use the relationship with the students to further learning.

Of the four types, Kleinfeld considers that warm demanders are the most effective teachers of indigenous students with both urban and community students.

Fanshawe (1976, 1989, 1999) has taken an ongoing look at the personal characteristics of an effective teacher of Australian Indigenous students. In Fanshawe (1989) he looks at student perspectives on teacher effectiveness. He collected data on a number of effectiveness measures from both urban Aboriginal and non-aboriginal secondary students, quantified the data to suit Kleinfeld’s two characteristics and plotted them as if the chart was a graph with two orthogonal co-ordinates. The effectiveness measures were students’ liking for their subjects, amount of work done, self-perceived ability, teacher preference and the amount of learning. He found there was no significant difference between the warm demanders and the sentimentalists for either student group or between the groups. In other words, the students appreciated the ‘warm’ aspect of the teachers rather than their ‘demandingness’.

Goulet (2001) describes the effective teaching of two women working with Aboriginal students in northern Canada, one of whom is Dene (‘Roxanne’) and the other a westerner (‘Janet’). ‘Roxanne’ taught in both Dene and English languages, often translating between the two. ‘Janet’ used community knowledge as well as culturally relevant materials. According to Goulet, both teachers conveyed a deep sense of caring for their students and emphasised the need to get to know and accept each student as an individual. They built up warm human relationships with their students and used an indirect, nonconfrontational approach to classroom management.

Bishop and Berryman (2006) interviewed a group of secondary teachers in New Zealand to determine what was considered effective teaching of Maori secondary students. In the majority of responses teachers pathologise Maori students’ experiences and explain their lack of educational achievement in deficit terms (Shields et al., 2005). However, there were some positive responses such as building positive relationships with Maori students, acknowledging them as being Maori by including their culture in the classroom, and including their input into how and what
they learned. A minority of teachers believed that the teacher-student relationships were of prime importance, that:

when positive caring and learning relationships were built into their classrooms,
improved student behaviour resulted along with engagement and involvement
in learning for all students, and especially for Maori students (Bishop & Berryman, 2006, p.251)

In the research on effective teachers done with Maori secondary students, showing respect for students and their culture is seen as an important part of developing positive relations (Bishop et al., 2003; Macfarlane, 2007) and expecting students to modify their behaviour (Macfarlane, 2007). Subsequently, Bishop (2011) has compiled an effective teacher profile.

Shields et al. (2005) use the term ‘empathic education’ to describe “a desirable state of affairs in education” (p.137). They define empathetic education as “a pedagogical approach that takes into consideration the interests, aspirations, and attitudes of the learner as fundamental to learning and understanding” (p.137). It means taking into account the cultural connectedness of the students as well as their cognitive development and is similar to being a ‘warm demanding’ or effective teacher.

Respect is one aspect of effective teaching which appears in some of the earlier research (e.g. Wax et al., 1964). They identify a few successful teachers who “differed from the less successful teachers in that they respect their students” (p.75). These teachers were also strict disciplinarians, were fair and did not embarrass their students while emphasising the students’ academic work. Kleinfeld (1975) feels there was insufficient detail in Wax et al. (1964) to use in building a case around respect as a characteristic of effective teaching, suggesting that there may be different views about how respect may be shown by Native Americans and Inuit and by westerners (Wax & Thomas, 1961). Eckermann (1987) includes respect in a set of guidelines, as a component of demanding: “mutual respect, caring and support not only between staff and students, but also between students” (p.64). Prater et al. (1995) survey a group of Navajo students regarding effective teachers and find that the students preferred being treated with respect and taught responsibly. Both Goulet (2001) and Tompkins (1998) suggest that effective teachers make allowances in their teaching for students dealing with personal problems “in a respectful, sensitive way” (Goulet, 2001, p.76). Shields et al. (2005) consider that for teachers the development of relationships with students was important and that they should model respect and caring:

Starting with the students is empowering; it is motivating. Starting with the subject matter, with technique, with tricks, does nothing to overcome the prejudices and pathologies that have developed over such a long period of time ... (Shields et al., 2005, p.51)

This is similar to the approach identified by Kleinfeld (1976) of warm demanding teachers who establish their relationship with the students first at the beginning of the school year.
Wilson (2001) discusses the trauma experienced by Sioux students as they transferred from an elementary school located on a reserve to a western-oriented high school in a nearby town. Among her observations in the elementary school she notes that teachers treated students with respect as well as making contact with all students during class. Their expectations were high and the students thrived. In contrast, the high school teachers made no or only limited contact with the Sioux students in their classrooms and had low expectations of the students; however the low expectations were as a result of deficit thinking and stereotyping rather than actual experiences. This would seem to resonate with the trope that primary teachers teach students, secondary teachers teach their subject.

By comparison, teachers at a First Nations high school in Canada realised that respectful treatment of their students was essential (Haig-Brown, Hodgson-Smith, Regnier & Archibald, 1997). When interviewed, one teacher suggests:

“What makes success for me ... is if I can get a student long enough to get a relationship. That I know them and understand them, that’s the purpose of being in there all day, rather than one hour coming to teach Phys Ed, Math or Science. You get to know them better then they trust me.” (T1:6, in Haig-Brown et al., 1997, p.147)

The success of the staff at this school was put down to patience, perseverance and commitment.

An alternative to respect per se has been the idea of teacher caring (Berger, 2007) based on the ideas of Noddings (1996). As Berger suggests for Qallunaat [western] teachers in Nunavut, “the teacher who cares is one who desires the well-being of students and acts in ways that promote it.” (Berger, 2007, p. 1).

