

NATURAL HISTORIES OF YUP'IK MEMOIRS

By

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Abstract

This thesis explores how cultural knowledge is committed to textual form and circulated within and outside of linguistically marginalized communities. Working within a Central Yup'ik context, I have focused my research on collections of Yup'ik elders' memoirs housed within the Alaska Native Language Archive. Published Yup'ik elders' memoirs offer rich descriptions of Yup'ik cultural histories, epistemologies and statements about language, the expression and inclusion of which varies based on the interactional contexts, participant frameworks and funding institutions through which they were produced. This study incorporates both Indigenous and non-Indigenous theoretical frameworks related to the process of entextualization, or text creation, and the transmission of cultural knowledge. Drawing from archival materials and interviews with participants involved in their production and circulation, I identify the relevant linguistic ideologies and participant frameworks involved in the creation of these publications or "text artifacts" and frame my analysis with respect to the following research questions: How have published memoirs of Yup'ik elders emerged as a culturally salient genre of text? Who are the primary participants in the production, publication and circulation of Yup'ik memoirs? How do issues of identity, agency, authenticity and essentialism shape the form, thematic content and circulation of Yup'ik memoirs in Alaska? This thesis seeks to identify the primary participants and ideologies contributing to the publication of Yup'ik elders' memoirs, as well as the visibility or erasure of these actors within the published text of the memoirs. I further explore the specific ways in which individual voices, tribal, political and academic institutions and their ideological goals presuppose and contribute to broader cultural processes and shape the linguistic structure and content of textual artifacts produced.

Although the documentation, description and analysis of Yup'ik language and culture has received sustained attention both within and outside the academy, this project is the first to investigate the processes and participant frameworks through which traditional Yup'ik cultural knowledge is entextualized and circulated as contemporary published text. This research offers significant insights into the collaborative efforts of Native and non-Native participants in the production of Yup'ik textual materials, while also contributing to a broader understanding of ideological goals and obstacles relative to processes of entextualization within communities facing marginalization or language endangerment within, and outside of, the circumpolar north. An analysis of the participants and ideologies shaping the production and circulation of Yup'ik memoirs provides an empirical framework for understanding the relationship between text artifacts and ongoing cultural processes, and contributes to an increasingly reflexive approach to anthropological and sociolinguistic research concerning identity, authenticity and the entextualization of traditional knowledge.

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Chapter 1 Opening Vignettes: From Boas to Contemporary Ethnography

October 4, 1883, Kikkerton, Baffin Island

The time nearing 8 o'clock, a flurry of snow dusts the cool night air where the home of Oxaitung flickers and glows in the surrounding darkness of the village. Inside, an oil lamp flame produces a single, wavering strand of black smoke that curls up and around itself disappearing into the steam of the now boiling kettle on the stove. There, Oxaitung's wife stands preparing a small meal of tea and bread that will sustain the hushed cadence of the evening's storytelling.

Ears still ringing faintly with the muffled scrape of the sleds from the afternoon's journey across the snowy fjords of Davis Strait, the work of the arctic researchers now continues quietly from the igloo floor. A young Franz Boas splays out over caribou skins near the far wall, waiting for the inkwell tucked deep inside his sleeping bag to thaw enough for him to copy the penciled notes he made hastily during the day's travels. Across from him sits James Mutch, a Danish geologist who has lived in the area for the last several years along with his Inuit wife. With Mutch as his translator, Boas is able to inquire about the local routes and place names, patiently drawn out into maps for him over the course of the last week by various community members and visiting elders. Each question spurs a storied response, and the couple's lamplit faces undulate with emotion as their conversations with Mutch lapse intermittently into laughter and long silences. His own command of the language limited, Boas extracts what he can from the gestures and tones of his informants, latching onto familiar words and phrases until he becomes lost again. It is in this way, through the successive passage of long afternoons and evenings spent in translated interactions, that Boas begins to understand the sustaining relationships linking Ukumiut communities with their surroundings. Details on the language and topography of Cumberland Sound resurface in his descriptions of human-environmental relations as he observed them on Baffin Island, some of which would remain privately in his journals and letters from the field while others became visible in the published ethnographic literature that stemmed from these encounters.

July 2011, Pastuliq, Lower Yukon River region, Alaska

"Our travels began mid-July when archaeologist Steve Street, geologist Nick Riordan (my son), and I flew from Anchorage and Bethel to Kotlik, where we stayed with Isidore and Angela Hunt, who would lead the Kotlik-area trip. The morning after we arrived we met at the Kotlik Tribal Council office to plan our route. Along with Isidore and Angela, our group included Patrick Kameroff and three youth chosen by the elders - JoAllyn Johnson and Juwan Akaran (the Hunts' grandchildren) and Deon Aketachunak (Patrick's long-time partner's grandson). JoAllyn was giving up a week of work at Kwik'pak Fisheries in Emmonak to travel with us. She routinely rode with her grandparents, recording place

names with her iPad while I wrote them down the old-fashioned way in a small waterproof notebook (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. xlv)."

"Our first stop was Pastuliq, among the oldest and most important prehistoric sites on the delta. An old dredge lay rotting along the bank, and the kids climbed up the huge rusty wood-burners for a high view. After walking over the tundra toward the above-ground graves, we gathered as a group. I took out my tape recorder, laid it on the ground, and handed Isidore the microphone. Isidore began, talking about his experiences at Pastuliq and memories of people who had lived there. When he was done, he handed the mic to Patrick, then Angela, then the students, and each took turns speaking about Pastuliq and their experiences there. This was a pattern we would repeat at dozens of sites throughout the delta. Elders would speak in Yup'ik for the recordings, later adding stories in English informally in the boats or over meals so that the youth, most of whom could not speak Yup'ik, would understand (2014, p. xlvi)."

"Group dynamics changed each week, although the general pattern remained the same. Each village formed its own group, choosing the elders who in turn chose the young people who would accompany us. Working in Kotlik, we had been welcomed into a large, hospitable family with Isidore, Angela and Patrick working together and planning beforehand what they wanted us to see. Ray Waska's energetic personality kept us moving at an even faster clip during our week traveling out from his camp, our route often depending on the tide and weather conditions we encountered along the way. One day we covered close to 150 miles and were gone from camp over fourteen hours with one break for a snack and another stop on the coast to roast seal meat and wait for the incoming tide so that we could head home. Peter was the eldest, and his good friend Ray never let him forget it, always deferring to him while teasing him in the process (2014, p. 1)."

1.1 Creating Text from Indigenous Knowledge

The prose descriptions above provide a comparative glimpse into historic and contemporary methods of documenting and circulating Indigenous cultural knowledge. The first vignette describing the work of Boas and Wilke on Baffin Island during their 1883-1884 research expedition is one I have composed based on available published letters, diaries and journals from the field, in which both men describe methods of data collection, daily routines and participant interactions (Müller-Wille 1998; Stocking 1966, 1984). The second passage is a compilation of contextual details provided by Fienup-Riordan in her introduction to *Nunamta Ellamta-Ilu Ayuqucia/ What Our Land and World Are Like* (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014), the most recent publication by the Calista Elders Council (CEC), produced as part of the CEC's ongoing work in documenting Yup'ik elders' cultural knowledge and lived experiences.

Figures 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 below map the contexts of data collection in each of the above

descriptions, illustrating some of the overlaps and differences in past and contemporary methods of documentation and resultant circulating cultural texts.

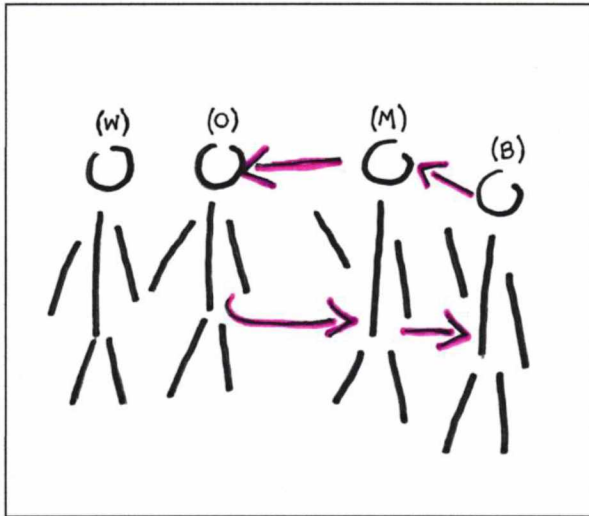


Figure 1.1.1 Interactional Context of Boas (B), Mutch, Oxaitung (O) and Oxaitung's wife¹ (W)

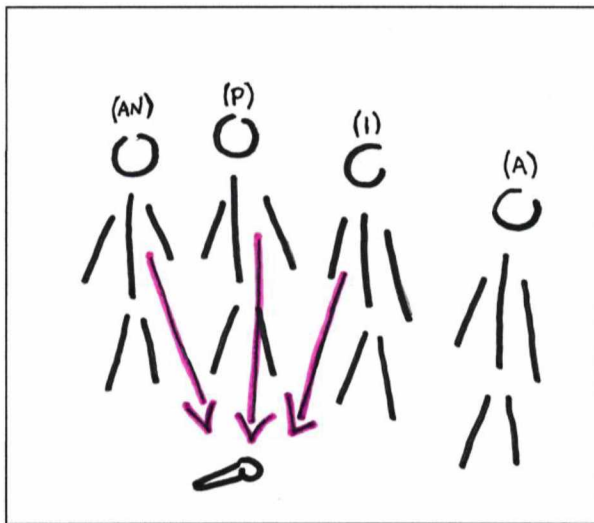


Figure 1.1. 2 Interactional Context of Anne (A), Isidore (I), Patrick (P) and Angela (A)

In Figure 1.1.1 we see a context in which questions originate from a researcher (Boas), are translated by an interpreter (Mutch), with the translated question answered by a Native informant (Oxaitung), and the answer then translated back to the researcher. In contrast, Figure 1.1.2 shows an interactional context in which all participants communicate in the same language, with information

¹ As is the case with many female informants in Boas' journals, letters and reports, Oxaitung's wife was not identified by name.

originating from Native participants (Isidore, Patrick and Angela), who direct their comments into a microphone, and in which the researcher (Anne) occupies a listening role, asking only clarifying questions as needed. A more detailed analysis of these interactional contexts will follow throughout my analysis, however for now it is important to note that each speech situation led to the production of significantly different textual documentation of Indigenous cultural knowledge. Boas' description was a product of his time; throughout the 19th century, it was common for non-Native linguists, folklorists and other academic researchers to gather information from Native subjects with the aid of bilingual "informants." Questions formulated by the researcher were often translated into the local language by a bilingual informant, who then listened to the response and translated the elicited information back to the researcher. In the case of Boas' research among the Ukumiut of Baffin Island, the data he collected through his travels and interviews with Native subjects was recorded into his field notes in German, his own mother tongue, and later circulated both privately in letters to his family and friends as well as publicly in academic and scientific literature of the time. English translations of Boas' 1883-1884 work within Ukumiut communities were only made available a century later, in 1998, with the goal of reaching a broader English speaking readership, including the descendants of those with whom Boas had lived and studied on Baffin Island (Müller-Wille 1998).

Understanding the different processes through which local Indigenous knowledge is documented and circulated publicly within and outside of southwestern Alaska, calls for a detailed exploration of the socio-political, ideological and interactional frameworks comprising the contextual background from which my selection of bilingual publications has emerged.

The opening vignettes in this paper illustrate that there is a deep history of cultural documentation and ethnographic research in Alaska and other regions in the circumpolar north, and that this work continues to be carried out in contemporary contexts through the collaborative efforts of Native and non-Native scholars, researchers, community leaders and local residents. As Woodbury (2003) describes, past methods of cultural and linguistic documentation, such as those used by Boas during the late 19th century, have informed the processes through which this work is carried out in contemporary contexts. However, a notable difference between the work of Boas and that of the CEC is the anticipated audience and means of circulating the cultural knowledge collected. While Boas published his materials to be read primarily by anthropologists, linguists and other academic researchers in the context of salvage ethnography, the CEC-produced bilingual publications are produced in contexts of perceived *language endangerment*, and are therefore intended to reach an audience of Yup'ik language speakers, learners and community members who identify with a shared Yup'ik cultural heritage.

According to Woodbury (2003), by the early 1990's, linguists and other social scientists working within marginalized Indigenous communities had grown increasingly concerned with the rapid decline of

global linguistic diversity, and began framing these concerns in terms of language endangerment (2003, p. 4). In response, the Linguistic Society of America (LSA) established the Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation in 1992, emphasizing the value of collaborative, community-based projects for Indigenous language revitalization and documentation. As a result of increasing scholarly interest, media attention, and public awareness surrounding threats to linguistic diversity, national and corporate foundations (such as the US Endangered Language Fund) began to emerge as centers of funding, community outreach and research opportunities. Global recognition of Indigenous languages has grown out of the efforts of multiple organizations, scholars and community activists, and one key product of these efforts is the participation of communities facing language shift in the creation of linguistic and cultural materials.

That ideas and discourses of *language endangerment* are part of the contextual background in Alaska is evidenced not only in works produced by the CEC. In a 2012 ethnography of a Yup'ik village given the pseudonym of Piniq, discusses the ways in which perceptions of language endangerment have contributed to community members' desire to document elders' cultural knowledge:

Very little of the elders' extensive knowledge of ecology, systems of navigation, strategies for resource harvesting or past cultural practices had been recorded at the time of the study. This created a general sense in Piniq, as in other areas of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Native Alaska, that when the current generation of elders passed away, thousands of years of orally accumulated knowledge and Yup'ik history would go with them. A related drive to record elders' knowledge and *qanruyutait* motivated multiple projects documenting elders' narratives in the Yup'ik region from 1980 to 2000 (p. 39).

My project aims to understand how contexts of language endangerment shape the production, circulation and political role of a particular set of bilingual Yup'ik-English texts produced by the CEC. Drawing from a combination of archival research, participant observation as a Yup'ik language learner, and interviews, this project explores participant voices and interactional contexts from which a new genre of published Yup'ik elders' shared knowledge and stories has emerged. As explained in greater detail in this chapter, I use the term *memoir* to describe this category of expressive cultural literature. I respond to the following questions in the remainder of my thesis:

1. How have published memoirs of Yup'ik elders emerged as a culturally salient genre of text?
2. Who are the primary participants in the production, publication and circulation of Yup'ik memoirs?

3. How do issues of identity, agency, authenticity and essentialism shape the form, thematic content and circulation of Yup'ik memoirs in Alaska?

In addressing these questions, several broader questions emerge: How do current cultural and linguistic documentation projects relate to earlier efforts, such as those of Boas and other 19th century linguists and folklorists? What can we learn from the various ways in which traditional local knowledge has been included and excluded from institutional education curricula and academic literature? Why are some voices visible in, and others erased from, published and circulating cultural texts? Whose needs are being met through the processes currently used to create and circulate cultural texts, and how can these processes be modified to reach more of the individuals whose needs have not yet been heard?

My analysis of bilingual memoirs produced by CEC explores examples from contemporary contexts of cultural documentation in a project led by Yup'ik elders who collaboratively author texts that demonstrate the continuing importance of storytelling and memory in sharing lived experiences and histories. This thesis also investigates how, through their textual contributions, Yup'ik elders draw on ancestral teachings to share cultural knowledge, to provide moral instruction and guidance to Yup'ik youth, as well as to assert their sovereign, placed identities within the landscapes and waterways of their traditional homelands in southwest Alaska.

1.2 A Discussion of Terms

The title of my research project, “Natural Histories of Yup'ik Memoirs,” represents my theoretical orientation as being shaped by both Yup'ik oral and western literate ways of knowing, linguistic ideologies, and traditions of practice. “Natural Histories” is a nod to Silverstein and Urban's (1996) *Natural Histories of Discourse*, a co-edited collection of essays exploring linguistic anthropological approaches to interactional contexts and participant relationships involved in the transmission of cultural knowledge.

