

TOOLKIT

Semi-Structured Interviewing about Inuit Food Knowledge



INTRODUCTION

Interviews can allow us to learn more about the person being interviewed, their experiences and perspectives. Semi-structured interviews are a form of interview where some questions are prepared in advance as guiding tools, but other topics may be explored as they arise.

INTERVIEW TIPS

- Bring some cookies or treats to the person you are interviewing, and have a cup of tea or water with them if they would like. This can help to create a comfortable environment.
- Sit facing the person you are interviewing.
- There may be times where there is a pause. This is okay. You can leave a few moments of silence and then move on to the next question.
- Ask if background noises like TV, radio can be switched off during the interview.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Setting up the interview

1. Call or visit the person you are interested in speaking with and let them know what you are working on and ask if they would be interested in taking part.
2. Let the person know how long the session might take.
3. Schedule a time that works for the participant and call ahead the day before to make sure this time still works.

4. Prepare a few questions specific to the topic you will be discussing. Write down anything you want to know.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Asking for consent

Consent is an important part of any research project, to ensure the participant knows what is involved in their participation and can decide if they want to move forward and how their information will be used.

Some participants will want to read the information sheet on their own, while others may want you to read it to them or summarize it. A copy of the consent form should be given to the participant to keep, and the interviewer should keep the signed page. The retained consent form outlines the study's rewards, risks, and the overall process.

Consent is an ongoing process. If the participant looks uncomfortable or indicates they would like to stop the interview, this is okay, and you should stop, thank them for their time, and end the session.

Introduce yourself and the project

Example introduction:

"My name is X, and I'm working on a research project about Inuit food. Hopefully this can help young people, and anyone interested learn more about traditional food and how to prepare it.

Do you have any questions about the consent form, or my research more generally? If any questions do come up, feel free to ask me now, or contact me using the information on the sheet.

I would like this interview to be more like a conversation, so if there's anything you are thinking about, or if you want to raise your own ideas, please feel free to do so. If you are uncomfortable at any time, we can skip a question, or stop the interview completely. This is not a problem for me at all."

After the Interview

- Say thank you and give them a gift and/or honorarium.
- Ask them if they have any questions for you.
- Let the person know that you will provide more information when the final product is released.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE (EXAMPLE)

Background

This project takes a semi-structured narrative interview approach. Therefore, these questions are guiding tools, rather than a strict structure like a questionnaire. Other topics may be explored as they arise.

The purpose of this narrative approach is to understand community member's perspectives on food systems and animal health. We are working on a project about Inuit food, and feel it is important to learn more about the local food system and environment that the food comes from.

Participants will read and sign a consent form before the interview begins. With written consent, the interview will be filmed. It is expected that the interview will take around 1 hour, to ensure the participant has enough time to express themselves fully. Interviews will take place in the participant's home, a community center, or other location of their choosing.

Interviewer Introduction

"My name is X, and I'm working on a research study about the digital documentation of Inuit food knowledge. Do you have any questions about the consent form, or my research more generally? If any questions do come up, feel free to ask me now, or contact me via the information on the sheet.

I would like this interview to be more like a conversation, so if there's anything you are thinking about, or if you want to raise your topic, please feel free to do so. If you are uncomfortable at any time, we can skip a question, or stop the interview completely. This is not a problem for me at all."

Guiding Questions

1. Can you please tell me a little bit about yourself?

- Name, home community, age, gender, occupation, etc.

2. Can you tell me about your experience on the land?

- What animals do you usually hunt?
- Who did you learn from?
- How long have you been going on the land?
- What is your favourite thing to hunt?

3. Have you (or your community) observed any changes to the land or animals over your time hunting or being on the land?

- What specific changes have you observed?
- Any changes to appearance/taste/texture of animals?
- Any changes to migration patterns or availability of animals where you hunt?
- Why do you feel these changes occurred?
- When did you notice these changes?
- Have you heard this from other people as well?
- Have you noticed any changes in animal health?
- Can you tell me about a specific time that you noticed changes while on the land?

4. Has the way you hunt changed in recent years?

- How has it changed?
- How have hunting quotas affected the way you hunt?
- How do you feel about any changes?
- How has the community adapted?

5. How do any environmental changes you've observed impact the community?

- Is there the same access to food? How is this changing?
- How do changes impact the food system as a whole?

6. Why do you think these changes are occurring?

- What makes you think this?
- How do any environmental changes you've observed impact the community?

7. What would you like to see happen to support Inuit food in your community?

- Who would you like to see supporting community initiatives?
- What resources or support does your community need to support Inuit food?
- What would food security look like in your community?

8. Is there anything else you would like to share?

- Do you have any questions for me?

Conclusion

Thank you so much for participating in this project. If you have consented to me contacting you in the future, I may be in touch with some follow up questions. If you have asked that I send you a final report about the results, I will do so when it is complete. Your perspective has been very helpful and I'm thankful for you sharing your thoughts.

Participants will be given a gift/honorarium at the end of the session.