Maintaining high standards is still considered to be important and being caring is considered to be something teachers work towards. Lewthwaite and McMillan (2010) find that Inuit students appreciate the caring nature of their teachers. In interviews some of the students identify that caring teachers create positive learning environments in their classrooms. Lewthwaite and McMillan consider that caring about their students’ educational success is a characteristic of effective teachers, one which is “manifest in actions” (Lewthwaite & McMillan, 2010, p.168).

Throughout this examination of the literature on effective teaching there has been the notion of emotional warmth and perhaps even respect and caring for the student and their culture. This is seen as a precursor to a high level of expectation of the student academically.

**Cross-Culturalists and Effective and Access-Enhancing Teachers**

In this section I consider the nexus between cross-culturalist and effective teachers. From my reading of cross-culturalists and effective teachers of indigenous students above, there are a number of shared attributes. Both are strong within their own culture but have an interest in the other culture as well. They understand that they
need to consider their students’ culture in their teaching although it is not always clear whether or how they integrate their students’ knowledge.

As teachers, cross-culturalists develop an understanding of the needs of their students both within their community and within the world at large and they strive to fulfil those needs. Effective teachers are warm towards their students, attuned socially and culturally to them. The place of respect as a cultural attribute appears to be ambivalent: often it is considered as respect for the students’ culture but not as much as respect for the students themselves. This is not unusual as there have been limited calls for teachers to demonstrate respect towards western students. Effective teachers are also demanding in their expectations of their students’ levels of achievement (Kleinfeld, 1975). On the other hand there is no presumption of demandingness from cross-cultural teachers and Fanshawe (1989) suggests that indigenous students do not necessarily relate to demandingness. Although the teacher effectiveness literature has not been applied particularly to community schools, the characteristics of cross-culturalists and effective teachers overlap to suggest that cross-culturalist teachers are effective teachers.

Hanrahan (2006) develops the idea of the access-enhancing teacher from observations in mainstream science classes and I believe it can be applied in indigenous classes as well. The characteristics of access-enhanced teachers basically revolve around being student-centred rather than subject- or teacher-centred, and so they have much in common with the characteristics of effective teachers. Thus an effective teacher of science for indigenous students would take into account their students’ culture and prior knowledge, involve the students in deciding what and how they should be learning.

Culture Shock and the Border Crossing Metaphor

Earlier I looked at the metaphor of border crossing and suggested that there is strong evidence that people who work at the border zone or cultural interface and who see the value of the other culture often become border crossers. Some also become border workers. I have looked at the ways in which teachers respond to working at the interface, particularly how they respond to culture shock. This influences how they perform as effective teachers of indigenous students.

In the previous two sections I have examined the characteristics of effective teachers and access-enhancing teachers. There are no stories of experience here but I suggest that models such as Geijsel and Meijers (2005) and Pillsbury and Shields (1999) provide a link between the culture shock experiences of teachers in indigenous communities and the experiences of effective and access-enhancing teachers. Both models consider that some kind of critical event leads to flexible border crossings.

Culture shock can be seen as having an impact on an individual's identity (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005; Heyward, 2002; Pillsbury & Shields, 1999). For instance, Heyward (2002) considers that prior to a culture shock experience, individuals have unformed or stereotypical notions of culture. I consider that these would be consistent with the ‘we-and-they’ or ‘us-other’ binaries related to the modernist perspective. As noted
in the Geijsel and Meijer’s model (2005), a positive response would typically lead to enhanced cultural identity. I suggest that subsequently there would also be an associated change away from the modernist dichotomy towards a postmodernist or postcolonialist perspective.

Similarly there has been some criticism of border crossing being based on an essentialist (i.e. modernist) perspective (Malcolm, 2007). Certainly it would seem that the expatriate group maintain a modernist perspective as their behaviours (discussed above) indicate a dichotomy between indigenous people and them. Border crossing implies enhanced identity learning suggesting movement away from the modernist perspective.

Here I make use of the border crossing metaphor and extend it to bring some of these ideas together. I interpret the literature to suggest that there are at least four, perhaps five, groups that can be identified by the characteristics which have been discussed previously. I refer to the four groups as border flee-ers, border liners, border crossers and border workers; I propose there is a fifth group, border mergers, with limited evidence from the literature.

Border flee-ers. Earlier I described a group of short-term stayers who have a negative response to culture shock and identity learning, and choose to either leave or become isolated within a community. In terms of the border they are fleeing from the border, intent upon locating themselves away from the cultural interface.

Border liners. I suggested earlier in describing the effects of culture shock that some westerners form a group I call the expatriate group who choose not to engage with the indigenous communities in which they work but rather form enclaves of westerners in which they associate with like-minded people. In Kleinfeld’s classification of effective teachers they would be classed as traditionalists, actively demanding but maintaining their professional distance, or perhaps also as sophisticates, not as demanding but also unable to interact with their students at a personal level. According to the Geijsel and Meijer’s model (2005) they demonstrate no identity enhancement to the boundary events. In Heyward’s (2002) model of intercultural literacy, they remain monocultural and do not make the transition to become cross-cultural, let alone intercultural (or bicultural). In some ways their behaviours are similar to those displayed by many expatriates working overseas who remain monocultural, distance themselves from their hosts and display stereotypical and chauvinistic attitudes.

In general these people may be strong in their own western culture, some may have assimilationist views and some consider that the indigenous culture is dying out but generally they have only superficial and deficit understandings of the other culture. There are a number of reasons advanced as to why people have been willing to occupy this border line position. Pillsbury and Shields (1999) consider loyalty to and overidentification with their own group and perceptions of correct social posture cause individuals to erect barriers at borders. Often they are mercenary reasons – financial or for advancement within the teaching profession.
I refer to this as the border line position relative to the cultural interface. The incumbents are westerners who work alongside (rather than with) indigenous people without crossing the border (Heyward, 2002).