My usage of the term “memoir” in both the title of this thesis and throughout my analysis reflects the fact that the published texts explored in my research derive from individual Yup'ik elder authors. English language users may associate the term *memoir* with a prolific category of personal narrative in western literary tradition and, as illustrated below in Figure 1.2, some of the text artifacts in my data set closely resemble western memoirs in both their physical appearance and circulatory potential.

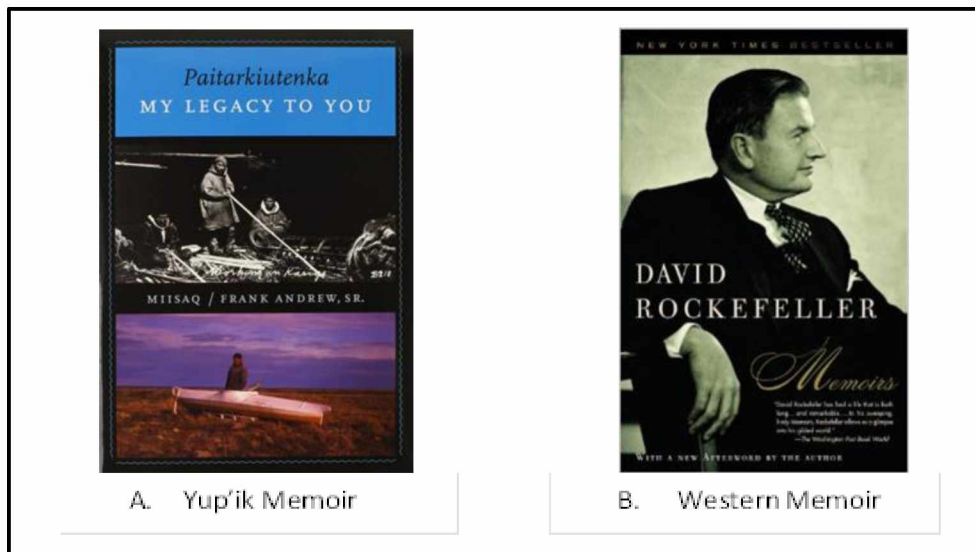


Figure 1.2 Examples of Yup'ik and western memoirs²

Though there is an interesting surface resemblance between the examples of memoirs in Figure 1.2, I have chosen this term deliberately in order to elevate and foreground the Yup'ik ways of knowing, learning, and passing knowledge from person to person that have shaped the particular histories and final forms of these text artifacts. While the written composition of a western memoir is often understood to be the first time a collection of memories has been transmitted to (familiar and unfamiliar) readers, Yup'ik memoirs strive to recreate, in written form, an oral tradition in which memories and knowledge are transmitted by elders to other community members, face-to-face. Memories and the act of remembering occupy privileged roles of continuing significance in Yup'ik oral tradition. The late Yup'ik scholar and anthropologist, Oscar Kawagley, states that through the continual practice of recalling and telling stories, “the children learn and the grown-ups are reminded of who and what they are, where they came from, and how they are to interact with others, with natural things and with spirits (Kawagley, 2006, p. 16).” As Kawagley describes, the practice of remembering and of passing on memories is fundamental not only to the transmission of cultural knowledge, but also to individuals’ sense of place and placed identities, and to collective affirmations of shared heritage.

Yup'ik elders participating in the production of the published memoirs in my data set echoed Kawagley’s assertion of the ideological importance of memories and remembering in Yup'ik language and culture. As contributing elder Fred Augustine, of Alakanuk, states in *Nunamta Ellamta-Ilu*

² Figure 1.2 contains images of the book covers for *Paitarkiutenka/My Legacy to You* (Andrews 2008) and *Memoirs* by David Rockefeller (Rockefeller 2003). Image accessed from https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_2?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=Memoirs+rockefeller (Accessed October 10, 2014).

Ayuqucia/What Our Land and World Are Like (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014), “Although people who speak once in a while die, they won’t be lost, they will be alive through what they said (2014, p. 324).” Augustine also speaks to the idea that, through the practice of remembering and sharing memories with others, other important memories and stories surface: “[t]here are a great many [teachings]. I had started to talk about my life in the past, but I have come upon the *qaneryaraq* here as I’m speaking (2014, p. 282). Elder Barbara Joe, also of Alakanuk, describes the ways in which memories of her mother have been preserved through her mother’s instructions to her as a young girl:

They say a person lives only for a short while...Today this is what I think, “I wonder when I watched my mother.” Today, I only remember her instructions she gave me. It seems indeed that I only watched my mother for one day. My memory of her is gone. But her instructions, her teachings to me, wanting me to follow her teachings, I only recall these things, I remember them (2014, p. 340).

As an outsider to the culture and contexts from which published Yup’ik memoirs have emerged, my analysis is necessarily limited to a descriptive account of the processes and participants involved in their creation and circulation. My ultimate goal is to understand how these textual artifacts relate to one another and to the broader cultural and historical contexts in which they are situated. *Entextualization*, as currently theorized in linguistic anthropology (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Briggs & Bauman, 1992; Silverstein & Urban, 1996), is a useful guiding concept because it provides a framework for exploring how interactional and ideological contexts shape the ultimate form and content of textual artifacts (Briggs, 1993; Silverstein, 1996; Voloshinov, 1986). The term *entextualization* refers to the processes that allow for portions of language use, occurring in real-time, to be lifted from their original context and circulated as bounded, sharable cultural objects whose meanings endure across social, temporal and spatial boundaries, or to have the appearance thereof (Bauman & Briggs, 1990; Silverstein & Urban, 1996). Exploring entextualization processes related to the production of bilingual Yup’ik memoirs sheds light on how Yup’ik elder contributors shape their shared knowledge and experiences into a message intended to reach both Native and non-Native audiences.

1.3 Overview of Chapters by Content

This thesis consists of eight chapters. Following the introduction to my research topic and questions here in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 provides an overview of theoretical concepts and frameworks that guided my research and analysis. Methodologies and description of material sources are presented in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 describes the geographical, social, and political background of the contexts of

production for Yup'ik Memoirs in Alaska. This description is continued in more detail in Chapter 5, which focuses on local interactional contexts and participant frameworks of textual production with respect to Yup'ik ideologies of language usage, genres of storytelling, and other expressive cultural forms. Chapter 6 provides linguistic description of Yugtun (the Yup'ik name for the Central Alaskan dialect of Yup'ik), and draws on textual examples in order to illustrate how Yup'ik elders and their textual contributions are both responsive to and transformative of the interactional contexts of collaborative text building and production. Chapter 7 discusses the political significance of Yup'ik memoirs as expressions of Indigeneity and reflections of traditional Yup'ik ideologies of interaction and language usage. Chapter 8 concludes with a summary of my findings, and a description of project limitations and possible future research.

Chapter 2 Textuality and Indigenous Genres of Textual Production

This chapter provides an overview of the theoretical concepts and frameworks central to the analysis. I discuss some of the ways in which Indigenous communities have been, and continue to be, essentialized in scholarly writing, as well as some of the ways that Indigenous community members have responded to essentializing practices. Section 2.1 discusses processes of *entextualization*, relative to the transmission of cultural knowledge across social and generational boundaries. Section 2.2 explores complex constructions of Indigenous identity, agency, and sovereignty in processes of textual production, with Section 2.3 laying the groundwork for understanding the concept of *genre* in participant interactions such as those from which Yup'ik memoirs have emerged.

2.1 Entextualization

Following Silverstein and Urban (1996), I approach each of the published Yup'ik elders' memoirs in my analysis as resulting from processes of entextualization in order to emphasize that these publications are crystallizations of real time social interactions. Much like the material artifacts that are familiar from archaeological contexts, Yup'ik memoirs are material forms that provide snapshots of the ongoing social processes from which they emerged, and their meaning is calibrated with respect to the specific interactional contexts and participant frameworks involved in their production. Silverstein and Urban approach written texts as “text artifacts” (1996, p. 5), or physical remnants of the interactional text-building processes through which they are produced. Their formulation of entextualization foregrounds the participant voices, ideological contexts and interactive processes - the “natural histories” – that shape textual production, and guides our interpretive focus of language towards a locally-situated understanding of how and why they were produced.

It is useful here to contrast the term *text*, which refers to an utterance of instance of language usage that has either been removed from its original interactional context (that is, decontextualized) or has been given the appearance of being a “perduring” and durable object that is considered to be replicable in later contexts while still retaining its original meaning (1996, pp. 1-6). As an example clarifying this difference in terms, we can think of a joke told within the context of a family dinner conversation. The joke is packaged as an utterance that has a beginning, middle and end, distinct from the talk that surrounds it: it is thus formulated or entextualized. When a joke is repeated in some later context by a participant from the original conversation, it is decontextualized or rendered a circulable *text and brought into a new context*. The joke retains its original meaning with respect to its humorous expressive content, and may be retold with similar effect as in its original dinnertime conversational context, though its purpose is transformed to fit the interactional dynamic specific to the context of its retelling (the joke is

recontextualized). Therefore, while the answer to the question of *what* the text is (i.e. a joke about such and such) may remain consistent over the course of several retellings, the purpose of the joke's telling and the response(s) it elicits will be unique to each new context in which it is repeated. If this joke is recorded in audio, video or graphic form, it then becomes a *text artifact*, a form which further increases its number of possible recontextualizations as it may be studied and circulated without the physical presence of a speaker.

The form and content of texts is dependent on the contexts and participant frameworks—or interactional contexts—from which they emerge, and entextualized knowledge may be variously packaged as a text artifact such as a book, audio file, video recording, or may be embodied through face-to-face performance. The theoretical framework of utterances or stretches of discourse as part of processes of entextualization is therefore essential to understanding Yup'ik elders' memoirs, as I aim to understand and describe the contextual processes and participant interactions involved in the entextualization and circulation of cultural knowledge, as well as the ways in which these contextual variables shape the form, structure and content of the published text artifacts. Focusing on *how* published Yup'ik memoirs have come to be representative of larger cultural processes locates meaning within ongoing processes of locally-situated, socially-responsive interaction rather than in the *denotational text* or purely referential content of the books themselves, and allows for a level of precision in analysis which is not achievable through examination of linguistic structures and forms alone. For example, the second opening vignette of this thesis describes a collaborative text-building event in which Yup'ik participants take turns speaking individually into a microphone to record personal memories of experiences at the site of Pastuliq (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. xlvi), to be transcribed, translated and published in book form. The way in which Fienup-Riordan & Rearden transform an oral speech situation into a written text situates participants' textual contributions to the book within an interactional context and the genre of its production, allowing readers to understand the denotational text (words on paper) as comprised of many individual voices, each specific to time, place and personal history that resist generalization to represent an entire Yup'ik community or region. In contrast, examples of texts within “scientific” genres of ethnographic documentation, such as the report compiled by Franz Boas following his research on Baffin Island, often favor an “objective” stance in which observations of people and events are represented as agent-less, detached from time, interactional context and authoritatively true. Precision in textual analysis hinges on a consideration of the particular kinds of interactional settings and communicative *genres* that facilitate processes of entextualization, and therefore also requires attentiveness to the concept of *intertextuality* or *interdiscursivity*³ in more recent linguistic anthropological terminology. The theoretical

³ See Agha (2007) for a fuller discussion of the ways in which interdiscursivity highlights multimodal, especially visual and auditory, dimensions of dialogicality.

notions of *genre*, *participation frameworks* and *intertextuality*, described more fully below, are crucial to my analysis of Yup'ik memoirs, as these concepts provide a framework for linking Yup'ik books with their cultural, linguistic and political context by situating the process of their creation within ongoing types of social interactions in which participants respond to real or imagined prior discourses (Briggs & Bauman 1992, p. 146). Failing to acknowledge the responsive, dialogic dimension of text obscures the purpose of its creation and circulation by casting it, as well as the genred contexts and participant frameworks involved in its production, as static, arbitrary, agent-less and unrooted in time and space, which is how the text artifacts emergent from Boas' fieldwork were presented (Briggs & Bauman, 1999). The notions of genre and intertextuality are also useful in analyzing the interactional relationships linking instances of discourse to larger socio-political contexts, communicative genres, and linguistic ideologies, therefore helping researchers to avoid the pitfall of equating culture with the texts it produces (Silverstein & Urban, 1996, p. 1).

As an anthropologist, I consider it my responsibility to avoid perpetuating harmful, essentialized stereotypes which present ideas and practices in isolation and deny the inherently processual and interactional nature of culture; theoretical frameworks of entextualization, genre and intertextuality provide analytic tools through which careful descriptions elevating individual identities and ideologies can be achieved. However, before moving on to more fully explore the relationships between genre, intertextuality and participant roles within processes of entextualization, it is important to understand the broader significance of these concepts. The ways in which Native and non-Native members of linguistic communities attend to the concept of "culture" through entextualization practices have real-life implications for those whose identities are anchored in, or expressed through, circulating cultural texts.

2.2 Authenticity, Agency and Sovereign Indigenous Identities

In his book, *Understanding Tolowa Histories*, anthropologist James Collins (1998) explores the social ramifications of essentializing Native North American culture to temporally-bounded practices of a "traditional," pre-Contact past, and examines the ways in which Tolowa⁴ history and culture have, and have not, been entextualized and circulated by Native community members and non-Native explorers, historians, and linguists within ongoing efforts in cultural and linguistic documentation. Collins echoes Silverstein and Urban (1996) in his concern with the problematic equation of culture and text, arguing that cultural identities are not only flexible, fluid and constantly in process, but must also be understood "as constructed against different, changing historical conditions" (Collins, 1998, p. 7). A central theme

⁴ The Tolowa are a small Indigenous ethnolinguistic group of people living in the Smith River region of northwestern California, an area of culturally important places that Tolowa tribal members have "claimed through naming systems, stories, songs, as well as through surveys, petitions, and congressional testimony (Collins, 1998, p. 1)."

within his narrative, and one which links it to historical ethnographic treatments of arctic Indigenous peoples is the textual erasure of twentieth-century Native voices from anthropological accounts of “American Indian culture” (1998, p. 4). Collins questions the logic underpinning the continued subjugation of Indigenous peoples who are at once “prized for their esoteric backgrounds and knowledge” yet relegated to socially, politically, and economically diminished tiers of local and global hierarchies (1998, p. 5). He traces the particularities of cultural continuity and change among the Tolowa with respect to broader patterns in European and American expansionism, expropriation of Indigenous lands, capitalist economies, extermination policies, and Enlightenment-era conceptualizations of human rights that, in a broad scale, impact Native peoples throughout North America.

Similarly, Peter Whiteley (2003) demonstrates that the relationship linking processes of entextualization and Indigenous sovereignty becomes visible in contexts of language endangerment, as it is often necessary for marginalized communities to appeal to outside legislation for protection of their language and culture. Drawing primarily from Hopi examples, Whiteley describes the problematic nature of language rights, as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in their local application to communities based in oral tradition. He argues that the cultural and linguistic ideologies of oral societies are undermined by socio-political conditions requiring that “counter-hegemonic intent operates according to terms set by the hegemonic center (2003, p. 712).” He examines contemporary definitions of language rights, as outlined in UNESCO’s 2002 Declaration on Cultural Diversity, in which language and culture are understood as “detachable” objects and marginalized communities are situated in inherent opposition to nation-state politics (2003, p. 713). This means that in order for a language to be protected under global legislation, it must be objectively definable, which requires members of the speech community to adopt a reflexive approach to shared practices and beliefs. Such a requirement is problematic because it reorients cultural and linguistic practices as separable from, rather than constitutive of, ethnic identity. This in turn encourages essentialized depictions of language and culture that treat them as homogenous and synonymous with identity. These formulations of identity as the possession of a set of linguistic and cultural traits denies marginalized community members—such as youth, women, or people who no longer speak a heritage language—the intrinsic human right to live and express themselves in ways that are personally meaningful without furthering their marginalization from resources and recognition that stem from advocacy that exploits essentialized stereotypes (2003, p. 715). Whiteley describes the dilemma faced by the Hopi who, similar to many Alaska Native groups, have a large and functioning community of speakers but also a rift in communication between elders and youth, due to the oppressive subjugation of their language and culture from the late nineteenth century until the passing of the Native American Languages Act (NALA) in 1990 (2003, p. 716). Specifically, many Hopi community members resist

contemporary educational programs modeled on western ideologies of language and language rights discourse because such programs run counter to traditional cultural practices of transmitting cultural knowledge orally. Further, many programs intended to aid in Hopi language maintenance and revitalization are often funded through outside institutions such as universities, and depend on literacy in the Hopi language, which many community members feel to be an overt threat to cultural sovereignty in that it renders the language into a system of fixed sounds and meanings consumable to outsiders (2003, p. 717).

