INUVIALUIT LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY:
PERSPECTIVES ON THE SYMBOLIC MEANING OF INUVIALUKTUN IN THE CANADIAN WESTERN ARCTIC

by

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Abstract: The revitalization of ancestral languages has been an issue of great concern to Aboriginal communities across North America for several decades. More recently, this concern has also found a voice in educational policy, particularly in regions where Aboriginal land claims have been ratified, and where public schools fall under a mandate to offer curricula that meet the needs of Aboriginal students. This research seeks to explore the cultural significance of Inuvialuktun, a regional Inuit language comprised of three distinct dialects traditionally spoken by the Inuvialuit of the northern Northwest Territories, Canada. More specifically, the research seeks to examine the role of current Inuvialuktun language revitalization efforts in the establishment of Inuvialuit collective and individual identities across several age groups. Tying into the sociolinguistic discourse on ancestral language revitalization in North America, the research seeks to contribute a case study from a region underrepresented in the literature on language and identity. The applied aim of the study is to provide better insight on existing language ideologies and language attitudes subscribed to by current and potential learners of Inuvialuktun in the community of Inuvik, NWT. Data obtained by the study is intended to aid local and territorial language planners in identifying potential obstacles and opportunities regarding language learner motivation. The project was conducted in partnership with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC), the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (ICRC), the Beaufort Delta Education Council (BDEC), and Aurora College, providing qualitative access to current and potential learners, as well as current and future teachers across several educational contexts.

[Keywords: Inuvialuit, language revitalization, identity, hybridity, ideologies, attitudes]

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Chapter One – Introduction

1.0 Introduction

While browsing the online archives of the New York Times a few years ago, a tantalizing article by journalist Christopher Wren caught my eye:

"Precise Eskimo Dialect Threatened with Extension"

> July 9, 1985: "Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories—The Inuvialuktun Language Project has embarked on a venture more curious than selling iceboxes to Eskimos. It is teaching them how to speak their own disappearing dialects." (Wren 1985)

As a student of anthropology, I was quickly drawn into Wren's article, in which he outlined some of the efforts that were put forth by federal and territorial governments to revive the three Inuvialuktun dialects of Inuvialuit, the Western Arctic Inuit who were formerly known also as Mackenzie Delta Eskimo. Reading his article raised several questions for me: What are some of the factors that may contribute to the loss of a language that presumably has been spoken for several thousand years? What must it be like to attempt to re-learn such a language in an indigenous context? Can a cultural identity be maintained in the absence of ancestral language?

After perusing academic literature on several similar scenarios from around the world, a desire grew in me to explore this topic with greater depth. Following an exploratory trip to the Inuvialuit Settlement Region during the summer of 2009, the opportunity arose for my family and I to relocate to Inuvik the following winter. It was from our new home in the Arctic that I was able to translate my earlier sociolinguistic curiosities into two main research questions: 1) what are contemporary Inuvialuit

perceptions of Inuvialuktun and how do these perceptions relate to Inuvialuit identity? And, 2) what motivates/discourages current and potential learners of Inuvialuktun to pursue the language acquisition process? Thus began, for all of us, a rewarding and life-changing journey of over three years, during which time I was privileged to learn about contemporary Inuvialuit life, culture, language, and identity in the community of Inuvik.

1.1 Why the Western Arctic, why Inuvik?

This research and its location was in many ways inspired by the work of Shelley Tulloch (2004), who focused on Inuit youth and their language attitudes on Baffin Island in order to assist Nunavut language planners. Tulloch chose Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, as one of three communities for data collection. In her words, "[t]he intensive contact between English and Inuktitut, and the evident shift from Inuktitut to English taking place among the Inuit of Iqaluit, make the capital city an interesting (and important) starting point for a study of the promotion of Inuktitut" (2004: 91). While the language situation in Iqaluit is somewhat unique within Nunavut, the predominance of English language use in Inuvik is more or less representative of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region as a whole.