*Border crossers.* Border crossers include the cross-cultural workers who have a positive response to the culture shock event and want to find out more about the indigenous culture. They (as well as members of the next two groups) have had identity learning enhancement to the boundary events (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). Border crossers include as effective teachers the warm demanders who display personal warmth towards their students. They see value in the indigenous culture and attempt to reconcile the two cultures, usually to promote an understanding of the western culture by the indigenous people. They start by crossing borders more-or-less on a needs basis, making forays across the border.

*Border workers.* These people use their understandings of both cultures to assist the indigenous people; they have undergone enhanced identity learning (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). Border workers chose, like Haig-Brown (1992), to remain metaphorically in the border world. They work as allies to the indigenous people, giving advice, and are invited by them to take part in the project rather than setting the agenda.

The transition from border crosser to border worker seems to suggest a number of changes. As border workers they take into account the wishes of the indigenous community and they have the support of the community they are working with, although this is not necessarily formal but may be tacit approval by the community. Using Heyward's terminology (2002), border crossers would be living with, and possibly living in, the community, although in some cases this may be metaphorically rather than a physical reality.

It would seem from the literature that teachers of indigenous students in indigenous and mainstream schools who are border crossers and border workers are also effective teachers. This means primarily that the teachers are warm toward their students, that they demonstrate understanding and respect for their students' culture. The literature suggests that they should also be demanding on their students academically.

*Border mergers.* Although there is little in the literature to support this situation at this time, I propose it to include those people who have moved beyond border crossing and find the notion of borders to be untenable or impractical, such as postculturalists (McConaghy, 2000).

**CULTURE BROKERS**

When people of different languages, cultures, and identities meet and deal with each other, they develop special channels of communication and role networks. (Clifton, 1989, p.35)
CHAPTER 2

In this section I consider the role of culture broker, and compare it with the border crosser, then following it I examine the nexus between the two. I undertake an examination of the literature on culture brokers primarily from three primary sources, anthropology (including sociology), ethnohistory and applied anthropology, to try to understand the characteristics of culture brokers and this led me to a number of conclusions regarding the nature of the literature:

- The anthropology literature is full of ‘stick figures’ and is concerned with who were the culture brokers, what could they do, who let them do it and the terminology that could be used, but without any characterisation to put any flesh on the bones. This literature provides the language, sometimes confused, through which the culture broker role is described.
- The ethnohistory literature is more informative, with some stories of real people who were considered to be successful culture brokers (and a few who were not), and the literature gives more substance to the characterisation.
- The applied anthropology literature, which includes health and educational anthropology, suggests ways in which culture brokers could work in various cross-cultural situations and how they could be trained. Overall it suggests that culture brokerage is another strategy for achieving cross-cultural communication, without much in-depth understanding of a personal effect.

Culture brokers were originally defined in the anthropology literature as change agents, firstly between layers in society but more recently in cross-cultural relationships. That culture brokers have a number of characteristics in common is derived particularly from the ethnohistory literature, particularly that they are interested in other cultures, are curious about the other side of the cultural divide and demonstrate a belief that those cultures offered something of value. These aspects are examined in detail below.

Culture Brokers as Change Agents

The idea of the culture or cultural broker has its origins in the work done by anthropologists from the 1920s onwards (Hinderaker, 2002). Some of the first studies dealing with innovation or change within societies (e.g. Adams, 1951; Barnett, 1941; Linton, 1936) identify culture brokerage, although at that time the personnel involved had been called ‘innovators’ or ‘change agents’ (Press, 1969). Culture brokering is generally seen to be about advocating change and the anthropology literature describes them as advocates of cultural change (Press, 1969; Rodman & Counts, 1982; Weidman, 1983).

In many of the early studies (Fallers, 1955; Geertz, 1960; Wolf, 1956) the role of culture broker was seen to be already occupied by someone in authority within a community and it was presumed that this new role was one they could and would undertake. The term ‘broker’ is first used by Wolf (1956) primarily in an entrepreneurial role as economic and political brokers, and Geertz (1960) first calls
them ‘cultural brokers’. Adams (1970) distinguishes cultural brokers from power brokers, seeing cultural brokers (using teachers as an example) as implementing upper level decisions by acting at a lower level, a top-down model, although their success depends on their own skill and personal influence, not on the power that they wield. Adams also characterises the cultural brokerage system as static because the broker does not change their position within the structure by virtue of their activities as a broker.

As anthropologists widely relied on native people as informants to interpret cultural phenomena as well as language, someone an anthropologist might find helpful as an informant or an assistant could be characterised as an intermediary (Clifton, 1989; Rodman & Counts, 1982). This is not necessarily acknowledged by anthropologists themselves although some of the ethnohistories are of indigenous people taking on the cultural broker role.

**Culture Brokerage Models**

A simple model of cultural brokerage revolves around the idea of a patron and can be dated back hundreds of years to hierarchical feudal systems (Kenny, 1960; Silverman, 1965). This arrangement had only started breaking down in parts of Europe since World War II. This model involves a patron acting as intermediary for their client by going to their patron at the next level. Paine (1971) introduces the patron – broker – client model in which he suggests that the patron and client are the two end-members, and between them are located two ‘intermediary’ or ‘middleman’ (sic) roles, the go-between and the culture broker. Of these intermediary roles, he describes that of go-between takes place without any manipulation or alteration, whereas that of the cultural broker has implications of either commercial gain or political interference or both. Paine identifies the broker as being engaged in managing of the patron’s values but not responsible for or initiating them. The broker is seen to be in an alliance with the patron and gains from the alliance, mostly in terms of prestige. On the other hand, if the broker is unsuccessful, they suffer again in terms of prestige.

