

Revitalisation of Indigenous traditions in food preparation

Abstract

Sustaining a local language and knowledge is an important factor for the wellbeing and identities of First Nations people. This research aims to understand the transmission of the Kunwinjku language and knowledge around food and examine some ways of supporting it. This project is based on intercultural collaborative work. The researcher – Tereza – has worked with members of the community of Gunbalanya, West Arnhem Land, speakers of the Kunwinjku language. The aim of the project is to build upon Kunwinjku pedagogies - primarily oral, person-to-person, relational teaching through visuals and stories – to support Kunwinjku food knowledge and language transmission. Part of this project is to find research methods suitable for our situation where people from different backgrounds meet. I mainly employ participatory action research and appreciative inquiry. To support food knowledge transmission, the project leaders co-designed a card game and tested the game with various people involved in the community of Gunbalanya, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Preliminary results show that playing a game together creates a safe and fruitful space for sharing, with the potential for great adjustability to particular participants and their wants and needs. This work is relevant to people involved in language revitalization and maintenance efforts.