I chose Inuvik for many of the same reasons Tulloch chose Iqaluit as one of her research communities. Inuvik is a multi-ethnic[1] community of 3,504 people (Bureau of Statistics GNWT 2011: 1), and it is a regional center with a high turnover of southerners who come here for work, reinforcing English as a default language in the work place. As a government town, Inuvik offers a relatively large number of waged employments, whereby participation in traditional on-the-land activities is somewhat inhibited. Due to

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[1] The population of Inuvik consists of approx. 1/3 Inuit, 1/3 Gwitch'in, and 1/3 non-Aboriginal (Statistics Canada 2010b).

greater access to imports coming in on trucks for most of the year, as well as a greater variety of public services, the lifestyle of many Inuvik residents is much closer to the culture of southern Canada than it has been in the past (Kolausok 2003a: 173). A more traditional lifestyle is maintained in remoter settlements (Lyons 2010: 32). Unlike Iqaluit, Inuvik is also home to a significant percentage of Gwitch'in (Dene) First Nation residents, who possess their own official minority language[2] rooted in the land directly south of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR). Besides the presence of more than one local minority language, members of all linguistic groups (Inuvialuit, Inupiat, Gwitch'in, and Euro-Canadian) have intermarried (Lyons 2010: 25). While Inuit language retention may be at its lowest in Inuvik, it is here also that the highest institutional support for the language exists. Among the institutions advocating on behalf of Inuvialuktun are the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre, the Office of the Language Commissioner of the NWT, and Aurora College's Aboriginal Language and Cultural Instructor Program (ALCIP). All of these reasons potentially increase the diversity in language attitudes and ideologies, making Inuvik a sensible choice for this research.

1.2 General context: land and language

The Inuit of the northern Northwest Territories refer to themselves as Inuvialuit, or *"the real people"* (Morrison 2003a: 1). Their homeland, the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR), traditionally also referred to as Nunaqput, is the western-most of four *Inuit Nunangat*[3] (Inuit territories of Canada), the other Inuit territories being the territory of Nunavut, Nunavik in northern Quebec, and Nunatsiavut of northern Labrador (cf. Figure

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[2] Gwitch'in is a Na-Dene language and belongs to the Athapaskan-Eyak language family. It has also been referred to as Kutchin, Loucheux, and Tukudh and is currently spoken in the communities of Tsiigehtchic, Fort McPherson, Aklavik, and Inuvik (Lewis 2009). Aklavik and Inuvik fall into the ISR. Like Inuvialuktun, Gwitch'in possesses a modified Latin script.

[3] *Inuit Nunangat* stands for land, water, and ice, all of which constitute Inuit homelands (ITK 2012).

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1). Inuvialuit residing in the ISR represent 6% of all Canadian Inuit, as contrasted by Nunavut where almost 50% of Canadian Inuit reside (Gionet 2008: 59). The vast majority of approx. 5,000[4] (IRC 2007) Inuvialuit live in 6 communities scattered across the ISR: Inuvik, Aklavik, Tuktoyaktuk, Sachs Harbour, Paulatuk, and Ulukhaktok. The settlement region covers nearly 91,000 square kilometers of land, and encompasses 344,000 square kilometers of sea (DAAIR 2008). The ISR includes the Beaufort Sea coast from the Yukon border in the west to the border of Nunavut in the east, as well as Banks Island and part of Victoria Island. Inuvialuit have Inupiat (Alaskan Inuit) neighbors to the west, while bordering with Gwitch'in and Hare First Nations in the south, and with Central Arctic Inuit[5] to the east.

Until the end of the Second World War, most Inuvialuit predominantly spoke the Inuit language in the home. This language belongs to the larger Eskaleut language family, where it is identified under the Eskimo branch and further placed under the Inuit-Inupiaq sub-branch (Dorais 2010: 9). Variants of the Inuit language are spoken from Alaska to Greenland: Alaskan Inupiaq, Western Canadian Inuktun, Eastern Canadian Inuktitut, and Greenlandic Kalaallisut. Inuvialuit refer to their language as Inuvialuktun, which is a modern cover term for three language variants: Siglitun, Inuinnaqtun, and Uummarmiutun. Siglitun and Inuinnaqtun are Western Canadian Inuktun language