2.3 Genre

According to Bakhtin (2011), all concrete instances of social interaction are *genred*. Speech genres emerge within larger speech events and consist of “relatively stable types” of utterances (2011, p. 121), through which speakers manifest and organize their speech and perform social actions (2011, p. 126). Some speech genres familiar to American readers may include “sermons,” “lectures,” “scientific articles,” and “gossip.” For linguistic anthropologists inspired by Bakhtin, genres are not so much sets of formal criteria that interlocutors strive to reproduce in new interactions, but crystalizations of past communicative behavior (Shoaps, 2009). In Bakhtin’s formulation, genres are dynamic, and by virtue of their nature as texts (or “utterances” in his terminology) they are responsively and dialogically related to other texts. These stretches of talk or written text are linguistic resources which orient participants towards relevant frameworks of interpretation and allow insight into the relationship between past and present communicative events (Shoaps, 2009). Bakhtin distinguishes between primary and secondary genres. Primary genres are organized around specific settings and goals of performing social action, such as greetings and other specific forms of oral dialogue, while secondary genres incorporate multiple genres, or genred elements, as is common in literary, artistic and commercialized language use (Bakhtin, 2011, p. 123). The theoretical notion of genre is useful in the descriptive analysis of published Yup’ik elders’ narratives and memoirs, as it provides a structured framework with which to compare the content, purpose, and participant frameworks involved in the production, publication, and circulation of these cultural texts.

Based on the data I have collected through archival research and ethnographic interviews, I argue that published Yup’ik elders’ memoirs fit Bakhtin’s criteria for secondary genres. These literary works both perform social actions and contain examples of organized speech and “relatively stable types” of utterances. However, each book is also comprised of several different primary genres and genred elements such as introductory greetings, storytelling, representations of mealtime conversations, traditional Yup’ik narratives, and “topic specific gatherings,” each of which is discussed in detail below. Thus in order to understand the purpose and content of Yup’ik elders’ memoirs, it is necessary to

approach these publications as multi-genred textual artifacts. Through descriptive analysis of the various contextually-situated communicative events and participant frameworks from which these publications emerge, multiple language ideologies and goals shaping the ultimate form and content of the texts become visible.

This understanding of textual utterances as multivocalic and ideologically grounded (Bakhtin, 2009, 2011; Voloshinov, 1986) permits us to pose questions about relationships, practices and linguistic ideologies that influence the desire to produce Yup'ik memoirs. Through ethnographic interviews with Native and non-Native contributors in these genred text-building processes, I explored the link between embedded prior texts—such as traditional narratives—and contemporary experiences as well as the emergent relationship between the process of producing elders' memoirs and that of consuming them through circulation.

In this approach to text, Goffman (1981) and Irvine's (1996) treatment of participant roles and frameworks of interaction are particularly relevant, as it is crucial to explore the multiple voices and ideologies, including those of ancestors and other actors not physically present, involved in the production, publication and circulation of elders' memoirs in order to understand how these texts fit into larger systems of linguistic practices, goals and beliefs. I will attend to these concepts and deploy them in analyzing Yup'ik memoirs in Chapters 4 and 5, after describing my methodology and the CEC in the context of struggles for Indigenous sovereignty in Alaska and the United States.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology and Data Sources

This chapter is divided into two sections, beginning with a brief discussion of the methods used to collect data, followed by a more detailed description of textual materials that were the basis of my archival research. I include in this chapter scanned textual and photographic images from Yup'ik memoirs, which are intended to provide readers with specific examples of the ways in which Yup'ik elders' words and stories are presented in book form. These specific examples will ground the more theoretical analysis of genre and participation frameworks offered in later chapters.

3.1 Methods

The primary methods of analysis used throughout my research include participant observation, archival research, ethnographic interviews, and triangulation of my findings with respect to broader cultural and ideological frameworks. As I did not have an opportunity to live and work in a Yup'ik community during the course of my research, my fieldwork was limited to my participation in and observation of an introductory spoken Yup'ik language class at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (hereafter, UAF). The majority of the students in class were Yup'ik, who either spoke Yugtun as a second language or whose parents or grandparents spoke the language. Given my focus on understanding contexts of transmission of cultural knowledge, the Yup'ik language class was an excellent site in which to learn how Yup'ik university students and instructors navigated cultural knowledge, ideologies about language structure and use, and written instructional materials and related formulations of Yup'ik culture.

3.1.1 Archival Research

The archival research component of my thesis work was primarily carried out from April through October 2014 in the Alaska Native Language Archive (ANLA), housed within Rasmuson Library at UAF. Founded in 1972, the ANLA currently holds more than 15,000 documents in and on Alaska's twenty living Native languages, including both published and unpublished materials in audio, video and print source formats. The ANLA is open to the public for educational and research purposes, and its archival collections house important documentation on the development of orthographies, literacy learning materials and other educational resources in Alaska Native languages.

Though the ANLA currently houses one of the largest and most widely accessible collections of Alaska Native language orthographies, texts and pedagogical materials, there has not yet been significant research on how these materials were produced, published and circulated within, and outside of, Indigenous communities in Alaska. Over the course of my archival research at UAF, I compiled a data set of bilingual publications with facing page Yup'ik transcriptions and English translations of texts

attributed to Yup'ik elders/authors in Southwestern Alaska. This archival data set formed the basis of understanding the participant frameworks and production contexts from which the bilingual textual artifacts emerged as part of contemporary processes of cultural documentation in Alaska.

3.1.2 Yup'ik Language Learning

As an outside researcher seeking to answer questions related to Yup'ik language and culture, it was necessary for me to enroll in a Yup'ik language course at UAF. During the 2014-2015 academic year, I enrolled in Elementary Central Yup'ik Eskimo, an introductory Yup'ik language course taught by Dr. Walkie Charles during the Fall 2014 semester and by Ataat' Joel Forbes in Spring 2015. Although one year of participant observation as a Yup'ik language learner was not enough time to become sufficiently fluent to converse or conduct ethnographic interviews in Yup'ik, my language studies provided me with a foundational understanding of Central Yup'ik language and dialects, cultural history, ideological frameworks, traditional ways of knowing and speaking, as well as the invaluable experience of participating as a Yup'ik language learner in a contemporary university setting. Chapter 6 provides background information on Yugtun, its sound inventory, orthography development and basis in oral tradition.

3.1.3 Ethnographic Interviews

Throughout the course of my thesis research, I conducted semi-structured ethnographic interviews with individuals directly and indirectly involved in projects and processes of cultural documentation in Alaska, including UAF faculty and students, ANLA founders and staff, as well as CEC staff members. Interviews took place in offices and meeting rooms on the UAF campus whenever possible, and were conducted by phone when necessary for CEC staff and other participants who were based outside of Fairbanks. My primary tools during interview sessions were active listening and handwritten notes. As my goal was to understand participants' experiences related to projects of cultural documentation in Alaska and not discourse analysis of the form of interview talk, I chose not to record interviews so that my consultants would feel comfortable to think and speak freely. The information gained through these interviews helped me to refine and answer my research questions, and particular consultants are named in this research narrative when appropriate.

3.2 Description and Selection of Sources

This section provides readers with a general overview the material sources comprising my archival data set, including a comprehensive listing of these sources by title and a brief discussion of how information is presented within CEC-produced Yup'ik memoirs. Later chapters explore participant

frameworks and interactional contexts relative to processes of production for the selected material sources, as well as the topic-specific contributions of participating Yup'ik elders, in greater detail. Table 1 below lists published texts that comprised my archival data set, beginning with the most recent publication. The final, "English Counterpart" column in the table acknowledges that four of my material sources are bilingual counterparts to accompanying English-only text publications. The CEC has produced four sets of these "paired" books to date. Each paired set is comprised of one book in English for "general and scholarly audiences," and one bilingual book "for community use (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. 93)." While the English-only paired counterparts provide valuable summarizing descriptions of Yup'ik elder gatherings and textual contributions, they do not include Yup'ik transcriptions of contributing elders' words and interactions. As this research project seeks to understand more about the ways that Indigenous community members address and respond to issues of perceived language endangerment and rapid loss of cultural knowledge through the production of educational materials, only bilingual texts were included in my analysis.

Table 1 Calista Elders Council Bilingual Publications, 2003-2016

| Title (Yup'ik/English) | Publication Date | Bilingual "Companion Book" (Y/N) | English Counterpart |
|--|-------------------------|---|---|
| Ciulimerunak Yuuyaqunak/Do Not Live Without an Elder (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden) | 2016 | N | N/A |
| Nunamta Ellamta-Illu Ayuqucia/What Our Land and World Are Like (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden) | 2014 | N | N/A |
| Qaluyaarmiuni Nunamtenek Qanemciput/Our Nelson Island Stories: Meanings of Place on the Bering Sea Coast (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden) | 2011 | Y | Ellavut: Our Yup'ik World and Weather: Continuity and Change on the Bering Sea Coast (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2012) |
| Paitarkiutenka/My Legacy to You (Andrews) | 2008 | Y | Yuungnaqpiallerput / The Way We Genuinely Live: Masterworks of Yup'ik Science and Survival (Fienup-Riordan, 2007) |
| Ciuliamta Akluit/Things of Our Ancestors: Yup'ik Elders Explore the Jacobsen Collection at the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin (Meade) | 2005 | Y | Yup'ik Elders at the Ethnologisches Museum in Berlin: Fieldwork Turned on Its Head (Fienup-Riordan, 2005b) |
| Yupiit Qanruyutait/Yup'ik Words of Wisdom (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden) | 2005 | Y | Wise Words of the Yup'ik People: We Talk to You Because We Love You (Fienup-Riordan, 2005a) |
| Qulirat Qanemcit-Illu Kinguvarcimalriit/Stories for Future Generations: The Oratory of Yup'ik Elder Paul John (John) | 2003 | N | N/A |

Of the more than 15,000 documents in and on Alaska's twenty living Native languages housed within the ANLA's collections, over 2,000 of these materials are categorized as composed in or about

Yup'ik language and culture. As illustrated above in Table 1, my data set is comprised of seven bilingual Yup'ik-English books, produced during the period of 2003 through 2016, by or in partnership with the CEC, an Anchorage-based Yup'ik non-profit corporation, active in research and documentation of traditional Yup'ik cultural knowledge in Alaska's Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region.⁵ A more detailed overview of the CEC and Alaska Native Corporations is presented in Chapter 6.

My data set does not contain all of the published bilingual texts of Yup'ik elders' shared knowledge and stories contained in ANLA's collections. I limited my analysis to those produced by the CEC for several reasons. First, these CEC-produced books offered a large and consistent data set, representing published documents of Yup'ik elders' knowledge arising from a collaborative project that spans over a decade. Secondly, the CEC-led documentation project resulting in these books is active and ongoing. The expanding body of work has allowed insight into how documentation methods and participant relationships have changed over time, in response to the interactive contexts unique to the creation of each book. Thirdly, and most critically to mapping changes in participant frameworks and methods of production, CEC bilingual publications consistently include detailed descriptions of the production history, context and participant relationships involved in the creation of each book, composed by CEC anthropologist, Fienup-Riordan. In the spring of 2015, I was also invited by Fienup-Riordan to review the manuscript for the CEC's newest bilingual publication, *Ciulirnerunak Yuuyaqunak/Do Not Live Without an Elder*, which was subsequently published in 2016. While this book was not part of my original archival data set, I draw from it for information and textual examples which are particularly useful in understanding the range of interactional contexts, participant relationships and ideologies central to the CEC's production of Yup'ik memoirs.

Each of these bilingual publications is a unique product of the interactional processes and participant frameworks involved in its creation. The differences among the text artifacts reflect the unique circumstances of production relative to each publication, and together these selected texts provide a record of the CEC's ongoing work in projects related to the documentation and circulation of Yup'ik cultural knowledge. The topics covered in each bilingual book are carefully selected by contributing Yup'ik elders, and the choices they make in deciding what kinds of cultural knowledge are most important to share with their audience provide insight into the elders' past lived experiences, as well as how they perceive the current political situation of cultural and linguistic change in Alaska. It is to the topic of Indigeneity as an organizing political concept and its relationship to expressive culture that I now turn.

⁵ Through early 2014, the CEC operated as a non-profit corporate extension of the regional, for-profit Calista Corporation. In early 2014, the CEC merged with another of Calista Corporation's non-profit organizations, Calista Heritage Foundation, and the new organization has been renamed "Calista Education and Culture." For further information on accompanying changes to the organization's structure and mission, see Fienup-Riordan & Rearden (2016, pp. 8-9).

Chapter 4 Situating Yup'ik Memoirs as Expressions of Indigeneity in an Alaskan Context

In order to understand the role of Yup'ik Memoirs as expressions of Indigeneity within contexts of perceived language endangerment in Alaska, it is useful to first have an understanding of Indigeneity as an organizing concept in how Native communities, corporations and leadership councils are organized in Alaska. Section 4.1 opens this chapter by exploring broad examples of how local conceptualizations of identity and sovereignty are shaped by both local and non-local definitions of Indigeneity. Later sections narrow the scope to focus on the Alaskan context, giving a general overview of Alaska Native corporations, resultant of the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, followed with a more in-depth description of the organizational structure and mission of both Calista Corporation and the CEC relative to the production of bilingual Yup'ik memoirs.

4.1 Indigeneity

The concept of Indigeneity has been, and continues to be, variously defined at global and local levels both by individuals who identify as Indigenous as well as those who are non-Indigenous or identify as some combination thereof. Human identities and group affiliations are fluid and experience-based, and inherent difficulties exist in categorizing individuals under a single “ethnic” label. Doing so often implies evaluating individuals in terms of a checklist of traits criterial of Indigenous identity, a reification of categorical boundedness that restricts individual mobility and freedom of expression in domains perceived as separate or outside of variously defined parameters of Indigeneity. In contrast to the way in which the racial category of “whiteness” in the U.S. has become less visible to white people over the last two and a half centuries (Hill, 2011, p. 64), Indigenous as an identity has been shaped by politics in ways that are meaningful to Indigenous peoples within and outside of the U.S. In thoughtfully analyzing the utility of Indigeneity as an analytic concept, it is important to remember not only that “we do not experience the world only as Indigenous or non-Indigenous (Cowlshaw, 2004, pp. 70-71),” but also that we do not experience the world in isolation. Our identities, self-ascribed or defined somehow by others, are continually recontextualized and transformed in dialogic relation with others and our surroundings.

