Hello friends.
My name is Tracey Cameron. I am a Gamilaraay woman. I come from New South Wales, Australia. Today I will be talking about my work (research project) teaching primary aged children Gamilaraay, a reawakening language.
Yaama maliyaa


Gamilaraay Country
Background

- A language being reawakened
- Documentation
  - from 1832 → reconstruction in recent decades
  - written and audio recordings of partial speakers
  - learners guide, dictionary and short texts
- The challenge - a living language again

My research project

- MILE and Gamilaraay language course
- The school
- The class
- An Aboriginal perspective
• My Question: How do beginner level students effectively acquire and retain Gamilaraay language - vocabulary and structures?
• A gap in the literature
• The project – using a communicative approach systematically comparing the effectiveness of
  – literacy-focused strategies and
  – orally-focused strategies

Which teaching approach to take?
• Communicative approach
  - incorporate LSRW; social view of language; meaning & grammar; fluency & accuracy; eclectic; learner autonomy; maximum use of the target language, prioritises interaction and use of the language
• Consistent with community priorities
  - Parent suggestions: Kids need to speak their language, I never learned how to speak my language, I want my kids to talk their lingo
  - Uncle Ken Walker: My dream, my personal dream is to one day be able to walk down anywhere in my country and hear my people speak my language rather than English
• Applied to a revitalising language
  - a challenge to be well-prepared and one step ahead of the learners; and to teach language useful outside the classroom
Literacy activities:
games, eg Dhii Maniilalayndaay (Animal Hunt)

Oracy activities:
card games, eg Gaba Dhiyaan (Happy Families)
Findings

Animals (literacy)

Family (oracy)

Discussion

My analysis
• based on the data, my observations and student feedback

Literacy focus
• initial acquisition high (post-test) due to novelty factor & environmental print support

Oracy focus
• longer term retention (delayed post-test) due to high level of interest in the games & the lack of print support
Conclusion
What’s needed?
- communicative activities work
- a balance between literacy and oracy
- strategies for developing memory skills

Limitations
- 2 topics
- order of topics
- timing of research
- absent students limit data

Additional outcomes
and future directions

• my own language proficiency
• community support and involvement
• ongoing revitalisation of Gamilaraay