Paine’s (1971) definition of the go-between is more akin to the cultural mediator. Mediation is about promoting dialogue between two groups and the mediator is considered to be an intermediary position with implications of balance between the two sides, particularly in the psychological literature which describes the process of mediating between cultures and the competencies of the mediator (Bochner, 1981; McLeod, 1981; Taft, 1981). Schwimmer (1958) describes the ‘equalitarian mediator’ who cannot impose their will by force but firstly has to gain acceptance for themselves, then for their idea; this seems to be similar to what is now described as a ‘cultural mediator’. Although the use of culture broker and cultural mediator throughout the literature sometimes appears to imply uncritically their equivalence, this should not be the case. I look at this in more detail below where I suggest that although these are two different roles, some individuals can undertake both.
Whereas originally a culture broker was considered to be an intermediary between two layers within a society (Fallers, 1955; Geertz, 1960; Wolf, 1956), Paine (1971) extends the role to one between societies, to facilitate cross-cultural communications as well. Using his model, Paine (1971) situates the idea of patronage in a cross-cultural context and replaces the patron with western institutions such as the government, business enterprises and the churches which act as what I term ‘institutional patrons’, exerting power over their clients through an intermediary who is also the institution’s employee. In discussing an intermediary in this context, Paine considers that the employees act as cultural brokers in their dealings with native peoples in the Canadian Arctic. Dunning (1959) suggests that employees in these situations often assume the role of cultural broker and may implement it beyond their authority, an observation supported by Paine (1971)²⁸.

Dunning (1959) describes westerners in cultural broker positions as ‘marginal men’ but Paine (1971) suggests it is an intermediary position. At times in the literature ‘middleman’ (intermediary) and ‘marginal man’ been used interchangeably but this is incorrect. My understanding is that ‘middleman’ and ‘marginal man’ describe two different aspects although an individual can be both. The ‘middleman’ or intermediary works between two or more groups as seen above and the intermediary positions are roles which an individual can undertake. On the other hand, marginality is an identity issue, of how an individual identifies themselves (or perhaps is identified by others) relative to two seemingly incongruent cultures.

The marginal person was considered as having fallen between the two and belonging to neither culture (Bochner, 1981; Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937). The ‘marginal man’ was originally used to describe people who find themselves between two cultures through migration or intermarriage or offspring of inter-racial relationships (Park, 1928), and transculturites are a marginal subgroup there by adoption, kidnapping or adaptation (Hallowell, 1963), including beachcombers and Pakeha Maori (Bentley, 1999; Milcaims, 2006; Nicholson, 2006). The confusion between the two terms ‘middleman’ and ‘marginal man’ arises from an assumption made by early researchers (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937) that marginal people would be best suited to be cultural mediators, a situation not proven equivocally by the research (Bochner, 1981).

The roles of patron and client seem to have disappeared from the recent culture brokerage literature, perhaps to create a more informal atmosphere or perhaps because the language sounds archaic; I find the terms useful and continue to use them. Many of the instances considered in the literature portray the culture broker as an agent for what I described above as ‘institutional patrons’, working in a top-down situation for the institution as suggested by Adams (1970) and Paine (1971), with seemingly little interest on requests from the client. Perhaps the potential for intermediaries to work in a bottom-up way needs to be viewed in terms of cultural mediators.

Herzog (1972) extends the role of cultural broker into applied anthropology and considers the role in education as an attempt to:
articulate, explain, and develop, to each other, the goals, life styles and concerns of all groups within and affecting the community; and with the groups, to synthesize mutually satisfactory goal statements and programs of action. (Herzog, 1972, p.9, his emphasis)

He suggests that it was not arbitration, as there was no power to impose solutions, nor mediation, because the broker could also suggest possible solutions. However, this seems to be a narrow interpretation of mediation. One implication from Herzog’s work is that the role of culture broker can be filled by a professional or paraprofessional, not necessarily by a trained anthropologist, and this idea has been applied to health care as well as education.

Jezewski’s intervention model (Jezewski, 1989, 1995) involves feedback systems and was designed for health workers and caregivers working in a multicultural environment. It is primarily concerned with the intermediary roles which could be taken primarily by health care professionals and paraprofessionals, and describes the role of the culture broker primarily as conflict resolver as well as innovator and mediator. She provides a pragmatic model of culture brokerage which might be useful for short-term individualised interventions found in health care. The model is oriented towards supporting the practice of western medicine and it is primarily a strategy to achieve this rather than to develop an understanding of the patient’s culture. Training programs relating to the model have been devised and assessed (Jezewski & Sotnik, 2001; Moffat & Tung, 2004). What is absent in Jezewski’s model in terms of this research is that little emphasis is given to experience-based cross-cultural development.

**Characteristics of a Culture Broker**

It is through ethnohistory, the study of the history of cultural groups and particularly those undergoing change through the impact of colonisation, that some individuals have been identified as culture brokers more or less by the way they operated between two cultures. Their biographies often identify characteristics such as being of mixed race or married to an ‘Indian’. Less frequently, personal qualities such as their interest in the other culture of individuals is described. It has been in anthologies (e.g. Clifton, 1989; Karttunen, 1994; Szasz, 2001) rather than individual stories that these characteristics have been identified across groups of cultural brokers. A limitation of many ethnohistories is that they are written essentially as historical biographies (Hinderaker, 2002) rather than for their characterisation. They tend to focus on historical rather than present-day characters but they feature people from a range of enterprises and give an insight into the personal qualities of culture brokers.