While the term “indigenous” has historically served to designate and distinguish between localizable social categories of cultural “natives” and their “others” (Merlan, 2009, p. 303), the meaning of “Indigeneity” has been expanded in recent decades to presuppose a moral valence among locally and globally marginalized indigenous groups in their struggle against liberal democratic policies of the states they inhabit (2009, p. 304). This newer formulation of the concept of Indigeneity, along with its increased usage in transnational discourse and policy practices, has been fueled by the 2007 United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As an amalgamation of previous charters

and international policies, the 2007 declaration is a legally non-binding collection of 46 articles addressing issues of self-determination, land and resources, international cooperation, socio-cultural and political rights, territorial occupation and relocation, and treaties (2009, p. 316). The UN's official statement on Indigenous identities and rights has been useful in mobilizing Indigenous participants to formulate and assert their authoritative rights as local communities within larger states, as well as within international bounds, though it remains problematic insofar as the universal "indigenous" group category to which this declaration applies is not equally recognized or defined within individual states. State-specific interpretations of the implicit rights of Indigenous peoples to land and other material resources remain especially problematic in the universal adoption and application of the UN's 2007 declaration, as evidenced by the rejection of the declaration by the four UN member states of Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the United States, frequently referred to as the CANZAUS group (2009, p. 317). Though these states are principally founded in a liberal democratic ideology that proposes to foster equality of opportunity for all, including indigenous participants, the CANZAUS groups place greater value and emphasis on individual freedoms, institutional stability and minimal overt exercises of state power in individual matters (2009, p. 314). Based on these latter reasons, the CANZAUS groups have rejected the UN declaration on the grounds that it threatens individual freedoms in competitive access to resources, arguing that land issues may be rightfully understood as separate from universal human rights (2009, p. 316). This view stands in direct opposition to Native American Indigenous conceptualizations of cultural identity, cosmology and practices as inherently inseparable from the lands they inhabit. I will address this contrast in more detail below.

Jessica Cattelino (2004, 2010) explores some of the tension surrounding land claims and sovereignty found in tribal-state relations through her ongoing work with the Florida Seminole. She claims that tribal gaming—in the form of lucrative casinos—in the Seminole context illustrates the economic organization of Indigeneity and calls attention to the cultural-political environment of "settler states" such as the U.S. (2010, p. 235). Cattelino defines Indigenous sovereignty as "the authority and obligation of people within an indigenous polity" to define the nature and boundaries of their authority and governance "with regard to their territories and one another" (2010, p. 239). Her definition derives from Seminole discourse surrounding the concept of sovereignty, which Native participants understand as emergent from three primary sources: their governmental authority from precolonial times into the present, their victory over the U.S. military in the 19th century Seminole Wars, and the ability to continue practicing a culturally distinctive way of life which is understood to be integrally tied to their collectively held lands (2010, p. 240). Under this definition, distribution and development of land and material resources are critical components of tribal sovereignty which require economic revenue to maintain and regulate.

Following the 1957 tribal reorganization, in which the Seminole government avoided termination and divided into a tribal council and federal corporation, the authoritative power of traditional clans was diminished in exchange for legal protection and federal services provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Also resultant of this reorganization was widespread poverty, high rates of unemployment, and health concerns. In 1979 the Seminole opened the first tribally-operated casino in the U.S., which went on to provide material wealth and symbolic power to the Seminole as a political entity (2010, p. 246). According to Cattelino, many Seminole believe that tribal gaming wealth “emerges from their sovereignty and facilitates its exercise” (2010, p. 236) through development of cultural and social services and institutions, as well as through funding and implementing programs related to land and natural resource management. Cattelino’s work illustrates the economic “bind” faced by Native American tribes such as the Seminole, in which Indigenous individuals may only obtain equality of rights and economic power on par with that enjoyed by non-Indigenous individuals within the state by backgrounding their adherence to “traditional” lifeways to roles as actors within a national economic system that caters to non-Natives; however, it is often only through participating in sovereign tribal organizations that economic wealth is able to be realized (2010, p. 241). This ethnographic context enables an understanding of how labels employed by, or ascribed to, cultural groups that claim Indigenous identity can become problematic when there is a differential understanding of what this title means in terms of individual and group conceptualizations of culture, tradition and authenticity. In relation to the establishment of tribal gaming halls, Cattelino (2004, 2010) demonstrates how casinos act both as channels for Seminole members’ solidarity and cultural expression and as sources of tension in Native and non-Native perceptions of what constitutes “traditional” culture. She explores discourses in mainstream white media which criticize tribal development of gaming rights as illustrative of a transition between “traditional” and “nontraditional” or capitalist Seminole culture (2004, p. 67) and then contrasts these discourses with those that emerged in her ethnographic interviews. In the latter tribal members stated that gaming rights did not represent a marked shift in cultural ideologies or practices with respect to historic economic contexts and behaviors. Cattelino concludes that, for many Florida Seminole, casino gaming and gaming rights do not represent a shift away from traditional culture, but rather one phase in the complex historical development of economic practices and strategies for maintaining tribal sovereignty in modern market conditions (2004, p. 68). Cattelino’s work indicts the false and irrelevant dichotomies often drawn between “traditional” and “modern” practices, emphasizing the need to approach cultural identity and practices holistically. In light of the role that western, white scholarship can play in Indigenous political struggles for sovereignty discussed below, her work is important in asserting that anthropologists understand identity in a way that does not marginalize and deprive Indigeneity from individuals for navigating the conditions of globalized markets and social interactions.

Several Native and non-Native scholars have described similar issues related to essentialist or stereotypical conceptualizations of Indigenous identities and their potential harm. Paradies (2006) describes some of the difficulties with the term Indigeneity from an Australian Aboriginal perspective. Some primary concerns he and others raise include: an association with Indigeneity as a term applied by outsiders with colonialist motives (2006, p. 357), emergent essentializations of Indigenous identity, limiting individual choice and communal political power (2006, p. 358), and fragmentation of Indigenous communities into groupings of those who can perform “authentic” Indigeneity and those who cannot, or will not (2006, p. 363). As an individual of mixed family and heritage roots, Paradies identifies himself as Aboriginal-Anglo-Asian Australian, stating that he refuses to surrender his other identities in order to be Indigenous (2006, p. 359). In his concluding paragraphs, Paradies calls for a more inclusive approach, on all sides, to definitions of Indigeneity that reflect and promote more fluid conceptualizations of cultural identities and diversity in social experiences.

Although originally formulated in 1969, Barth’s work on ethnic boundaries offers some of the most useful insights that can be applied to theorizing Indigeneity (1998). Pointing out the limitations to defining ethnic groups on the basis of what is included, or excluded, within their bounds, he argues that analytic focus should instead rest on the boundaries themselves, and the processes through which these inter-ethnic boundaries are maintained. Making reference to historic examples of shifting ethnic formulations in Europe and elsewhere, he stresses that merely inhabiting, or claiming to inhabit, the social or territorial space designated to an ethnic group is not a sufficient empirical definition of group membership. Rather, he argues, it is more useful to think of ethnic groups as “organizational vessels” which may be filled with diverse amounts and forms of relevant socio-cultural content (1998, p. 14). With respect to what is shared between co-participants in such an organization, Barth argues that group membership implies a shared conceptualization of reality, common criteria for evaluation and continual labor in the task of boundary maintenance. It is this reflexive sharing of ideologies and patterned behaviors which allows members the “potential for diversification and expansion of their social relationship to cover eventually all different sectors and domains of activity (1998, p. 15).”

Barth’s insights about ethnic identity are important for this project because they resonate and align with some important Native articulations of Indigeneity and their critique of the relationship between researchers who harbor static views of ethnicity and the Native communities they study. For example, in a now renowned 1974 address to the Meeting of Nordic Ethnographers in Tromsø, Norway, Keskitalo, a Sámi Native, spoke to the increasing need for reorienting conceptualizations of cultural categories and ethnic identities through his description of persisting asymmetries within inter-ethnic research relations such as those between Sámi and Nordic institutions and researchers. Keskitalo called for a transformation in Nordic and other majority group attitudes toward the Sámi and other Indigenous

minorities, a particularly poignant message given that this was the work many of the ethnographers in the audience believed was already taking place as a result of their own ongoing fieldwork within Sámi communities. His artful critique of western ethnography centered around what he termed an ongoing “crisis in anthropology” (Keskitalo, 1994, p. 10), referring to a generalized misunderstanding on the part of “ethno-scientists” as to their appropriate political roles, both as researchers within minority Indigenous communities and as mediators in majority-minority institutional relationships (1994, p. 13). In particular, Keskitalo criticizes the social disturbance in Sámi communities due to the influx of inexperienced fieldworkers harboring “archaic” fantasies and expectations of Sámi cultural beliefs, practices, and Indigenous research capabilities. The latter he termed the “law of underestimation of minority resources (1994, p. 15),” referring to dominant, majority group discourse and ideologies in which minorities are construed as lacking sufficient knowledge and expertise to produce, maintain or represent themselves in institutions.⁶ Keskitalo argued that pejorative representations of Sámi cultural practices and capabilities were not only outdated, but also revealed the ethnocentric bias in characterizing the minority Sámi as too underdeveloped to navigate institutional domains rather than seeing the failings of the majority group institutions’ capacities to accommodate minority needs (1994, p. 16). Keskitalo asserts that tension in Sámi-Nordic relations stems from competing cultural ideologies in their respective definitions of group complexity and cultural borders (1994, p. 13). Like Barth (1998), he argues that in order to alleviate inter-ethnic tensions, these definitions must be reoriented to focus on the fluid and interactional nature of cultural identities and practices. This would afford individuals within minority groups freedom of expression and mobility in their adaptations to appropriated institutions.

The diverse cultural landscape of Alaska provides ample opportunity for exploring Indigeneity as a salient social and political identity among Alaska Native community members and organizations. In upcoming chapters I explore some of the ways in which Yup’ik participants in the production of bilingual memoirs understand Indigenous cultural identities, past and present, and how the concept of Yup’ik identity continues to be shaped through the entextualization and transmission of cultural knowledge from elders to youth.

4.2 Geographic Context

As homeland to at least twelve distinct cultural groups, the social and linguistic environment of Alaska is fluid and diverse.⁷ Yugtun is the most widely spoken Yupik⁸ Eskimo language dialect in the

⁶ See also French (2003) on some western linguists’ conception of native speakers of Mayan languages in Guatemala as disqualified to describe their own languages or chart a direction for linguistic documentation.

⁷ In the Fall of 2014, with the passage of House Bill 216, Alaska became the second U.S. state following Hawaii to grant legal recognition to its twenty living indigenous languages by elevating them to the status of official state languages.

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region of Southwestern Alaska. This region, pictured on the following page in Figure 4.2, is home to over 23,000 Yup'ik people, of which nearly 14,000⁹ are speakers of Yugtun. Fienup-Riordan & Rearden (2014, p. ixxvi) and Jacobson & Jacobson (1995, p. vii) note that Yugtun is spoken from Norton Sound to Bristol Bay, among lower drainages of the Yukon, Kuskokwim and Nushagak rivers, and along the Bering Sea Coast.

⁸ Following Jacobson & Jacobson (1995, p. vii), and in accordance with Central Yup'ik spelling conventions, I retain the apostrophe in "Yup'ik," in order to distinguish between Central Yup'ik and other Yupik languages, including: Naukan, spoken on Siberia's Chukchi Peninsula; Siberian Yupik, spoken on both the Chukchi Peninsula and on Alaska's St. Lawrence Island; and Alutiiq (also known as Sugpiaq or Pacific Yupik), spoken in the Prince William Sound region as well as in areas of the Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak Island and the tip of the Kenai Peninsula (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. ixxvi; Jacobson & Jacobson, 1995, p. vii). These four Yupik languages, together with Inupiaq or Inuit languages spoken throughout Alaska's northern coastal regions, northern Canada and Greenland, comprise the Eskimo branch of the Eskimo-Aleut family of languages. Aleut languages spoken throughout the Aleutian, Pribilof and Commander Islands constitute the Aleut branch of this language family.

⁹ These numbers are drawn from Fienup-Riordan (2014, p. 92), though it is unclear whether the number 14,000 refers to speakers of Central Yup'ik or all Yup'ik dialects. Jacobson & Jacobson (1995, p. vii) cite 10,500 as the total number of speakers for Central Yup'ik.

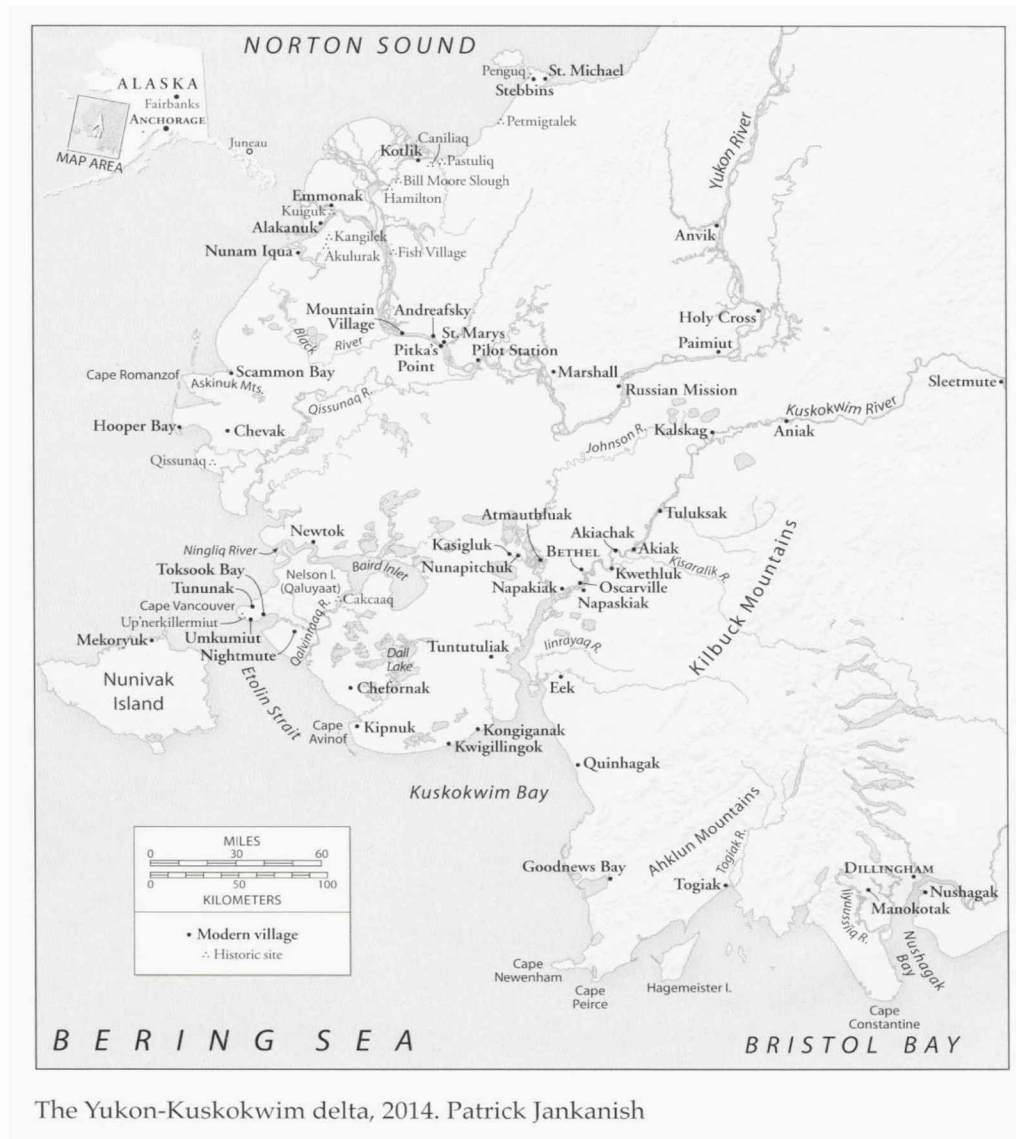


Figure 4.2 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region of Alaska ¹⁰

4.3 Overview of Alaska Native Corporations

Due to the primary organization of Alaska into village-based councils and corporations, Alaskan Natives face different challenges to tribal sovereignty than those posed to tribes inhabiting reservation lands in the Lower Forty-Eight states. The passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971, gave federal recognition to 220 autonomous village corporations, each with its own governing tribal council, and created twelve larger regional corporations to manage 40 million acres of land and resources ceded to Alaskan Natives by the U.S. federal government (Hirschfield, 1992, p. 1331).

