

Appendix 1

Policy On Collecting And Processing Crow Cultural Materials

Replicated for this publication from original materials



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You will have noticed a reference to the “Policy on Collecting and Processing Crow Cultural Materials” on the copyright page of all BMDC culturally oriented books and materials. This policy was approved by the Crow Culture Committee on May 2, 1972, and is our guide in all development of new and revised curriculum materials. It is reproduced here for your information.

Policy On Collecting And Processing Crow Cultural Materials

A Creed

WE BELIEVE that the language, lore, history, and customs of the Crow People belong to them and their wishes for the uses of their language and cultural information shall be respected and honored. Final approval of the Curriculum for the Crow children shall be sought from the Crows.

WE RESPECT the individual artist (painter, singer, story teller, writer) and shall make every effort to protect his work and seek his approval in its use.

WE ENTRUST the teaching of the Crow language and customs into the hands of native Crow Indian Teachers trained in educational methods and place upon them the responsibility for doing the best possible job, tirelessly checking with their people for authenticity and seeking approval of their teaching.

Collection of Materials

EVERY EFFORT is made by the Bilingual-Bicultural Staff to contact resource people and consultants in the different districts of the Crow Indian Reservation.

EVERY EFFORT is being made to try to discover recognized experts in the various areas (legend, lore, language, history, song) including the elder tribal members and the Crow Culture Committee and to consult them.

EVERY EFFORT is being made to find books and other references on Crows and other Indians to be used as background information.

EVERY EFFORT is made to honestly record and document (as to name of informant and date) all information, in both the Crow language and in English.

If there is more than one version of a story or legend, or song, or more than one interpretation, each will be recorded and documented for we know that when there is no written language, there are many spoken versions depending on the memory and point of view of the teller.

If anyone has another version, we invite and welcome his idea. Whenever a controversy occurs between versions of a story, legend, song, or interpretation, we will search for other Crow informants and seek help of noted Crows in resolving the controversy.

Developing Lessons

When information is accumulated, these steps will be followed in developing lessons for children:

- Step 1. We constantly seek the help of Crow people in the choice and development of lessons to be taught in school.
- Step 2. Material is tentatively classified under language, culture, environment, or logical processes.
- Step 3. Teachers select a sequence of materials and prepare text and materials for teaching children in their classrooms according to the abilities, achievements and age levels of these children.
- Step 4. The lessons are tried with children and necessary changes are made or suggestions for use at a higher level if the lesson seems too hard, or a lower level if too easy.

A concept may be simplified to fit children or saved until the child is older.

If there is more than one version or interpretation of a story or concept, the teacher may (1) teach all versions if the children will not be confused and permit each child to select his version; (2) select one and save the others until later; or (3) accept one version as chosen by expert Crows.

If a controversy exists, teachers will get ideas from more informants, choose according to expert opinion, according to good sense, and according to the children's age and ability.

Some concepts are not in the Crow language yet, as polygon in mathematics or seahorse in science. In such instances, teachers will (1) discuss among themselves and choose words and make vocabulary lists of such; (2)

let the children describe and use the children's words; or (3) seek guidance from experts. Word lists will be established and revised when necessary. Eventually there will be a Crow dictionary, grammar, and spelling book, as well as Crow readers.

The Problem of Two Cultures

Whenever people of two cultures meet, there are differences, because people of each culture have different ways, different customs, different ideas of what is good and right.

Children may become confused if home teaches one thing and school another; if one adult teaches one way and another adult another way. We must try to get together and understand each other and try to help children learn, and not confuse them.

We must try to help children be comfortable with each other and with members and in environments of either culture. We must help children respect and permit the differences of other people and other cultures. Children should do this without losing their own dignity and respect for their own culture.

We must give each child good and authentic information about his own and other cultures and then permit him the freedom as he grows to choose his own way.

Translation of Materials From One Language to Another

It is necessary that teachers have materials with which to work in the classroom. One rich and attractive source of materials for use in one language is a story or song already told or sung in the other language. The temptation to translate from Crow to English to Crow, for example, is therefore very strong and in some instances very appropriate; and at other times translations are not possible or recommended, as in the following instances:

- (1) Some concepts cannot be translated from one language to the other because the second language does not have the words at all.
- (2) Some concepts in one language have no simple counterpart in another language and a cumbersome structure in the new language would result in the event of a translation.
- (3) Some concepts cannot be translated because they are language and culture bound. Without the environment of the culture, the semantics or connotations, the concept has no relevancy, perhaps even no meaning at all.
- (4) Some concepts are sacred to the people whose language and culture contain the concept. The people don't desire translations and respect for these people suggests that their wishes be honored.

- (5) Emotional feelings may be related to the language of expression and become lost in translation.

Therefore, if translation destroys or distorts the meaning in any way or prevents the emotional impact desired, translating is not recommended.

Procedure for Translations:

- (1) If teachers have a story or song they wish translated, they first seek advice and guidance of an authority about the appropriateness of the translation.
- (2) If approval by the Crow consultants to the Bilingual Program is given to translate, the translation is made in the best structural expression of whichever language the new form takes – the best English or the best Crow, as judged by a fluent user of the language.
- (3) If a simplified version of a story or legend for use with children can be made without destroying or distorting the meaning, such a version will be prepared by the teachers for use with children. If not, that story or legend may be saved for older children or for use later on or for other use.
- (4) The translated version will be taken to the authoritative group (the Crow Culture Committee or its equivalent) for approval for use in the classroom.
- (5) Lessons and materials to accompany the translated piece will be prepared by the teachers, tried out with children and revised before becoming a part of a published curriculum.

WE REPEAT, if in any way translation will result in damage to the meaning of the beauty of a selection, translation is not recommended.

Seeking Approval

We try to present our lessons to the Crow people and to explain our choices of what and how to teach.

We welcome and invite criticisms and we make revisions where they need to be made.

Finally, we present our curriculum to the Crow people or to a formal committee representing the Crow people (such as the Crow Culture Committee) for formal approval before publishing in the final printed form.

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