Szasz (2001) gives some insight into the characteristics of cultural brokers. She considers that the cultural brokers examined in her anthology came into the roles more or less by accident and there were influential factors such as internal networks, mixed cultural heritage and gender which predetermined what they would become.
Szasz suggests that the people in her anthology have three main characteristics in common; openness to others, a desire for power and unique experiences.

**Openness to others.** All the border people were curious about the other side of the cultural divide and demonstrated a belief that those cultures offered something of value, certainly a different level of involvement than Rodham and Counts’ (1982) “being less afraid than their peers” (p.4). Recognition of those cultures might also have implied that they were of intrinsic worth. Intermediaries who succeeded in this border world also demonstrated that they were trustworthy and that it required determination.

I suggest that the descriptor of “being curious about the other side” may be interpreted as saying that some cultural brokers were also border crossers and perhaps many of these would have been border workers. In many cases described in anthologies (Clifton, 1989; Karttunen, 1994; Szasz, 2001), the culture brokers had already had some sort of border crossing which could be an event or critical incident or it may have been as part of their upbringing. Many can be considered as border workers in the sense of Haig-Brown (1992) in the borderlands or being located at Nakata’s (2007) cultural interface. Many of the stories are about indigenous people as cultural brokers. For the non-indigenous subjects it is more how they position themselves at the cultural interface, particularly as a result of critical incidents, and whether they choose to remain in that position.

**A desire for power.** Those who succeeded in meeting these demands were locked into a position that offered rewards but often countered those rewards by immeasurable difficulties. Often intermediaries found themselves in awkward, sometimes life-threatening, positions. According to Szasz (2001), one of the strongest motives for brokering was the sense of power that it offered. Beyond the anticipation of material rewards and the pleasure gained from power, cultural intermediaries also derived personal satisfaction.

Paine (1971) considers that cultural brokers gain prestige from their patrons and Dunning (1959) and Paine (1971) both comment on how some cultural brokers misuse the power available to them when representing their institutional patrons. Meuwese (2003) suggests that some mediators were never sincerely interested in bringing the two cultures together but only accommodated to native customs and practices in order to further their own goals and those of their employers.

**Unique experiences.** Each of the people discussed in Szasz’s book followed a different path to become cultural brokers depending on their historical and cultural circumstances. Importantly, the examples in the book come from both western and Native American cultures, rather just from the indigenous side as they had been portrayed by many of the anthropologists.

These unique experiences can also be seen in other anthologies about culture brokers (e.g. Clifton, 1989; Karttunen, 1994).
Redefining the Culture Broker in Education

I mentioned above that according to the anthropology literature there was a difference between culture brokers and culture mediators but in education in particular there has been a merging of the two roles with subsequent redefinition of culture broker. This has been in a number of cross-cultural contexts, of western teachers working with African-American, Hispanic and Native American/First Nations students (Bartolome, 2002; Diamond & Moore, 1995; Diaz & Flores, 1990; Flores, Cousins & Diaz, 1991; Gay, 1993, 2000; Gentemann & Whitehead, 1983; Stairs, 1991, 1994, 1995; Wyatt, 1978/79). Other writers have looked at the role of culture brokers in various situations (Bassey, 1996: multicultural education; Cooper, Denner & Lopez, 1999: Mexican-American students; Gorman, 1999: Canadian Native students; Harris, 1999: multicultural education; Haynes, 2000: ESL); in each of these cases the term ‘culture broker’ has been used, more-or-less, uncritically.

The teachers are still change agents (culture brokers), working on behalf of institutional patrons (educational authorities or schools), but this is mitigated by their consideration of their students as clients, for whom they work as cultural mediators and negotiators. Thus Gay (1993) defines a culture broker as:

A cultural broker is one who thoroughly understands different cultural systems, is able to interpret cultural systems from one frame of reference to another, can mediate cultural incompatibilities, and knows how to build bridges or establish linkages across cultures that facilitate the instructional process (Gay, 1993, italics added).

The section in italics stresses the mediation aspect of an intermediary rather than simply the change agent aspect. Gay suggests that there are several skills necessary for teachers to become cultural brokers. These are acquiring cultural knowledge, becoming change agents and translating knowledge into practice.

Wyatt (1978/79) recommends the synthesis of the learning styles of the school and the native community (in this case, a Canadian First Nations community in British Columbia). Drawing upon Herzog’s work (1972), Wyatt (1978/79) syntheses the role of a culture broker as being based on three premises which sound more like cultural mediation:

– acceptance of both parties as being equals
– development projects should draw on the resources of both groups
– having the skills to synthesise solutions, not merely to mediate between or encourage the two parties to devise solutions.

Wyatt suggests that only native teachers have the background necessary to be effective cultural brokers because they could achieve a balance between school and community styles of learning. This may have been the case in her particular situation but other writers have shown that culture brokers can come from either cultural group (Paine, 1971).
Stairs (1991) considers that the movement from cultural inclusion to a cultural base in the conceptualisation and implementation of Native education, where there had been the progressive incorporation of schools into the Native culture, would benefit further from the presence of cultural brokers. She feels that the future directions included emerging oral and written linguistic forms, in both Native languages and English as cultural bridges, and developing Native educator roles as culture brokers between Native and Euro-Canadian ways of knowing. Stairs also sees a role for culture brokering for incorporation of certain indigenous ways of learning into mainstream formal education:

I suggest in closing that genuine two-way brokerage between Native culture and formal schooling validates Native ways of learning, responds to urgent mainstream needs, and is our collective path to success in Native education. (Stairs, 1991, p. 291)

Stairs (1994) indicates that she has moved on from this earlier culture broker idea to one of teachers as cultural negotiators.