¹⁰ This map originally appeared in *Nunamta Ellamta-Illu Ayuqucia* (Fienu-Riordan & Rearden, 2014) and is reproduced here with permission of A. Fienu-Riordan.

Additionally, ANCSA facilitated the establishment of the Alaska Native Fund in the United States Treasury, through which payments based on federal appropriations and mineral revenues were made directly to regional Native corporations, who then distributed funds¹¹ among village corporations. While village corporations govern surface rights to local landholdings, regional corporations oversee the maintenance and development of all timber and subsurface resources, as well as the distribution of revenue from mining, drilling and other profit-based resource extraction from Alaskan Native land holdings (1992, p. 1336). Corporate shareholders were initially restricted to Alaskan Natives born before or on December 17, 1971, with the expectation that descendants would either assimilate into the larger Alaskan population or inherit shares from their grandparents, a policy which has grown increasingly problematic with population growth and increased life expectancies.¹² Though this restriction has since been lifted so that regional corporations may vote to include descendants, or “afterborns,” as tribal shareholders, only four¹³ of twelve regional corporations have voted in favor of this measure to date (Roderick, 2010, p. 23). Despite granting Alaskan Native villages legal autonomy in ownership and governance of local lands, this two-tier corporate profit model has presented significant obstacles to tribal sovereignty through unequal access to shareholding positions, as well as the forced economic dependence of village corporations on regional corporate policies and development partnerships with outside institutions (1992, p. 1337).

4.4 Overview of Calista Elders Council

As a means of resisting the expectation that Alaska Native peoples would assimilate after ANCSA, tribal corporations began spearheading endeavors to preserve and pass on traditional knowledge. Calista Corporation, the for-profit corporation serving the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region of Alaska (Figure 4.2), established the CEC in 1991 as a nonprofit and “primary heritage organization for southwest Alaska, representing 1,900 Yup’ik tradition bearers of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta” in the active documentation of Yup’ik traditional knowledge and practices (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. xlii). One of the interesting links between past projects in cultural documentation, such as that carried out by Franz Boas on Baffin Island from 1883-1884, and recent efforts headed by the CEC from 1997-2014, is

¹¹ Alaska Native Fund, 43 U.S.C. § 1605 (2012). Monetary settlements totaled \$462.5 million from the U.S. Treasury general fund and \$500 million in federal and state resource revenue. Hirschfield (1992) observes that this combined total, while substantial, fell far short of goals for improving Alaskan Native lives once the funds were distributed across regional, local and individual shareholders over a twenty year period. Exact figures can be found in United States. Dept. of the Interior., ESG (Firm). (1984). *ANCSA 1985 study: Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)*. [Washington, D.C.]: U.S. Dept. of the Interior.

¹² For a more detailed discussion of problematic and unresolved issues related to ANCSA legislation and shareholder restrictions, see Hirschfield (1992, p. 1340-44).

¹³ According to Roderick, these were Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, Doyon Limited, NANA and Sealaska (Roderick 2010, p. 23).

the necessary role of institutional funding in the collection and circulation of Indigenous cultural knowledge. The creation of nonprofit organizations is one way that Indigenous communities and leadership councils can secure funding for culturally oriented projects by facilitating productive partnerships with outside academic and research institutions. As the primary producer of the text artifacts used in my research, the CEC represents one example of such an organization. Mark John, originally of Toksook Bay, led the CEC's board of nine elected elders from 1997 through 2013 in developing "a program to address cultural issues, including rapid loss of traditional knowledge" among Yup'ik communities in the Calista region (Fienup-Riordan, 2014, p. 94). The production of bilingual books represents one of five components in this program, with the remaining four components including museum exhibits, dance festivals, culture camps and elder-youth conventions (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. 6). Beginning in 2000, many of the CEC's documentation projects, including the production of bilingual books, were supported in part by grant funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) secured by Fienup-Riordan.

CEC bilingual publications are produced as part of the organization's broader mission of documenting and sharing Yup'ik oral traditions and cultural knowledge. In addressing the "cultural issues, including the rapid loss of traditional knowledge (2014, p. 94)," the CEC's mission is responsive to a history of cross cultural contact between Yup'ik communities and outside missionary, academic, scientific, and other non-Native influences in Alaska, all of which have contributed to a significant gap in the knowledge shared by Yup'ik elders and young people. Following the institution of missionary and BIA schools in southwestern Alaska, Yup'ik elders who were raised speaking their heritage language were pressured to send their children away to be educated in English. By separating the generation of Yupiit who attended boarding schools from their families, elders, and languages, forced academic assimilation projects complicated students' sense of identity as members of Yup'ik communities and deeply disrupted family relationships. Familial relationships are the starting point for traditional Yup'ik methods of passing on knowledge and lessons to future generations. Other contexts of Yup'ik education and storytelling referenced by Yup'ik elders participating in the production of bilingual memoirs are part of a holistic system of instruction which begins with cultivating relationships of respect and reciprocity among parents, children, and the environments they inhabit and interact with together. Through the words of contributing elders, we can understand published Yup'ik memoirs as emergent from their desire to address the gap in communication and disjointed relationships among Yup'ik elders and young people. Productive partnerships with funding institutions such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) make it clear that CEC-produced bilingual books are also shaped to a degree by the agendas of the scientific research projects of which these books are a part.

In order to understand the form that these text artifacts take and the significance of their creation

for the elders who participate in their entextualization, it is important to understand local ideologies about language, knowledge transmission and discourse genres. Linguistic ideologies and their relationship to Yup'ik discourse genres are the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter 5 Interactional Contexts of Yup'ik Memoir Production and Yup'ik Storytelling Genres

This chapter examines how Yup'ik linguistic ideologies and discourse genres inform the interactional contexts of production which result in published bilingual memoirs, the goals shared by participants, and the important role of memories and storytelling in this process. Sections 5.1 and 5.2 provide an overview of Central Yup'ik ideologies guiding linguistic processes. Section 5.2 examines specific genres of Yup'ik forms of storytelling, while Section 5.3 analyzes the participant framework of the process of production for Yup'ik memoirs.

5.1 The Importance of Yup'ik Oral Tradition

While my research highlights published Yup'ik texts, circulating in printed form, it is important to remember that Yugtun is a language based in oral tradition. I take a discourse functional approach to Yup'ik grammatical construction, following Du Bois' formulation of the relationship between structure and use as "grammars code best what speakers do most (Du Bois, 1987)." That is, the linguistic resources and grammatical constructions found in a language are best understood as "crystalizations" of the ways that speakers frequently use language to communicate ideas and participate in their social environments. The inscription of an oral language and attendant creation of grammars, dictionaries and story collections for both pedagogical and scholarly purposes not only represents new genres but also new orientations to language and traditional knowledge. As Yup'ik cultural and linguistic specialist and author, Elsie Mather, points out, "even with the advent of a writing system that is now widely known in the Yup'ik area, reading and writing in Yup'ik are not the norm for transmission of information. Literacy in the language is promoted separately, through the educational institution and represents almost a foreign activity among traditional Yupiit, where lifeways and ideals are promoted through oral tellings (Mather, 1995, p. 15)." Traditional Yup'ik methods of transferring cultural knowledge orally are based on memories grounded in shared experiences of speakers and listeners, which facilitates the process of information being remembered and preserved from one generation to another. Mather argues that when stories are written, they "lose a kind of fluidity" and "become fixed, more like objects" than shared knowledge with variation in meaning based on the experiences of individual storytellers (1995, p. 15). She also draws attention to the fact that while the creation of a contemporary Yup'ik orthography helped to spur the development of bilingual education curricula, teaching materials and cultural heritage programs in southwestern Alaska in the 1980's (1995, p. 14), literacy based education has also exacerbated an already existing relational gap between Yup'ik elders and youth, due to the fact that literacy based methods of instruction separate the

stories from the speakers.¹⁴ Mather asserts that although bilingual and multicultural programs are designed in order to help Yup'ik youth gain a better understanding of their cultural heritage, often the generational gap among elders and children persists because of the institutional nature and time constraints of school based curricula, resulting in the fact that young people “are often not around their grandparents enough (1995, p. 17).”

[Our elders] don't often have the chance to impart their knowledge today, with young people away in schools and parents away at jobs. These once-important teachers are often left alone and forgotten in nursing homes. Even when they are among us—in meetings, for instance, where we conduct ourselves according to alien procedures that are confusing to them—they are lost and ignored. We need to involve them in the process of our education in villages and elsewhere (1995, p. 16).

5.2 Yup'ik Cosmology and Genres of Expressive Culture

Yup'ik ceremonies, stories and other forms of expressive culture are integrally related to the health and well-being of Yup'ik communities and individuals. These practices are ways in which Yup'ik people can articulate, and actively participate in, their traditional worldview, through which cultural knowledge is regularly entextualized and passed from one generation to another. The significance of ceremonial and otherwise expressive cultural forms is rooted in *yuu'araq*, traditional Yup'ik epistemology which defines the interconnected and reciprocal relationship linking humans, spirits and the land (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; John, 2010; Kawagley, 2006). Balance, reciprocity and awareness or consciousness are guiding philosophical principles within Yup'ik cosmology (Fienup-Riordan, 1990, 2005a; John, 2010; Kawagley, 2006; Mather, 1995). From a Yup'ik perspective, “balance” represents an ideal state of harmonious relationships among human, natural and spiritual domains that unites the elements of all existence (Kawagley, 2006, p. 14). Balance is achieved through the continual and reciprocal communication among human, natural and spiritual domains, and is realized in individual consciousness through a constant awareness of one's existence with respect to these interconnected domains of existence (Figure 5.2)

¹⁴ The role of literacy-based instruction in furthering division and generational alienation in Native communities seeking to preserve linguistic heritage is not unique to Yup'ik contexts. Meek (2011) provides a detailed ethnographic treatment of the politics of language revitalization among the Kaska, an arctic Athabaskan people.

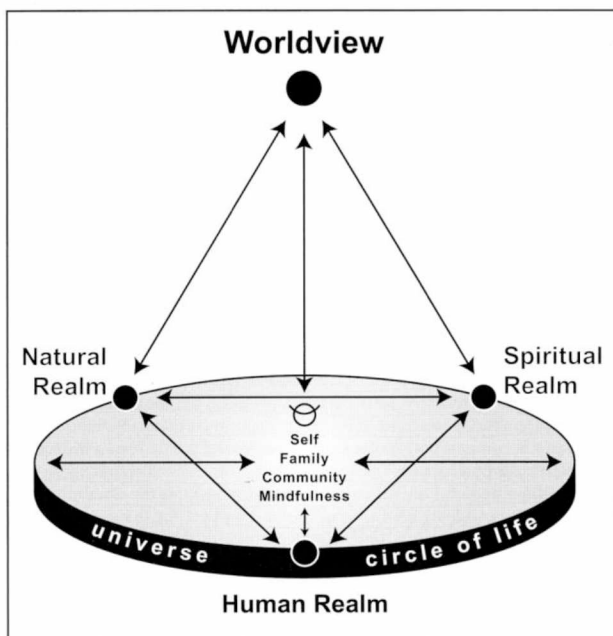


Figure 5.2 Kawagley's tetrahedral framework illustrating the Yup'ik worldview¹⁵

Central to the ideas of consciousness, awareness, and balance is the concept of *ella*, which is a Yup'ik term that may refer to the surrounding world, weather, awareness, creative spiritual forces or god, the sky and the universe (Kawagley, 2006, p. 14). A derivative of this term, modified through the addition of first person plural possessive postbase, *ellavut*, translates as “our sense of awareness or consciousness” with possible referents of “our” being both “the people’s” and “the land’s” (John, 2010, p. 44). Grammatical and morphological features of Yugtun, through which multiple senses and sources of agency can be expressed, are reflective of larger Yup'ik cosmology in which human-spirit-land relationships exist reciprocally and on an even plane of complex connectivity. As Kassam (2009, p.74) describes, “a being ‘is’ not because of a certain property contained within, but by its ‘relation’ in a continuum of beings.” Within Yup'ik cosmology, an understanding of this interconnectivity is realized through active awareness or consciousness of one’s place within the reciprocal matrix linking humans, non-humans and the land (John, 2010; Kawagley, 2006). This awareness is the highest function of a human being, both practice-centered and experience-based, so that performative acts of storytelling, active listening, Yup'ik ways of dance, and participation in traditional rituals and ceremonies are all methods and tools with which Yup'ik people may gain an intuitive understanding and awareness of their traditional worldview (Fienup-Riordan, 1990, 2005a; John, 2010; Kawagley, 2006).

Storytelling is a traditional form of Yup'ik pedagogy of continuing significance for community

¹⁵ Diagram drawn from *A Yupiaq Worldview: A Pathway to Ecology and Spirit* (Kawagley, 2006, p. 15).

members, used by elders and parents to instruct children at home, in the *qasgiq*, or community house, and while traveling and co-participating in subsistence or other activities. Mather draws attention to this reality, stating that stories “are still very much a part of our everyday lives... In hunting, and other subsistence pursuits, and even in our everyday social activities, the ideals and values which underlie our ancient worldview are always near the surface, still operating to guide us in our behavior and way of life (Mather, 1995, pp. 14-15).” Through the practice of storytelling, Yup’ik elders teach youth *niisngayarat*, ways of listening respectfully and obediently (Fienup-Riordan, 2005a, p. 25) and instill cultural values and practices through traditional frameworks such as *qanruyutet* (wisdom or advice on proper ways of living), *qulirat* (ancestral stories), and *qanemcit* (stories based on personal accounts) (John, 2010, pp. 49-50). Education was traditionally a part of everyday life in Yup’ik communities, and a responsibility shared by parents, elders and other family members who passed on their knowledge gradually to children, through lessons with morals and metaphors, as part of a daily practice. This continual method of teaching develops children’s memory skills (2010, p. 56), fosters a healthy cognitive awareness of life in this world and lays a guiding foundation for navigating physical and metaphysical geographies from childhood through adulthood (Kawagley, 2006, p. 21). The integral nature of storytelling as a traditional teaching methodology in Yup’ik culture reflects a worldview in which creative awareness and consciousness are not only valuable traits to foster within an individual, but also fundamental tenants of Yup’ik conceptualizations of personhood that emphasize the power of the creative human mind and the cyclical relationship linking thought and contemplation to action and experience (Fienup-Riordan, 2005a; John, 2010). Awareness is understood as something that is arrived at gradually (Fienup-Riordan, 1990, 2005a; Kawagley, 2006, Mather, 1995). According to Yup’ik linguistic ideology, elders select stories and teachings with care, transferring knowledge and advice in small amounts in order to allow children to internalize their messages so that they may remember, retrieve and recontextualize these teachings in later experiences to which they apply (Fienup-Riordan, 2005a, p. 20). In Fienup-Riordan’s *Wise Words of the Yup’ik People: We Talk to You Because We Love You* (2005a), Yup’ik contributors link children’s visual attention to elders with listening and critical awareness. They recall, in the book, the emphasis their own elders placed on the importance of watching the movements of their eyes and lips as they spoke in the *qasgiq*, and describe how, by watching elders’ eyes and lips as they tell stories, children focus their attention on the transmission of traditional teachings, attuning their senses to subtle messages embedded in facial expressions and paralinguistic features of prosody and intonation. All of these details are said to combine in the minds of children, along with the messages of the stories told, as images from which they could draw on, and build from, in subsequent teaching sessions, life experiences or expressions of cultural identity (2005a, p. 24).