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[4] In the 2006 census, 3,230 individuals residing in the "Inuvik region" (i.e. ISR) indicated Inuit identity as single response (Statistics Canada 2010). It must be noted that not all Inuvialuit beneficiaries may indicate single response identity due to intermarriage, and the IRC also counts Inuvialuit beneficiaries residing outside the ISR. In 2011 the IRC made year-end distribution payments of its profits to a total of 4,131 beneficiaries (IRC 2009b). Some fluctuation is also to be expected in these numbers due to occasional status switching in descendants of mixed marriages (i.e. Gwitch'in/Inuvialuit).
[5] Historically known as "Copper Inuit" of the Central Arctic, members of this group belong to the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut.

variants, while Uummarmiutun[6] is a North Slope variant of Alaskan Inupiaq (Dorais

2010: 32-33). Inuinnaqtun consists of four related variants, one of which is known as

Kangiryuarmiutun, spoken by Inuvialuit in the community of Ulukhaktok (Dorais 2010:

33). Inuvialuit from the communities of Tuktoyaktuk, Sachs Harbour, and Paulatuk

traditionally speak Siglitun, while Uummarmiutun is traditionally spoken in Aklavik and

Inuvik where it now overlaps with Siglitun. Thus, when referring to the 'Inuit language'

in the context of Inuvialuit, I have in mind one or all of the three dialects comprising

Inuvialuktun.
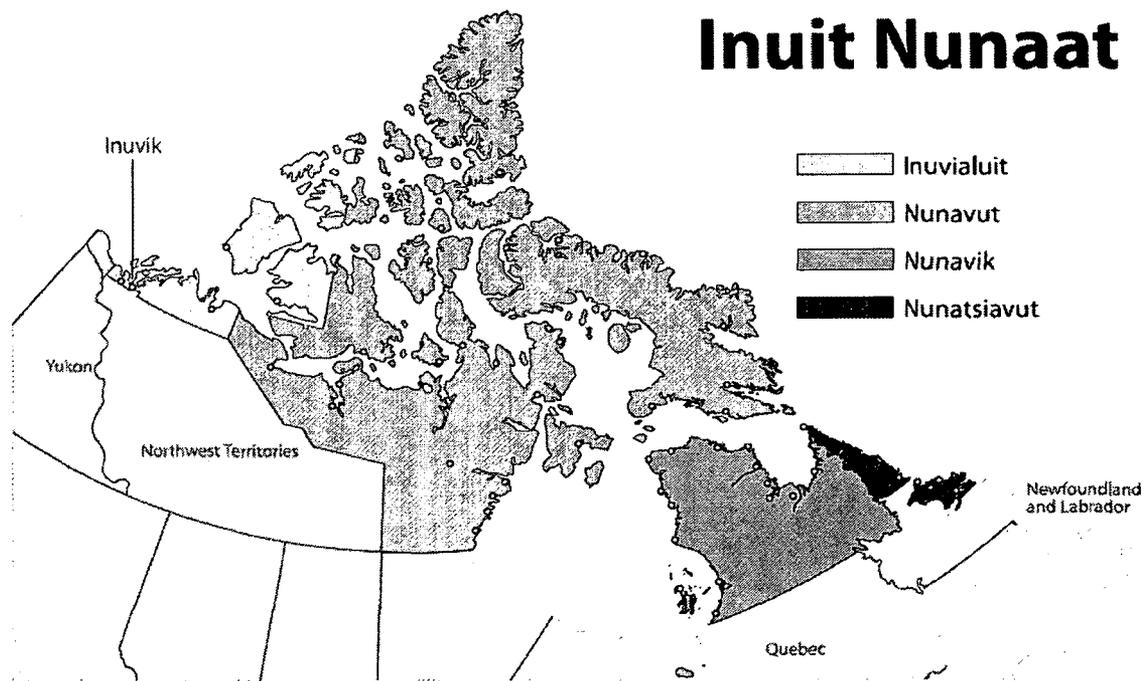
Figure 1 - Map of Inuit Nunangat   Used with permission from Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

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[6] Beginning in the 1890s, many Nunatarmiut (Inupiat "inland people") from Alaska, as well as a number of coastal Inupiat, migrated into the Delta region (Morrison 2003c:91), bringing with them Inupiaq variants. To this day some of Aklavik's residents are land claimants in both Alaska and Canada (Lyons 2010:25).