Understanding culture is dramatically different to knowing culture … move students beyond the initial multicultural what of culture … to construct a cultural negotiation model, the how of contextualization and the why of intention and meaning… (Stairs, 1994, p. 232, her emphasis)

The idea of understanding culture fits in with the idea of border crossing to a greater extent than simply knowing culture.

Erickson (1986) suggests that because all teaching could be seen as involving intercultural communication, that:

... the teacher can be seen as a translator and as an intercultural broker. It is the teacher’s responsibility to operate in such a bridging role on behalf of all students… That role of bridging, or intercultural mediation, is a complex one. (p.123)

He points out that science is an area in which this approach could be taken.

Culture brokerage is also considered in other areas of education, including African-American education. Gentemann and Whitehead (1983) consider a two-way perspective of the culture broker and suggest that a culture broker is more than just an interpreter, although they consider knowledge of language (even an understanding of Standard and non-standard forms of English for someone working with African Americans) to be one of the cultural symbols the broker must possess. They see that the culture broker is important as a role model for those in the ethnic community who aspire to participate in mainstream activities.

What has been happening in the education literature is a melding of ideas, starting with the culture broker as a change agent and including being a mediator and for some a negotiator (like Stairs, 1994). This is not the same as the confusion between culture broker and mediator noted earlier. It has two principal components:
a change agent component, where the teacher takes into account the difference in culture in how and what they teach; this is mostly a cognitive approach

– a mediator component, where the teacher acts at a personal level with and on behalf of their students; this is primarily the affective side of their teaching.

If this merged role is to be acknowledged, it would appear that the terminology may need to be changed. On the other hand the term ‘culture broker’ seems to have become established as the favoured term used in education.

The Culture Broker in Science Education and Cultural Studies in Science Education (CSSE)


Aikenhead (2006) points out several facets of how a ‘teacher as culture broker’ should operate, particularly when working with indigenous students, including:

– they acknowledge that a border exists and motivate students to cross it by developing a relationship with them, by understanding the specific history of the students’ culture and by holding high expectations for them

– they employ the language of both the students’ culture and the culture of western science

– they explicitly keep track of which culture comprises the context of the moment and they help students resolve cultural conflicts that may arise

– they reframe the acquisition of relevant western science as an appropriation of western culture for utilitarian purposes rather than as the correct way of knowing about the world

they make the ontology of the western coloniser explicit in their classrooms thereby providing students more freedom to appropriate parts of western science without
embracing western ways of valuing nature, an appropriation Aikenhead calls ‘autonomous acculturation’.

It appears that Aikenhead uses a model of culture broker primarily as a change agent, not necessarily as a mediator. However, it is difficult when reading Aikenhead’s work to determine the characteristics of a culture broker because they are not explicitly stated. For Aikenhead, being a culture broker is another teaching strategy or role, a pragmatic action similar to the approach in Jezewski (1989, 1995).

Aikenhead links border crossing and teachers as culture brokers with Jegede’s (1995) ideas about collateral learning (Aikenhead & Jegede, 1999; Jegede & Aikenhead, 1999). He uses Lugones’ metaphor (1987) of the needs of travellers between cultures, in distinguishing the potential roles of teachers as culture brokers in the same way as travellers sometimes only need a travel agent but at other times need a travel guide. Aikenhead and Otsuji (2000) see the role of a teacher as being a culture broker for all students although not necessarily for potential scientists, and that the result of cross-cultural science teaching would be to facilitate the students’ border crossings.

Since publication, Aikenhead’s (1996, 1997) early papers have been referred to widely in the CSSE literature. Various authors highlight border crossing as a way of promoting cross-cultural science teaching, as well as in Aikenhead’s own work in developing Rekindling traditions (Aikenhead, 2000, 2001a). Barker and Hawera (2003) report on the development of primary school teaching resources using a strategy similar to that suggested by Aikenhead (1997)\(^1\). Two accounts based on the Maori science curriculum (NZ Ministry of Education, 1996), the Taha Puutaiao or science content and the Taha Maori, a Maori legend, proverb or song, are linked together to explain a western scientific concept. The source of the content in a western curriculum would be seen as the biological or earth sciences. Teachers were able to reflect (over time) on their own ability to move from the world of family and friends to the world of school science, using Costa’s (1995) original scale.

Among their conclusions, Barker and Hawera (2003) see that the approach had made the cultural links explicit: “the task encouraged the teachers, personally, to bring their own cultural heritage to the domain of science schooling, and to conceive the latter in cultural terms” (p.12). Aikenhead’s early work introduced me to the concept of culture broker which I used in a number of papers (e.g. Michie, 1998, 2004; Michie, Anlezark & Uibo, 1998; Michie & Linkson, 1999, 2000). When Linkson and I collaborated in writing a handbook for science teachers of indigenous students (NTDE, 2000), it was developed around border crossing and the ‘teacher as culture broker’ idea. Chigeza (2007) describes the need for indigenous students learning western science to make smooth transitions or border crossings into western science.

At the same time as Aikenhead has been using culture brokerage, Hodson (1999, 2001, 2002) uses the idea of ‘teacher as anthropologist’. According to Hodson (2001), Medvitz (1997) argues “that science could be learned in much the same way as an anthropologist learns another culture”. Hodson recognises that the
concepts, procedures and language of science as cultural artefacts are susceptible to systematic study. He expresses some concern that science education should illustrate the interactions of science with other human agencies, its impacts on the physical and social environment, and its use and sometimes misuse for ideological purposes. Gitari (2003) refers to Hodson’s work in her examination of the integration of indigenous knowledge and skills into the Kenyan science curriculum. However, ‘teacher as anthropologist’ is not the same as ‘teacher as culture broker’. Aikenhead (1997) suggests that in the same way as cultural anthropologists do not necessarily accept the cultural ways of their subjects, teachers as anthropologists are raiding science for items which may be of interest to their students, a process he terms ‘autonomous acculturation’.