5.3 Yup'ik Genres of Storytelling

Theresa John (2010) describes Yup'ik genres and practices of storytelling as sharing an intimate, and often overlapping, relationship with genres and practices of *yuraq*, or Yup'ik style of dance (2010, p. 72), so that these two expressive cultural forms may be methodologically approached as co-constructive frameworks of interpretation relevant to processes of entextualization and transmission of cultural knowledge, histories, values and understandings of fluid, socially-situated identities (2010, p. 10). These multiple identities are brought to life through performance in *yuraq* as participants frequently play overlapping roles as dancers, singers, drummers, audience members, educators, directors, spiritual leaders and regalia artists, all of whom share a knowledge of dance, music, symbolism, gesture and conventional rules of behavior and organization (2010, p.13). Dancing is also a way for participants to explore textual multivocality (Bakhtin, 2009) in song and dance through gestural movements which mimic the thoughts and behavior of characters variously situated within the recontextualized narrative (John, 2010, p. 14). Similarly to genres of storytelling and oral pedagogy, which may be entextualizations of ancestral knowledge or personal experiences, genres and forms of *yuraq* may emerge from both traditional ceremonial contexts and family or personal experiences (John, 2010).

According to John (2010, p. 30), symbolic expressions of *ellarvut*, “our [Yup'ik] sense of awareness,” are found in the traditional circle and dot motif called *ellam iinga*, “the eye of the universe and awareness,” which traditionally decorated drums, masks, dance fans and regalia (Fienup-Riordan, 1990, pp. 49-61). This traditional motif represents the mind’s eye, or spiritual vision and awareness, symbolizing the “creation of a pathway between the human and spirit worlds” (John, 2010, p. 30). Through *yuraq*, participants collaboratively perform ancient forms of Yup'ik prayer, traditional narratives and contemporary expressions of identity through dancing, with spiritual leaders and instructors facilitating spiritual channels of communication between human and non-human realms through drumming and dancing (2010, p. 14). The audience plays an equally important participatory role during the dances, as they watch and listen attentively to receive and internalize the narrative text of songs and dances. This is a crucial step in the entextualization, transmission and recontextualization of traditional cultural knowledge, as audience members can then share the stories with family and friends after the ceremony has ended (2010, p. 14).

A specific example in which the overlap between Yup'ik genres of storytelling and dance is transparent is documented in the literature describing the different styles and exchanges of dance performed by men and women during *Kevgiq*, or the Messenger Festival (Fienup-Riordan, 1990; John, 2010). The name for this festival derives from the term *kevgak*, the dual form of *kevgaq*, “messenger,” which refers to the two messengers who ran between villages in traditional practice to announce an invitation to a ceremonial performance and distribution of gifts (John, 2010, p. 52). Accounts of these

messengers are found in traditional narratives passed down by Yup'ik elders, who describe the origins of the Messenger Festival as rooted in the decision to open up cooperative friendships in place of the warring relationships that historically linked villages on Nelson Island (2010, pp. 45-46). These narrative descriptions represent interwoven texts of both *qulirat* and *qanemcit*, with the former represented in the entextualized values of cooperation and generosity expressed in traditional Yup'ik cosmology, and the latter represented through elders' personal accounts of Messenger Festival participant frameworks and practices.

Another example of transparent overlap in textual genres and performances is illustrated through the opening dances of the Messenger Festival, in which participants performed “family-owned motion dances” in groups of three, representing traditional conceptualizations of kinship as a mother, father and child, to musical compositions consisting of three verses (2010, pp. 47-48). John provides examples of these family-specific dances in her account of an experience as a child, in which she was trained by her grandmother to perform dances based on family experiences of whale hunting, gathering mouse food and making a raincoat from the intestines of a bearded seal (2010, p. 48). John's description illustrates the ways in which *qulirat* and *qanemcit* co-create the context of the performative event, as the family dances both express the value of kinship relations in traditional Yup'ik cosmology, while also describing and recontextualizing personal experiences and practices through which these kin relations are enacted and sustained.

John's description of the family-specific dance also provides an example of how Goffman's (1981) theoretical framework of participant roles can be useful in analyzing expressive cultural forms as text by allowing analysts to identify the range of contributing voices or the “participation framework (1981, p. 137)” of a communicative event or encounter. In the performance context of the family dance, roles of performers and audience members are easily identifiable as both co-participants and co-creators in the performative context. Goffman argues that in order to fully understand the participant framework of a text, all contributors including non-present actors must be accounted for. He suggests that the role of speaker or performer can be further broken down into three categories (1981, p. 144): *animator*, an individual who actively produces an utterance (which in the context of dance could include the work of executing moves and steps); *author*, an individual for selecting the ideas expressed through the text and the forms of encoding them (i.e. words, gestures, bodily positions, etc.); and *principal*, an individual whose beliefs and sentiments are told through the text and whose “position is established” through the authored forms. Given that John describes ways in which the text of the dance emerges from, and refers to, both broadly traditional Yup'ik cultural values of elders and ancestors, as well as personal experiences of family members, the full participation framework of the performed text includes not only the performers and audience, but also non-present voices who have authored the text, namely John's

grandmother, non-human participants in the stories told through the text such as landscapes, animals and bodies of water, as well as unnamed Yup'ik elders and ancestors who preserved the value of kinship relations through their teachings to younger generations. If we imagine the context of John's grandmother teaching the dance to her as one in which her grandmother is occupying the role of performer, demonstrating the dance to John who in the context of the teaching is the audience, John's grandmother could be considered the *animator* of a text, which was *authored* by the family members, animals and landscapes whose voices and experiences are reflected in the movements. Since the text of the dance not only establishes the relational positions of the family members to one another through their shared experiences, but also generally expresses traditional cultural values passed on by Yup'ik elders and ancestors, the family members along with the non-present Yup'ik ancestors could be considered the *principals* of the family dance text.

The family-centered dances discussed above, along with other forms of *yuraq* involving themes related to subsistence practices, represent holistic expressions of *yuyyaraq*, readable as texts describing the interconnected and reciprocal relationship linking humans, spirits and the land, as well as central processes in the entextualization and transmission of experiential knowledge as performed and embodied in *yuraq*.

5.4 Participant Frameworks in the Production of Yup'ik Memoirs

According to Fienup-Riordan & Rearden (2014), the process for creating bilingual memoirs has evolved over the last ten years into a methodical process in which CEC board members, together with Yup'ik elders and community members, agree on topics of cultural importance. These topics are then discussed collaboratively in audio-recorded *topic-specific gatherings*. The audio files of Yup'ik participants textual contributions in these gatherings are then transcribed and translated to form the text of the resultant bilingual memoir.

CEC anthropologist, Fienup-Riordan (2014, pp. 92-3), refers to topic-specific gatherings as the organization's "primary information-gathering tool," and explains that the format of these gatherings was "pioneered" and developed over time by the CEC, especially during the organization's work with Yup'ik elders from 2000 to 2005, when the CEC participated in a large-scale traditional knowledge project funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF).¹⁶ Participants in topic-specific gatherings always use Yugtun as the primary language of interaction, and each gathering is recorded and saved in digital audio

¹⁶ For more information on this project, see *Linking Global and Local* (Fienup-Riordan, 2014) and Fienup-Riordan & Rearden (2014, pp. xlii-xliii).

files¹⁷ (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. xliii). From 1995 to 2002, topic-specific gatherings typically included CEC board director, Mark John, Yup'ik elder board members, non-board member Yup'ik elders, parents and youth from participating villages, simultaneous Yup'ik-English interpreter, Marie Meade (through 2000), CEC anthropologist, Ann Fienup-Riordan (beginning 1999), and CEC translator and oral historian, Alice Rearden (beginning 2000). Though the composition of participating elders and youth changes along with the cultural topics and goals relative to bilingual book produced, CEC-staff members, John, Fienup-Riordan, and Rearden now form the core team that facilitates and records each gathering. Rearden then uses the audio recordings to create "detailed transcriptions and translations of each gathering (Fienup-Riordan, 2014, p. 93)." She then translates the Yugtun transcriptions into English through a method of *free translation*, in which "each speaker's choice of words is respected, while word order and sentence structure are modified where necessary to communicate the narrator's intended meaning (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. lxxviii)." Her method lends itself well to representing both Yup'ik participants' interactions and conversational styles, allowing readers to have a sense of the individual voices and personalities contributing to the textual material within the bilingual memoirs. Following Rearden's work, CEC staff and other gathering participants work together to turn the transcripts and translations into the finished bilingual publications.

Fienup-Riordan notes that the term *gathering* was consciously chosen by CEC board members to define the genred communicative event in which Yup'ik elders, youth and community members engage in "open-ended exchanges between generations," which "encourage elders to speak among their peers at the highest level (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. lvi)." In the choice of terminology, Fienup-Riordan suggests that the CEC elevates the value of communal relationships and shared experiences by defining topic-specific gatherings in categorical opposition to western institutional genres of *meetings*, which are commonly "goal-oriented decision-making events," and *interviews*, in which questions are posed to elders "by those who often do not already hold the knowledge they seek (Fienup-Riordan, 2014, p. 93)." The CEC's efforts to organize topic-specific gatherings as new genres of cultural transmission may be understood as responsive to the growing need for communicative settings that allow for Yup'ik youth and other community members to learn from elders in ways that are both nontraditional while still culturally appropriate. Yup'ik researcher, Elsie Mather, explains the need for new contexts for researching cultural knowledge in her discussion of the work that she and Phyllis Morrow did interviewing Yup'ik elders for their book *Cauyarnariuq/It Is Time for Drumming* (Mather & Morrow, 1985). She explains, "[w]e both knew that to ask many questions, especially of an elder by a younger person, was one of the no-no's in

¹⁷ According to personal communication with Fienup-Riordan, all audio files are currently stored in a central clearing house based in Anchorage, Alaska, and are in process of being digitized and used in the CEC's Yup'ik websites and other online media.

our way of learning. But we were also aware that our elders have a lot to teach us. And they don't often have the chance to impart their knowledge today, with young people away in schools and parents away at jobs (Mather, 1995, p. 16).” She also notes that when she explained to Yup'ik elders her purpose in collecting information was for its use in educating Yup'ik youth in high-school programs, “the elders were more than willing to teach me and answer my questions patiently...but it was important for them to see me demonstrate a little bit of knowledge about what I was asking. They know they teach us best by building upon our experiences (1995, p. 16).” Similarly, Rearden expressed that at the beginning of her documentation work she was uncomfortable with the feeling that she was asking too many questions of Yup'ik elder participants in the production of the memoirs, but found that it became easier over time as she built relationships with elders and they began to understand that she was actively listening to their teachings (personal interview, 2014). At the close of the gatherings for the 2014 memoir, *Nunamta Ellamta-llu Ayuqucia* (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. 558), Yup'ik elder, Maryann Andrews, affirms her openness to the CEC staff's questions throughout the discussion saying, “thank you all for listening and asking us questions all this time about the meaning and significance of what we were talking about. When you ask questions, you make us very grateful.”

5.4.1 Participant Goals

Genres are not only comprised of participant frameworks and formal, linguistic features, but are also defined by participants' goals (Bazerman, 1994). According to Fienup-Riordan (2005a, p. xxiv), the emergence of topic-specific gatherings as culturally salient communicative events reflects Yup'ik elders' “growing awareness of devastating social problems related to poverty and cultural dislocation,” and their goal of creating “a context in which they can communicate their sense of Yup'ik distinctiveness to young people” by choosing discussion topics which they believe will “instill in youth a respect for and understanding of [Yup'ik] traditions (2005a, pp. xxv-xxvi).” She explains that elders are proactively aware of the fact that their shared contributions in the topic-specific gatherings will circulate outside of the face-to-face context, bounded in print with facing page translations in English. Yup'ik elder, Mary Black, affirms this awareness when she says, “Although there are just a few of us gathered here, the people from our hometowns will learn about this, our grandchildren, our children, and other children who we don't know. They will read and learn about what we've said. I'm grateful because we're doing this for future generations (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. 558).” It is significant that elders' memoirs are published in both Yup'ik and English, as this choice reflects the intended audience of the CEC-produced publications. This audience includes both Yup'ik and English language users, Native and non-Native youth, community members, teachers, researchers, political leaders and other interested readers with access to the books through libraries and other public institutions or a variety of online resources.

5.4.2 Participant Frameworks of Topic-specific Gatherings

The participant frameworks of topic-specific gatherings vary by project, but generally include CEC staff and “small groups of [Yup’ik] elder experts, accompanied by younger community members,” who come together for multi-day discussions of a specific questions and topics, selected and agreed upon beforehand by Yup’ik elders and CEC board members (2014, p. 93). As Fienup-Riordan (2005a, p. 4) explains, CEC gatherings that took place from 1995 through 2002 “ranged in size from annual conferences of several hundred held in small villages, to meetings in Bethel of one to two dozen participants, to still smaller get-togethers involving three to six people in Bethel or Anchorage.” The photo in Figure 5.4 below, depicting Yup’ik elders, Lawrence Edmund, Eugene Pete, and Mike Andrews, Sr., at a 2011 CEC topic-specific gathering in Anchorage, provides one example of what a topic-specific gathering might look like.



Lawrence Edmund (Alakanuk), Eugene Pete (Nunam Iqua), and Mike Andrews Sr. (Emmonak) talking during a CEC topic-specific gathering in Anchorage, December 2011. AFR

Figure 5.4 Example of Topic-Specific Gathering¹⁸

In considering the participants who have shaped the text of bilingual Yup’ik memoirs, it is important to note that the full framework of contributors also includes the voices of Yup’ik ancestors who

¹⁸ Photo originally appears in *Nunamta Ellamta-Ilu Ayuqucia* (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014) and is reproduced here with permission of A. Fienup-Riordan.

are not physically present in the contexts of production. The next chapter explores how some of these non-present participants are brought into the conversation by Yugtun speakers, through their usage of the evidential enclitic =*gguq*.

Chapter 6 Textual Visibility of Non-present Participants

In order to understand the linguistic traces of non-present participants, it is first necessary to provide a brief introduction to Yugtun, the Yup'ik language. Section 6.1 gives a basic overview of Yup'ik sound inventory and orthography, and Section 6.2 follows with descriptions of regular morphological patterns of Yugtun. Section 6.3 presents examples of ways in which evidentiality or source of knowledge is grammatically encoded in Yugtun, with Section 6.4 discussing the role of evidentials markers in indicating non-present participants in texts.

6.1 Sound Inventory and Orthography

The standard orthography for Yugtun, which I employ throughout my thesis, was itself developed through the collaborative work and interests of linguists and Yugtun speakers at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in the late 1960's (Jacobson & Jacobson, 1995, p. 447). Previous orthographies¹⁹ were already in existence by the 1960's, as a result of missionary efforts to communicate with, and convert, Central Yup'ik community members in southwest Alaska throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The earliest of these first orthographies was created by Russian Orthodox missionaries, using the Cyrillic alphabet, while orthographies using the Latin alphabet were subsequently developed by Moravian Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries in the region (1995, p. 447). Jacobson & Jacobson (1995, pp. 447-48) describes the new standard orthography as one “devised to rectify the shortcomings of the older systems,” which often failed to accurately and consistently distinguish between sounds such as /k/ (a voiceless velar stop found in *cat*) and /q/ (a voiceless uvular stop which is not found in English), or to offer adequate explanations for phonological processes such as the rhythmic lengthening of vowels and automatic germination.²⁰ The newest standard orthography represents the Central Yup'ik language using a one-to-one correlation of distinct sounds or phonemes to letters or *digraphs*, combinations of two letters, so that any given word can be pronounced in only one way (Jacobson, 2012, p. 46, Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. lxxvi). The basic inventory of sounds in Yugtun, as presented by Fienup-Riordan and Rearden (2014, p. lxxvii), has been reproduced below in Figures 6.1.1 and 6.1.2.

¹⁹ For a comparative discussion of modern versus older Yup'ik orthographies, see Jacobson & Jacobson (1995, pp. 447-48; Jacobson, 2012, pp. 53-54).