1.3 Current linguistic vitality

According to the 2004-07 NWT statistics, there were 2,743 Inuvialuit within the ISR, of whom 552 had the Inuit language as mother tongue, while only 130 used it in the home (Dorais 2010:293, appendix IV). In 2006 the Canadian census counted 1,030 individuals in the NWT who were able to speak the Inuit language, 800 of whom had it as their mother tongue (Dorais 2010:238). This suggests that 248 Inuit mother tongue speakers lived outside the ISR but within the NWT. This is congruent with 2009 data from NWT statistics, which indicates that 240 Inuktitut speakers primarily from Nunavut lived in Yellowknife (NWTALP 2010:36). If we subtract these 240 Inuktitut speakers from the 2006 Canadian census total of 1,030 Inuit speakers in the NWT, we arrive at 790 Inuit speakers, presumably residing within the ISR. If we divide the total Inuit population of the ISR of 2006, by the total speaker number of the same year, we arrive at 28% of the population able to converse in the Inuit language.

Before looking at more recent data, it is important to understand that the government of the NWT (GNWT) identifies Inuvialuktun[7] and Inuinnaqtun as separate official languages (OLA 1988:4). According to a 2009 community survey by the Bureau of Statistics of NWT[8], there were a total of 499 individuals across the territory able to converse in Inuvialuktun. Of this total, 16 individuals were aged 0-14 (3.2%), 100 individuals were aged 15-39 (20%), 157 individuals were aged 40-59 (31.5%), and 226 individuals were aged 60 and over (45.3%). For Inuinnaqtun there were a total of 196 individuals able to converse in the language. Of this total number, 11 individuals were

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[7] Uummarmiutun is counted under Inuvialuktun in the 2009 NWT Community Survey (personal communication, Bureau of Stats., NWT, March 6, 2012). L.-J. Dorais counts 56 individuals as Uummarmiut first language speakers for the community of Aklavik, based on 2004-7 NWT statistical data (Dorais 2010:193, appendix 4).
[8] Cited in the 2010 Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan (NWTALP 2010:36).

between the ages of 0-14 (5.6%), 42 were between 15-39 (21.4%), 89 were between 40-59 (45.4%), and 54 were 60 years and older (27.6%). When combining the total results for Inuvialuktun and Innuinaqtun (not considering the 240 Inuktitut speakers of Yellowknife), there were 694 individuals in the NWT able to converse in a Western Canadian Inuktun dialect. Comparing the 2004-07 data with that of 2009, we can detect a decline in the total speaker number: there were 96 fewer speakers. The drop may be accounted for in part by the number of Inuvialuit elders who passed on in the three years between surveys.

1.4 Disciplinary context within the Canadian Arctic

In light of these speaker numbers, the primary intention of this study was to examine the role of ancestral language loss, revitalization, and maintenance efforts in the construction of contemporary Inuvialuit cultural identity. The relative absence of sociolinguistic data from literature available for the western Canadian Arctic[9] further encouraged this research. While extensive work has been conducted in Nunavut and Alaska on Inuit language and identity (e.g., May 2005; Dorais 1995; 1997; Kaplan 2001; Patrick 2004, 2006; Shearwood 2001; Tulloch 1999), as well as on language maintenance and revitalization (e.g., Tulloch 2005; Johns 2002; Dorais & Krupnik 2005; Patrick 2004, etc.), little is available for the ISR. In Nunavut and Nunavik Inuktitut dialects are still being passed on to younger generations in the home, even if decreasingly so (c.f. Tulloch 2004:73-74). The situation in the ISR is markedly different, as language maintenance efforts are largely limited to optional school instruction and Language Nest programs in early childhood settings, and consequently as few as 38% of Inuvialuit children between

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[9] Although little sociolinguistic research has been conducted in the Western Arctic region, other types of research have been so prevalent that a common phrase I heard from Inuvialuit elders was, "We have been researched to death!"