More recently, Ryan (2008) has referred to use of cultural mediators in the development of science education curriculum. Seen from her postcolonial perspective, cultural mediators are conciliators bringing together people and their stories, a reference for the necessity to include traditional knowledges rather than their exclusion from neo-colonial curriculum development. Ryan also sees that cultural mediators “understand the need for healing, restoring, and making amends for past neo-colonial activities” (p.20). To do this science educators need to be challenged and open to new ideas and ways of doing and thinking.

Criticism of ‘Teacher as Culture Broker’

Criticism of the idea of ‘teacher as culture broker’ has come from the perspective of postcolonial theory, particularly looking at the power relationships between teacher and student (McKinley, 2001; McKinley & Stewart, 2009). One of their criticisms is that western science teachers only need to learn how to deal with pedagogical aspects of cross-cultural differences, rather than dealing with the teachers’ views of their students’ abilities as learners or the validity of their knowledge. A second criticism is that if western teachers can learn to become culture brokers, then seemingly there may be no role for indigenous people in the educational enterprise.

Carter’s criticism (2004) that ‘teachers as culture brokers’ focuses on implementing the western science curriculum is probably well-founded because there are still few instances in the literature of the inclusion of indigenous science as part of school science (e.g. Aikenhead, 2001a; Michie, 2002, 2005); more often than not such inclusion would fit a ‘teacher as anthropologist’ style as examples fitting a western science profile (Ninnes, 2000).

The notion of teaching western science implies that the teacher is working to a western curriculum, including western knowledge and concepts at the expense of traditional, indigenous or local science. However, the role of culture broker has been seen by some authors to enable the retention of local knowledge for indigenous students (e.g. Aikenhead, 2001a; Chigeza, 2007; Linkson, 1998; Michie & Linkson, 1999; NTDE, 2000). The culture broker may also make indigenous knowledge available to western students (e.g. Michie, 2005; Michie, Anlezark & Uibo, 1998).
CHAPTER 2

Concluding remarks  Culture brokers were initially seen in anthropology as change agents working between different strata of a society. Over time, both the role and context have changed and the idea is seen to apply between societies. Paine’s (1971) middleman model can be used to demonstrate the evolution of the culture broker idea.

Firstly, there were two intermediary positions between the patron and the client; these were the cultural broker and the go-between. The cultural broker was the change agent, the go-between a mediator; however, modern trends, particularly in education, have seen a melding of the two roles. A teacher can be seen as a culture broker, enacting change (i.e. students’ learning), while at the same time mediating or negotiating with their students about how this is to occur in their classroom.

Secondly, Paine saw that cultural brokerage was useful in cross-cultural situations; this applies also in education and has been considered particularly in indigenous education. It has been seen to be significant in science education where science can be considered as a different culture to that of the student.

Thirdly, Paine realised that the broker could in fact be an employee working on behalf of an institution rather than an individual patron; I identify them by using the term ‘institutional patron’. In education the ‘institutional patron’ can be the ministry of education, the local educational authority or the school or some combination of them.

In enacting the role of ‘teacher as culture broker’, a teacher needs to be working at the cognitive and the affective levels, capable of merging what is often portrayed as the dichotomy between subject and student. This role combines the two aspects of being an intermediary, culture broker and mediator.

The ethnohistory literature characterises the culture broker as having an interest in the other culture and openness to others, and teachers can acknowledge this by being inclusive of the other culture in their teaching. A desire for power is identified also in the literature, but is better interpreted for teachers as exercising their power responsibly.

THE NEXUS BETWEEN BORDER CROSSING AND CULTURE BROKERAGE

Earlier I looked at the characteristics of westerners who work with indigenous people. Using the border crossing metaphor I suggested they can be categorised into one of four or five groups depending on their experiences. Then I described the idea of culture brokerage and how the literature has described the role of the culture broker in a number of settings. Here I firstly make the distinction between border crossing and culture brokerage.

– Border crossing is the ability of people to move metaphorically between cultures. They may identify themselves or be identified as border crossers primarily because of their interest in and understanding of the other culture. They can be aligned with one of five groups because of the nature of their experiences with the
other group, in some cases their initial experiences and for others their long-term experiences.

Using the identity learning model of Geijsel and Meijers (2005) it can be shown that a border crosser enhances their identity learning as a response to exposure to another culture, in both cognitive and affective ways. I suggested earlier that this might happen as a response to culture shock when first living in an indigenous community. However, some people do not respond positively to or do not wish to engage with the other culture, so they do not respond to identity enhancement nor undergo a border crossing. I distinguished a spectrum of five border crossing positions based on the literature; the first two, border flee-ers and border liners represent failure at border crossing; the next two, border crossers and border workers, represent two different levels of engagement, the former as forays and the latter as longer-term commitment; the fifth position, border mergers, I suggest as a response to cross-culturalists who come to believe that cultural borders no longer exist for them.

-- Culture brokerage is a strategy which an individual can be used to promote cross-cultural understanding. They adopt the role of culture broker to achieve a particular cross-cultural outcome.