²⁰ For a more complete reference guide to the rules governing the combination, rhythmic stress and rhythmic lengthening of sounds in Central Yup'ik, see Jacobson & Jacobson (1995, pp. 1-16; Jacobson, 2012, pp. 15-58).

Consonants

| | labials | apicals | front velars | back velars |
|----------------------|---------|---------|--------------|-------------|
| stops | p | t c | k | q |
| voiced fricatives | v | l s/y | g (ug) | r (ur) |
| voiceless fricatives | vv | ll ss | gg (w) | rr |
| voiced nasals | m | n | ng | |
| voiceless nasals | m | n | ng | |

Symbols in parentheses represent the sounds made with the lips rounded.

Figure 6.1.1 Yugtun Consonants²¹

Vowels

| | front | | back |
|------|-------|---|------|
| high | i | | u |
| mid | | e | |
| low | | a | |

Figure 6.1.2 Yugtun vowels

6.2 Morphology

Yugtun is a highly *polysynthetic* language, which means that ideas are expressed through lengthy words composed of multiple *morphemes*, or units of meaning. A distinctive characteristic of polysynthetic languages noun incorporation, or the presence of lexical noun roots within verbs (apart from person conjugation). In Yugtun words are formed by combining *bases*, primarily nouns and verbs, with *postbases*, or suffixes, that inflect to specify the grammatical categories of person and number, though not gender (Jacobson & Jacobson, 1995, p. 17; 2012, p. 23). There are also words in Yugtun which do not inflect, mainly adverbs and conjunctions, called *particles* (1995, p. 17). Examples of the morphological processes by which bases and postbases are combined to create spoken words are illustrated below Examples 6.2.1 (a) and (b), and 6.2.2 (c) and (d), offering compositional analyses of noun-based and verb-based Yup'ik words, respectively.

²¹ Figures 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 originally appear in *Nunamta Ellamta-llu Ayuqucia* (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014). Reproduced here with permission of A. Fienup-Riordan.

Example 6.2.1 Noun-based Inflection

(a) *yup`ik*

yug- *-pik*²²

person(Nbase) + real, genuine or authentic N(postbase)

real/authentic person

In Example 6.2.1 (a) above, the noun base *yug-* is combined with the postbase *-pik*, to form *yup`ik*. The minus sign (-) in front *-pik* indicates that this postbase causes final base consonants, *g* and *r*, to drop whenever it is used. The apostrophe in the final form indicates *gemination*, or lengthening, of the *p* sound. Gemination in *yup`ik* is a special occurrence “due to the peculiarity of the word for person,” which “causes gemination where possible (1995, p. 51).”

(b) *kanaqlacuarat*

kanaqlag- *-cuar(ar)* *%:(e)t*

muskrat(Nbase) + little N (postbase) + 3rd person pl(ending)

little muskrats

In Example 6.2.1 (b), the minus sign (-) in front of the postbase *-cuar(ar)* serves the same function as described for *-pik* in Example 6.2.1 (a) above, dropping the final base consonant, */g/*. The ending *%:(e)t* is used for the unpossessed absolutive plural forms of nouns, with *%* indicating that “weak base-final consonants are dropped and strong base-final consonants are retained (1995, p. 44).” The colon (:) indicates that velar consonants are dropped when flanked by single vowels, and the *e* is used “only when a strong base-final consonant is kept (1995, p. 44).”

Example 6.2.2 Verb-based Inflection

(c) *pissurtuq*

pissur- *+` (g/t)uq*

to work(Vbase) + 3rd person sing(ending)

He/she is hunting.

²² This postbase is a variant form of the postbase *-piaq*, also meaning ‘real, genuine or authentic N (Jacobson & Jacobson, 1995, p. 51).

Example 6.2.2 (c) demonstrates the usage of the 3rd person singular ending, +'(g/t)uq. The plus sign (+) indicates that “base-final consonants are retained,” the apostrophe (‘) indicates that gemination occurs “with ‘short’ bases ending in *e*,” and the *g/t* in parentheses “indicates that *g* and *t* are used between base and ending only with certain base-termination types and not others (1995, p. 20).” As Jacobson & Jacobson (1995, p. 18) note, tense in Yup’ik differs from tense in English, so that while *pissurtuq* means ‘he or she is hunting,’ “a verb describing a momentary act (such as ‘falling,’ ‘leaving,’ ‘dying,’ etc.) can mean either that the act is occurring right this instant or that the act has just recently occurred.” In the example of *ayagtuq*, from the verb base *ayag-* (‘to leave’) the meaning can be read either as ‘he or she is leaving’ or ‘he or she has just left.’

(d) iqvaryullrunritukut

iqvar- @~+yug -llru- -nrite- +'(g/t)ukut
to pick berries(Vbase) + to want to V(postbase) + PAST + NEG + 1st person pl
We didn't want to pick berries.

Example 6.2.2 (c) above demonstrates the usage of the postbase @~+yug (‘to want to V’), in which the @ indicates special treatment of bases ending in *te*,²³ and the tilde (~) indicates that the final *e*, if present, is dropped from bases onto which it is applied (1995, p. 23). The postbase -llru- locates an action clearly in the past, so as to avoid the ambiguity discussed previously in Example 6.2.2 (d).

6.3 Evidentiality

Evidentiality, the marking of a speaker’s source of evidence or certainty about a claim, is a culturally salient grammatical category for Yugtun speakers. An example of the encoding of evidentiality in the language can be found in the postbase -llini-, ‘to evidently have V-ed.’ The meaning of -llini- could also be translated as ‘I found out that...,’ ‘It seems that...’ or ‘It must be that... (Jacobson & Jacobson, 1995, p. 147).’ Examples of how this postbase might be used are illustrated below in 6.3.1 (e) and (f).

Example 6.3.1 Expressing Evidentiality Through the Postbase -llini-

(e) Ayallrulliniut

ayag- -llru- -llini- +'(g/t)ut
to leave (V base) PAST EVIDENTIAL 3rd person pl
Evidently they left.

²³ For a full explanation of the “@” symbol in morphology, see Jacobson & Jacobson (1995, pp. 23-24).

(f) Iqvallrulliniuq akwauguq.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|------------|------------------------|
| iqvar- | -llru- | -llini- | + ⁷ (g/t)uq |
| to pick berries (V base) | PAST | EVIDENTIAL | 3rd person sing |

Evidently she/he was picking berries yesterday.

While it is possible to say ‘evidently they left’ in English, it is not obligatory to explain how one came to this conclusion or whether or not one was there during the time of the departure. For Yugtun speakers, it is obligatory to make a distinction between information that is gleaned through personal experience and that which is either obtained through secondary sources or inferred through observation (1995, p. 147). In this way, example 6.3.1 (f) might be used if a person indicated that she or he wanted to, or was going to, pick berries (the day before the utterance) and is now in possession of several gallons of berries. While the speaker may not have been physically present during the time that the person was actively picking berries, observable evidence indicates that she or he did indeed pick berries.

Evidentiality is also expressed morphologically in Yugtun through the enclitic =*gguq*. ‘It is said (1995, p. 209).’ This particle may be used in cases of reported speech, as well as to cite knowledge from another source, as described in Example 6.3.2 (g) and (h) below.

Example 6.3.2 Expressing Evidentiality Through the Enclitic =*gguq*

(g) Taigi-gguq

| | | |
|------------------|-----|------------|
| tai- | gi | =gguq |
| to come (V base) | IMP | EVIDENTIAL |

He/she says “come here.”

Because it is an enclitic, =*gguq* does not inflect. Its form remains constant regardless of verb tense, and its inclusion in an utterance indicates the source of the information the speaker is transmitting to his or her audience. According to Mather (1995, p. 23), a speaker’s usage of =*gguq* indicates that what he or she says “has come from another source” and that he or she is “only passing on information.” This evidential is often used in Yugtun discourse when a speaker is referencing traditional cultural knowledge and moral instructions passed down from Yup’ik ancestors, as in Example 6.3.2 (h), drawn from Yup’ik elder Fred Augustine’s discussion of traditional *qanruyutet*, or moral instructions (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. 282).

(h) Taum-gguq yuum anguq’apiar qacungakengramtegggu caunrillekluku qaneryaqunata.

They say although we don’t think much of someone, we should never belittle him.

The enclitic =*gguq*, highlight a claim’s importance as deriving from ancestral authority. Example 6.3.2 (h) above, is a way of letting “others know that this information is not our own, but we respect its source...In a way we are saying, ‘Look, what I’m telling you to do is not coming from me. This is something you should do.’ (Mather 1995, p. 23)” The discussion of ways in which Yup’ik elders use =*gguq* in their textual contributions to bilingual memoirs to reference and include the voices of non-present ancestral voices is continued below in Section 6.4.

6.4 Evidentials as Markers of Non-present Participants in Texts

The evidential enclitic =*gguq* is a linguistic resource that Yugtun speakers use to include voices of non-present speakers, or “shadow” participants (Goffman, 1981; Irvine, 1996), into communicative contexts. In the text of bilingual Yup’ik memoirs, contributing elders often use the evidential enclitic =*gguq* to cite the source of the information they share, as well as to bring into the conversation both specific and unnamed participants who are not physically present. In this way, Yugtun speakers participating in the production of the memoirs use their language to expand the participant framework to include the voices of relatives and ancestors, with whom they shared experiences, and from whom they learned the stories and lessons discussed in the text. Example 6.4 (a) below illustrates the usage of =*gguq* to report the speech of a named person, and is drawn from the comments of Yup’ik elder, Benedict Tucker, in his discussion of a story told to him by Jasper Joseph (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, pp. 228-29).

Example 6.4 (a)

Jasper Joseph-am-llu qanrutellruanga tuaten. Ayaglutek-**gguq** avavet Qip’ngayak-llu augna tekilluku.
And Jasper Joseph also told me that. He said they traveled out there and they reached Qip’ngayak.

In Example 6.4 (b), Yup’ik elder, Fred Augustine, uses =*gguq* to reference unnamed ancestral voices, evidencing the source of the instruction that he shares on the healing power of spoken language (2014, pp. 319-19). In Example 6.4 (c), Yup’ik elder, Barbara Joe, uses =*gguq* in her discussion of learning as a lifelong process, referencing unnamed ancestral voices as the source of her knowledge (2014, pp. 328-329).

Example 6.4 (b)

Man`a-**gguq** man`a maani yullemteni cangalkellerput tua-i piksuumiinaku qanerciqukut.

Qanrutkenrikumteggu taugken tua-i pivkenani. Ca-**gguq** qanrutkaqamteni taugaam calilartuq, qanrutkumanrilami-ll` calivkenani.

They say as we are living, if we speak of something that we find offensive, we will say that we don't want to be like that. But if we don't talk about it, it won't [progress]. They say when we speak of something, it begins to progress, and if we don't speak of it, it won't progress.

Example 6.4 (c)

Man`a-**gguq** yuullerput yuunginanemteni qaneryaraq amllertuq yuunginanemteni avani; avaken niilluku maa-i-llu wiinga waten elliama tamakut imkut aanama aatama-llu alerqutait taringyaurrluki... Yuk-**gguq** man`a yuurtelartuq, yuk tamarmi, aanami atami-llu elicautai elitengnaqu`urluki.

They say our lives, as we live, there are many qaneryarat [teachings] that we heard as we lived; we heard it in the past, and now that I'm this age today, I have started to understand the instructions that my mother and father gave me... They say every person is born continually trying to learn the instructions given by his mother and father.

In sum, the enclitic =*gguq* is a linguistic resource that Yugtun speakers use to indicate that something is shared knowledge and to locate authority for their statements in ancestral wisdom. This enclitic also marks speakers' usage of memory to linguistically construct and maintain relationships of cultural continuity, linking present and historical contexts.

6.5 Textual Erasures

While the production contexts for published Yup`ik memoirs showcase individual voices and perspectives, as well as honor "shadow," ancestral participants, the careful identification of the sources of participants' textual contributions also makes it clear that there are some voices that are left out or less often heard from. Interestingly, contributing Yup`ik elders frequently identify female relatives and grandmothers as the source of information shared during text building activities, however, the majority of elder authors participating in the production of Yup`ik memoirs are male. The majority of CEC board members who help to administer the process of designing cultural documentation projects and choosing appropriate topics of discussion are also male.²⁴ Though Yup`ik women participate with Yup`ik men in the production of bilingual memoirs, it appears that men speak more or are more comfortable speaking in

²⁴ According to Fienup-Riordan & Rearden (2016, pp. 1-2), of the twenty-two people who served terms on the CEC board from 2005-2014, only two were women.

the contexts of storytelling during topic-specific gatherings and other text building activities. Discussing her thought process before attending a topic-specific gathering session for the production of *Nunamta Ellamta-llu Ayuqucia* (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014), the elder Barbara Joe explains, "...I suddenly thought about how I would feel shy and I thought, 'I must take care. I'm afraid I will be very shy' (2014, pp. 598-99)." As contributing Yup'ik elder, Ray Waska, of Emmonak, stated in response to CEC staff's suggestion to hold a women's gathering during the production of *Nunamta Ellamta-llu Ayuqucia*, "That's a good idea if you give women their own group. If they want to say something, they couldn't say anything in front of men because it's not respecting them. But if you take them in their own group, like here, all ladies, they're more open (2014, p. 370)." In their discussion of the *qasgiq*, or communal house where Yup'ik elders often instructed youth through storytelling, elders Barbara Joe, of Alakanuk, and Maryann Andrews, of Emmonak, agreed with one another about feeling "too shy" to go inside (2014, p. 372). Fienup-Riordan (personal communication 2015) described the possibility of a forthcoming Yup'ik memoir with all women authors, which may give some insight into traditional linguistic practices and ways of passing on cultural knowledge and instructions that are specific to Yup'ik women. Mather (1995, p. 17) notes that, "Many of our Yup'ik traditional stories are about a grandmother and grandchild. Usually the grandchild is portrayed as someone with special abilities, someone extraordinary." This theme could be interesting to explore further in relation to the generational gap between Yup'ik elders and youth.

6.6 The Entextualization of Traditional Yup'ik Leadership Roles

Although topic-specific gatherings have emerged as new communicative contexts for discussing questions and topics related to the CEC's cultural documentation projects, participant roles and relationships within gatherings also reflect traditional²⁵ Yup'ik ideas of leadership, moral instruction, decision making and storytelling. In her discussion of testimony from Yupiit Nation elders on traditional Yup'ik leadership roles and methods of moral instruction, Fienup-Riordan (1990) describes three levels of Yup'ik tribal organization and decision making in southwestern Alaska near the beginning of the twentieth century. These are: the extended family, the village group (comprised of one or more extended families) and regional village groups. She notes that, through the early twentieth century, situations requiring regional levels of leadership were rare so leadership roles were most often occupied by Yup'ik

²⁵ According to Fienup-Riordan, the term *traditional* is currently understood by Yup'ik elders participating in CEC gatherings as indexical of Yup'ik cultural values and ways of being that were still in practice through the early 1900's, "after many technological improvements had been introduced but before the Yup'ik people had experienced subordination to federal and state control and related [socio-economic and political] dependency (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. xxv)." Within the interactional context of topic-specific gatherings and other CEC-related events, the title and role of 'elder' has gained new metalinguistic significance as term referring to "men and women, born in the first decades of the twentieth century," as part of "the last generation raised in *qasgit* [communal men's houses] and sod houses before schools and churches were built in their communities (2014, p. xxv)."

men at the level of extended families or village communities (1990, p.198). According to Fienup-Riordan (1990, p. 198), “parents traditionally led the extended family,” which was comprised of two to four generations of Yup'ik relatives. Within Yup'ik villages, these extended families were “residentially divided between a central men's house (*qasgiq*) and one or more separate dwellings [*enet*] in which the women and younger children lived (1990, p. 199).” Within the household dwellings, Yup'ik women were the leaders and moral instructors for children and female youth, while the male leaders of extended families worked together to instruct others and make decisions within the *qasgiq*. Yup'ik participants interviewed for Fienup-Riordan's *Eskimo Essays* (1990) emphasized the fact that neither age nor sex was the final determining factor for leadership roles (1990, p. 199), rather it was an individual's ability to “demonstrate intelligence and knowledge” gained through listening to and assimilating the teachings of past leaders, “to learn and transmit oral tradition,” and also to “respond to the community as a whole” with a generous attitude which made him or her a good leader (1990, pp. 200-201). Significantly, Yupiit Nation elders' testimony also documented that “leadership was not the exclusive prerogative of a single individual (1990, p. 199),” but rather the shared responsibility of leaders who would discuss and arrive at important decisions together. This collaborative process continues to be a model for decision making among Yup'ik elders and CEC board members within the context of topic-specific gatherings, however, the necessity of conducting such gatherings through regional Native Corporations and affiliated nonprofit organizations has shifted the authority to make decisions regarding continued transmission of cultural knowledge to regional, rather than communal, levels of leadership.