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the ages of 2 and 5 understood Inuvialuktun in 2006[10] (Tait et al. 2010:7). While the sociolinguistic and demographic realities of the ISR may place it in a somewhat peripheral position vis-à-vis Nunavik and Nunavut, the Inuvialuit experience serves as a good example of identity formation in face of progressed language shift within a community strongly affected by the hegemonic forces of the English language.

1.5 Purpose and problem

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of how several Inuvialuit individuals in the community of Inuvik[11] personally assessed the importance of Inuvialuktun, their heritage language, as constituent of a shared cultural identity. In other words, "how integral is the maintenance of ancestral dialects to protecting Inuvialuit cultural identity?" The interview guide (Appendix III) that directed my discussions with co-researchers was based on a series of questions that were originally inspired by the literature for various other languages shift scenarios in North America and Europe. Some of the original questions were: If Inuvialuktun is no longer a communicative vehicle, then what is the symbolic function of the language in the maintenance of cultural identity? Does language re-acquisition solidify Inuvialuit identity? Does the importance of heritage language acquisition differ for people of varying ages and/or between life stages? What language attitudes and ideologies exist in potential and current learners, and what do they tell us about obstacles to and/or opportunities for language learner motivation? As evident in the last question, a more practical aim of this study was to help shed light on the place of Inuvialuktun in the lives of several current and potential learners in order to

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[10] Only Nunatsiavut (Labrador) had lower values: here only 33% of Inuit children were able to understand their heritage language (Tait et al. 2010:7).
[11] Not all participants considered Inuvik their primary home; some were originally from outlying communities and had either recently moved to Inuvik, or were in Inuvik only for the purpose of employment or education.

aid local Inuvialuit language planners, in identifying possible strategies for language learner motivation.

1.6 Necessity and importance of the study

The larger context for this study is the accelerating decline of minority languages through assimilative processes, a tendency that has increasingly been warned about by linguists since the early 1990s (e.g., Robins and Uhlenbeck 1991; Brenzinger 1992; Krauss 1992; Crystal 2000; Nettle and Romaine 2000; Dalby 2003, Harrison 2007). In response to the loss of linguistic diversity, there have emerged many voices speaking on behalf of protection and maintenance of minority languages. The rational for linguistic advocacy has ranged from claims of loss in environmental, medical, philosophical, and artistic systems of knowledge, to the demise of unique human cognitive models (Hale 1998:193; Hinton and Hale 2001:4-5), and from the demise of diversity in the ways the world is seen (Nettle and Romaine 2000:66) to an increased threat to democracy at large, and minority rights in particular (Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 2009:325). Many of these arguments for linguistic diversity share a common foundation in linguistic ecology (e.g., Maffi 2001; Harmon 2002; Romaine 2008), a model that compares human languages to ecological systems, and in which the loss of diversity is seen to parallel the consequences of homogenization in ecosystems. While an ecological view of language can give us a more holistic perspective of speech forms and their interconnections with various environments, its underlying biological approach falls short because of the inorganic nature of language. "Languages themselves obey no natural imperatives, they have no intrinsic qualities that bear upon any sort of linguistic survival of the fittest, they possess no 'inner principle of life' (Edwards 2009:323). If we accept that some or all of the above

listed attributes of minority languages are integral to the identities of their respective speakers, then we must also ask whether it is at all possible to maintain unique cultural identities in absence of heritage languages?

Many language specialists today agree that language and cultural identity are inseparable entities, and that the loss of language invariably leads to a loss in traditional knowledge and epistemology – cornerstones of traditional indigenous identities. One of the best-known proponents for this inseparability of language and cultural identity is Joshua Fishman (1991: 4). While Fishman does not deny that even diasporic societies are able to possess sustained "ethnocultural label-maintenance and self-concept-maintenance," he argues that their ability to regulate cultural contact and cultural change begins to crumble in the absence of their heritage languages (1991:17). When applying Fishman's insights to the Inuvialuit context, one might wonder whether Inuvialuit cultural identity is not weakened by the loss of ancestral language. In reference to Canadian Inuit at large, linguist Louis-Jacques Dorais suggests the possibly that with the increasing loss of the heritage language "more fundamental cultural identity will [...] grow weaker and weaker for want of ancestral linguistic support," as opposed to ethnic identity, which is retained by "social and political relations a native group maintains with the majority society" (2010:272). As we can see, Dorais—like Fishman—points to the mere symbolic value that ancestral language begins to assume when ethnic identity starts to take the place of a deeper cultural identity.