Secondly, I expand on two ideas that were originally addressed in the anthropology literature, the marginal person and the intermediary, which I believe are the basis for the two positions, border crosser and culture broker respectively. Above as I discussed the terminology used in anthropology I suggested that the marginal person and the intermediary describe two different aspects which may coincide in an individual. I suggested there that marginality is an identity issue, of how an individual identifies themselves whereas the intermediary positions are roles which a person can choose to undertake. Also I suggested there that the confusion between the two arises from an assumption made by early researchers that marginal people would be best suited to be intermediaries and thus they conflated the two ideas.

-- The border crosser can be traced back to the ‘marginal man’; the marginal person was considered to be of mixed or hybrid heritage whereas a border crosser can be considered to be potentially of hybrid culture.

The term ‘hybrid’ originated as a biological term for the offspring of two animals or plants of different species but it has also been used for offspring of human parents of different races as a synonym for intermarriage or miscegenation (McKinley, 2003; Webber, 2008) and pejorative terms such as ‘half-caste’. Park (1928) uses hybrid in terms of culture where somebody who came under the influence of two differing cultures resolves them as a cultural hybrid. Hybridity has been used more recently by Bhabha (1994) in the context of both race and culture and he uses the term ‘third space’ to describe metaphorically the merging of the two cultures. Webber (2008) uses Bhabha’s terminology when describing the hybrid nature of the dual heritages.
CHAPTER 2

of many Maori/Pakeha in New Zealand, regarding the third space as liberating and opening new ways of thinking about New Zealand culture. Goodenough (1971) and Wolcott (1991) use ‘propriospect’, a similar idea to hybrid but with limited uptake, used to describe how each individual’s unique version of culture is aggregated through their experiences.

– The culture broker is one of the two main intermediary positions or roles identified in the anthropology literature but the distinction between the two, culture broker and cultural mediator or go-between, is poorly defined and often merges in the one individual.

Culture brokers need to see some value in the other culture which is a characteristic of a border crosser. Szasz (2001) sees that cultural brokers are interested in the other culture and consider it offers something of value, seemingly identifying them as border crossers. She also sees cultural brokers as having a desire for power and there is evidence that cultural brokerage has been used exploitatively (e.g. Dunning, 1959; Meuwese, 2003). The situation would seem to be contradictory and depends on whom the brokerage is done for, the patron, the broker or the client. However, there is a perception in education that both aspects of the intermediary position can be involved, with the teacher as culture broker implementing the curriculum and also being a mediator for the needs of their students.

NOTES

1 In 1994 I became Principal Education Officer Science for the NT Department of Education. At the time the department was engaged in a Commonwealth-funded project to develop science materials for Indigenous students. Although it was not my direct responsibility, I took an interest in the project. A question I asked early on was, “What are they doing overseas?” This led me to investigate and from then on I have maintained an interest in the area.

2 This alternative terminology was introduced by Costa (1995).

3 The Yolngu are Indigenous Australians from Northeast Arnhemland in the Northern Territory of Australia.

4 Webber (2008) describes a similar Maori imagery, of a river flowing and the water moving back and forth from one side to the other.

5 Balanda is the Yolngu name for westerners, derived from ‘Hollander’ as the Dutch were the first westerners the Yolngu met.

6 Haig-Brown (1990) includes among the missionaries those “touting a variety of panaceas” (p.232) as well as operatives from organised religion, an understanding similar to Christie’s (1995) modernist missionaries.

7 Sojourners are distinguished from migrants and refugees on the one hand, and tourists on the other, depending on the length of their stay and their motives for geographic movement (Weissman & Furnham, 1987, p.313).


9 Green (1983) describes two separate sets of experiences, firstly as a teacher in Warburton in 1966, then later as a teacher education lecturer whose travels took him into many other remote indigenous communities.
A second group consists of those who tried to take part in the local culture “to learn about other lifeways that would have made their stays in those countries far more pleasant and interesting” (p.566). Richards (1996) suggests that this response is less likely to occur because it is more difficult. Using my classification I suggest that this group is the same as the cross-cultural group.

The Dene people are First Nations people from the North West Territories of Canada.

The third, reintegration phase of Pederson’s model of culture shock (1995) is exemplified by anger directed at the host community. I suggest that the expatriate group do not develop beyond this phase of culture shock and their negative attitudes towards their hosts are a modification of an earlier anger at the community.

Pakeha Maori is the term given to a group of westerners, mostly men, who moved into Maori society during the early days of colonial New Zealand (Bentley, 1999).

Stanner (1979) is titled White man got no dreaming, which seems to parallel this trope occasionally heard in Australia and sometimes used by westerners. Its origin seems to be uncertain.

Similarly, Kleinfeld’s traditionalist teacher and Hanrahan’s access-limiting teacher also share negative characteristics such as distancing from students.

As both terms ‘culture broker’ and ‘cultural broker’ have been used interchangeably, I will use culture broker except where the original authors have used cultural broker.

Much of the terminology used in describing the cross-cultural positions and roles in the literature is expressed in the masculine as used at that time. I have attempted to use gender-neutral language although I occasionally need to resort to the original terms.

Meuwese (2003) suggests that some middlemen (sic) were never sincerely interested in bringing the two cultures together but only accommodated to native customs and practices in order to further their own goals and those of their employers (cf. Dunning, 1959; Paine, 1971).

A similar situation occurs in some of the health care literature about culture brokering.

In a number of cases the ‘bridge’ metaphor has been used to describe the role of a culture broker (Erickson, 1986; Gay, 1993). This metaphor resonates with the idea of border crossing. It will be considered in more detail below where the nexus between border crossing and culture brokerage is examined.

Aikenhead (1997, p.28) describes a technique of dividing the page or blackboard into two and labelling them ‘my idea’ on the left and ‘subculture of science’ on the right.

A similar situation occurs in some of the health care literature about culture brokering.