Chapter 7 Political Significance of Yup'ik Memoirs

This chapter explores the ways in which Yup'ik elders' memoirs can be understood as having political significance within, and outside of, the Yup'ik communities and membership involved in their production. Briggs (1993, p. 390) argues that all processes of entextualization are “deeply political” and produce “particular types of texts in the service of social and political agendas.” Framed collectively as a Yup'ik textual genre both emergent of, and responsive to, larger cultural documentation projects and entextualizing processes, CEC-produced bilingual publications may be understood as “political” in Briggs’ sense. Though the socio-political ideologies and goals shaping the structure and content of individual CEC publications varies in their explicitness and visibility, they remain accessible for analysis through participants’ *metadiscursive practices*, a term coined by Briggs to describe the strategies employed by interactive participants to navigate and challenge discursively based power relations (1993, p. 389). In his usage of this term, Briggs rejects and reframes static conceptualizations of textuality and discourse as an agentic, dialogical processes “oriented toward exerting effects of power on other situated discourses (1993, p. 390).” One clear example of a political decision shaping the presentation of published Yup'ik cultural knowledge can be found in *Nunamta Ellamta-llu Ayuqucia/What Our Land and World Are Like* (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014). In the winter of 2012-2013, Dr. Walkie Charles, originally from Emmonak, and Monica Shelden, originally from Alakanuk, were the first to read and review the edited manuscript for this most recent CEC-produced bilingual Yup'ik memoir (2014, p. xxvi). All previously released CEC bilingual books contain facing page transcriptions and translations, with English text presented on the right-hand side and Yup'ik text on the left. Following Dr. Charles' suggestion to elevate the Yup'ik text by presenting it instead “in the primary position on the right-hand page (2014, p. xxvii),” *Nunamta Ellamta-llu Ayuqucia* is the first CEC publication featuring a reverse order presentation of the facing page Yup'ik-English text, with Yup'ik translations appearing on the right-hand side and English transcriptions on the left.

7.1 Claims to Place

Other examples of ways in which bilingual Yup'ik memoirs may be understood as politically motivated and goal oriented are visible in Yup'ik elders' discussions of traditional place names and human-landscape interactions. Implicit and explicit claims to place, and discourses of placed identities are especially pervasive throughout the denotational text, and even the title, of *Nunamta Ellamta-llu Ayuqucia*, translated into as English “What Our Land and World Are Like.” This choice to translate the Yup'ik verb *ayaqu-* with the simple-present tense conjugation of the English verb ‘to be’ is significant, as Yup'ik verbs do not feature a clear distinction between past and present action, unless modified with a

specific verbal postbase (or attachable ending) that clearly locates an action as taking place in the past or future (Jacobson & Jacobson, 1995). As presented in Yup'ik and English, this title affirms that Yup'ik participants in the production of this book claim active ownership of the Yukon territory, whose cultural and natural history they explore throughout their conversations in the material text of the publication. As illustrated in Table 3.1, all the other CEC bilingual publications used in my analysis use present tense verbs to describe claims to place, ancestral practices and instructions. Following Collins' analysis of Tolowa place names in northwestern California, I argue that these publication titles should be understood as both "a continuation of a traditional culture of place" and "as a response to *displacement* (Collins, 1998, p. 135, emphasis original)." Alaska Natives retained a larger amount of their lands than the Tolowa and other Native North American tribes. But due to the ANCSA, the reorganization of tribal governments into a corporate—rather than reservation—system, Alaska Native peoples still only retain 44 million acres of their heritage lands, with the majority of the Yukon delta region under federal ownership as part of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. xlv). With their politically conscious titles of bilingual Yup'ik memoirs with English translations, these CEC-produced books concerning knowledge of place names and environmental history aid in the circulation of enduring Yup'ik claims to ancestral lands and the right to inhabit and interact with them in ways that are meaningful to present and future generations.

As stated by Fienup-Riordan in her discussion of the March 2011 Yukon village planning meetings held prior to the production of the 2014 book, Yup'ik elders and community members "were enthusiastic about sharing Yukon history and oral traditions, especially place names (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014, p. xliii)." She observes that through sharing over "400 place names and dozens of related stories," participating Yukon elders "effectively asserted that the land and waterways are still Yup'ik country, every mile of which is named and known (2014, p. xlv)." The communal, rather than individual, Yup'ik land claims provide an interesting example of strategic essentialism or the assertion of a kind of general cultural truth as applying to an entire population. In contrast to cultural generalizations made by outside researchers such as Boas, however, this Yup'ik example emerges from the interests and goals of Yup'ik community members. In such contexts, essentialism can be a rhetorical strategy for members of socio-economically marginalized Indigenous communities to assert their political rights.

Yup'ik elders' contributions to the text of CEC bilingual publications articulate a variety of local and individual concerns, ideologies, and social goals, reflecting a level of diversity within cultural regions, communities and families that is often erased from generalized and academic textual accounts such as Boas' descriptions of the Ukumiut. In the most recent book, *Ciulirnerunak Yuuyaunak/Do Not Live Without An Elder* (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2016), some contributing Yup'ik elders shared place names out of concern for the dangers that hunters or young people might encounter while out on the land,

and the importance of passing on knowledge about place names and related stories. Nick Andrew, from the Yukon region, explains the importance of passing on knowledge of traditional place names and related stories to Yup'ik youth, in order that they might avoid dangerous situations when traveling. He discusses the value of creating maps with traditional place names for young people who do not have an intimate knowledge of their home villages and surrounding landscapes, saying that "...when a person breaks down in the wilderness, if [place names] are [written down on a map like that] we will know where a person [who had been broken down somewhere] is located...even a small lake, and even smaller lakes have names. And if a person reveals its name, and if they reveal that place along a river, we will immediately know where the person is located. And we will be able to go and get that person although the weather is bad (2016, p. 220)." Contributing elder, Paul John, of the Bering Sea coastal region, describes the importance of teaching young people Yup'ik place names in the context of suicides among Yup'ik youth. John attributes increased suicides among Yup'ik youth to language loss and its role as a key contributing factor in the loss of identity (2016, pp. 107-10), saying, "And earlier, I mentioned how people are starting to commit suicide although they are young. When I started to imagine what it's like in my mind, although a poor young person considers himself a Yup'ik person, he cannot speak the Yup'ik language. And because he cannot speak in Yup'ik, when he runs into a wall, although he wants to continue on his path, not being able to speak in Yup'ik seems to be part of the reason they are starting to commit suicide today. That's the reason why they're starting to commit suicide (2016, p. 107)."

The elders' comments above, linking the importance of documenting and sharing traditional Yup'ik place names with dangerous travel and suicide, are significant when considering Fienup-Riordan's discussion of some of the differences in documentation goals among Yup'ik elders from Nelson Island and the Yukon region (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014):

Unlike the case on Nelson Island, where the majority of names are attached to points and historic sites, on the Yukon names are focused on routes in what Ray Waska described as the "highway of puzzles" that comprises the lowland delta. Moreover, whereas Nelson Island elders want young people to learn the Yup'ik names for places before they are forgotten, Yukon elders fear the new English names and nicknames youth are attaching to the old places...Young men [in the Yukon] use these names freely on the VHF radio, and elders hear them with dismay (2014, pp. xliii-xliv).

The 2016 publication from which this excerpt was drawn is unique in its inclusion of a variety of perspectives from elders representing villages in both the Yukon River and Bering Sea coastal regions of

southwest Alaska. Through the editors' preservation of conversational roles occupied by elder participants and CEC staff, readers can begin to see both significant overlaps and differences in the lived experiences and shared knowledge of elders from both Yukon and coastal areas. This most recent memoir is unique among CEC publications in drawing attention to a variety of perspectives from elders representing villages in both the Yukon River and Bering Sea coastal regions of southwest Alaska. The participant framework of contributors is significant because most of the CEC's previous work has been concentrated on coastal villages in the Bering Sea region, with the first book on Yukon history, traditions and practices, *Nunamta Ellamta-Ilu Ayuqucia/What our land and world are like*, not released until 2014. This imbalance in regional focus was due in part to the fact that these coastal communities experienced contact with outsiders significantly later than Yukon residents, for whom "early and sustained" interactions with non-Native traders, missionaries, and epidemics in the late 18th and early 19th centuries led to rapid transformations in local linguistic and cultural practices, interactions, and beliefs (2014, pp. xxxii-xxxvi). Early CEC efforts to document traditional Yup'ik knowledge centered around regions such as Nelson Island, where rates of language loss are lower than in the Yukon region. Contributions by elders from the Yukon region in *Nunamta Ellamta-Ilu Ayuqucia* bring to light rich local histories and continuing practices of interacting with an environment involving significantly more travel over land and waterways than is common in the Nelson Island region. As a result, Yukon elder participants in CEC's place name documentation are concerned with the safety of, and healthy development of identity among, youth in their region with respect to the importance of learning place names through shared travel and experience. Yup'ik elders from the Bering Sea coastal region are also concerned with their local youth's safety and sense of identity, though this concern is more closely tied to the importance of learning and speaking Yup'ik language. Through the interactive discussion of place names from these Yup'ik leaders representing different regions of southwest Alaska, we can understand that not only are lived histories and contemporary experiences of Yup'ik elders diverse, but so are the social issues faced by the youth in their home communities.

Chapter 8 Concluding Discussion and Future Research

8.1 Project Summary

Through a combination of archival research, participant observation of Yup'ik language classes and ethnographic interviews, I learned that CEC-produced, bilingual Yup'ik memoirs have emerged as part of some Yup'ik elders' response to perceived contexts of language endangerment and language loss among Yup'ik youth in Alaska. My research revealed that some Yup'ik elders, especially those who are active board members or shareholders within the regional Calista Corporation and its not for profit sub-corporations, share a desire to bridge the gap in cultural knowledge among Yup'ik elders and youth, and that the production of bilingual memoirs is understood as one productive means of achieving this goal.

8.2 Project limitations

Part of my project was aimed at uncovering information on how bilingual Yup'ik memoirs are circulated within and outside of Alaska, in order to get a sense of how well these books are reaching their intended audience, primarily Yup'ik youth. Unfortunately, there is not yet reliable data to determine how many books are distributed throughout communities and households, or how they are used. Further research will be required to uncover this information. An understanding of a foreign language or culture develops gradually over the course of experiences interacting and participating within it, and I did not feel I had sufficient time to gain fluency in Yugtun that might have been useful in speaking with Yup'ik elders and youth about their thoughts on bilingual memoirs.

8.3 Future Research

In seeking to understand how bilingual Yup'ik memoirs are shaped by ideas about cultural identity, some of the most interesting insights provided through elders' contributions to the texts are their linguistic ideologies that link language to identity. Yup'ik elders from both the Bering Sea coastal region and Yukon River region who participated in the production of bilingual memoirs seem to share a common concern for hardships experienced by youth, which they perceive to be directly related to the lack of instruction given youth receive in Yup'ik values and traditional practices (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2016). However, as described above in Chapter 7 above, there seem to be differences in how elders from the Bering Sea and Yukon regions approach the problem of a generational gap in cultural knowledge. Elders such as Paul John from the Bering Sea region, where rates of language loss among youth and other community members are lower than in the Yukon River region, frame concerns of youth's well-being in terms of language learning and stress the importance of speaking Yugtun in order to maintain a strong sense of identity. On the other hand, elders such as Nick Andrew, from the Yukon River region, frame

concerns over hardships faced by youth in terms of safety and the importance of knowing how to navigate when traveling the land. This difference is significant in the context of cultural documentation and bilingual education in Alaska because the CEC, which is one of the primary heritage organizations in the Yup'ik region leading grant funded projects to foster youth's involvement in learning traditional cultural knowledge, was led for sixteen years by Mark John of Toksook Bay (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2016, p. 1), a region which has higher numbers of Yugtun speakers than areas further north. As discussed in earlier chapters, documentation projects led by the CEC focused almost exclusively on Bering Sea coastal communities until 2014, when the memoir *Nunamta Ellamta-Ilu Ayuqucia*, became the first bilingual book to focus on communities and elders in the Yukon River region (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2014). According to personal communication with CEC oral historian and translator, Alice Rearden (2015), CEC staff members who participated in the production of the 2014 memoir were surprised and impressed with the wealth of traditional Yup'ik moral instructions, cultural values, knowledge of the land and subsistence practices that were alive in the memories of elders and community members in areas where rates of language loss were higher than in other Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta communities. In describing 25 years of language renewal work with Native communities in Alaska, Arizona and California, Paul Kroskrity (2009) suggests that there are often differences in language speakers' feelings and beliefs about language which are "the inevitable outcome of the interaction of indigenous, colonial, post-colonial and professional academic perspectives" and which can be "displayed and even magnified through language renewal activities (2009, p. 71)." In the case of such differences, as the one described above between Bering Sea and Yukon River Yup'ik communities, Kroskrity suggests that an "ideological clarification" is needed among language speakers, educators, researchers and materials developers in order to most effectively implement renewal and documentation projects. One direction for further research is to document whether and how such a clarification takes place.

An important question that this research points to concerns how Yup'ik elders and youth can find ways, through funded projects or other community based initiatives, to spend time with one another. As Moses Paukan, stated in his discussion of this need, "We need time with kids, and school has taken that away (Fienup-Riordan & Rearden, 2016, p. 14)." In my own experience studying Yugtun with Dr. Walkie Charles and assistant professor, Ataat' Joel Forbes, I had the humbling opportunity to spend the 2014-15 academic year learning the language alongside my Yup'ik classmates from diverse regional and dialectal backgrounds. Through my conversations and interactions with classmates, I learned that even students who did not grow up speaking Yup'ik were familiar with, and often active participants in, traditional subsistence activities with their families and community members. While I did not often hear the idea of Yup'ik identity discussed explicitly by the students, I often heard students tell stories or ask questions about things they had listened to and observed in their home communities. One student was from a

region that spoke Cup'ik, and identified himself as Cup'ik as well. It was evident in my classroom experiences that students from non-standard Yup'ik dialectal regions appreciated the professor's attentiveness to, and explanations of, phonological, lexical and other variations among Yup'ik dialects. As part of my thesis investigations surrounding the production of CEC bilingual texts, I distributed a short questionnaire to my classmates asking if anyone had heard of or read any of the titles I was looking at, and got only a few responses from people who had heard of any of the books, with no one reporting to have read them. It remains unclear whether printed books are an effective communicative channel for reaching young people now, though, from what I was able to observe through my shared interactions and learning experiences with Yup'ik classmates, there are many young Yup'ik men and women who are actively seeking to gain a deeper understanding of their heritage language and culture. The CEC's bilingual memoirs seem to have helped unify the voices of some Yup'ik elders in their efforts to strengthen their relationship with youth, though further research is required to determine how effective the bilingual memoirs are in accomplishing this goal, and how Yup'ik conceptualize their language and culture with respect to identity and worldview.

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