This view is somewhat contested by a number of observers who point to the importance of non-linguistic factors in the maintenance of cultural identity (e.g., specific foods, traditional practices, ties to ancestral land, narratives, beliefs, etc.) for North

American Indigenous populations (c.f., Kwatchka 1992, 1999; Tulloch 1999; 2004; Nicholas 2010). Here the argument is made that much of an ethnic culture can be maintained through the keeping of traditional practices, even in absence of a spoken heritage language. However, even these authors do not deny the importance of language, especially when it comes to maintaining traditional narratives and beliefs (e.g. Nicholas 2010).

Whether language is heralded as the primary pillar of ethnocultural identity, or as one important factor among many, success or failure of language revitalization is dependent upon potential learners' attitudes toward their heritage language. To better understand the place of a heritage language in the lives of individual minority members, it is paramount to establish what are some of the existing ideologies that govern language attitudes, a concept that is discussed with greater detail in chapter two.

1.7 Applicability to the Northwest Territories

In the Northwest Territories there exists a shared desire to protect and revitalize Aboriginal languages. This desire is paralleled by a nationwide, statistically observed, trend in indigenous individuals to acquire an Aboriginal language as second language, rather than as mother tongue (Norris 2007:20). Honorable Jackson Lafferty, Minister Responsible for Official Languages in the Northwest Territories, has stressed the importance of protecting heritage languages within the territory because they are "the foundation of northern cultures" (from the introductory words to the Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan) (NWTALP 2010:2). The language plan emphasizes that many scholars of language, identity, and cultural heritage from around the world echo the minister's concern through their research findings. The Language Plan

also reiterates that many of these scholars see the loss of heritage languages as leading to the loss of 'worlds of knowledge,' because indigenous ways of knowing are embedded in Aboriginal languages. The Government of Northwest Territories has consequently taken an ideological side in the sociolinguistic debate mentioned above.

According to the Northwest Territories' Official Languages Act, Inuvialuktun is an official language represented by a member on the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board (OLA 1988:4,14). Strategic language planning and its subsequent development of language materials, as produced by the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre in Inuvik, represents a practical response to the voiced concern over language and heritage loss within the territory. However, reviving a heritage language is a large and difficult task, calling for a network of language specialists on multiple levels. Recent research in New Zealand and North America has shown that successful language planning, and "effective promotion strategies to encourage [Aboriginal] language use," gain much from an in-depth knowledge of local language attitudes (King 2009:106). An understanding of how potential learners view their own heritage language (i.e. attitudes held in regard to language) allows language planners to strengthen positive existing sentiments, while creatively transforming negative ones. It is precisely here that I have attempted to anchor the rationale of this study.

1.8 Theoretical perspectives

Without question, all activities conducted by individuals and organizations everywhere are subject to motivations that originate somewhere and with someone. To better understand how motivations for or against language maintenance are generated and sustained, I have referred to several theoretical models that can aid in thinking about

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human decision making processes in general, and about language motivations in particular. These theories are explored with greater detail in chapter two, but I briefly mention them here because they influence my perspective as a researcher, which needs to be evident to the reader from the beginning. These perspectives also constitute a framework that is integral to my conclusions.

In order to better understand how individuals may establish values that inform their motivations and subsequent actions, I draw on the work of Herbert Blumer (1969). In what he calls symbolic interactionism, Blumer explains how a person develops meanings for things based on how other people view him or her in relation to the thing, but also as the result of internal communication with the self (Blumer 1969:4-5). In the context of this study, the 'thing' represents language, and the value of language for the individual is established in relation to how other people view the individual in light of that language, as well as how the individual reasons about the language. Blumer's perspective lends itself well to an exploration of language motivation in current and potential learners of ancestral languages.

To throw light on larger societal dynamics that encompass but also reach beyond individual motivations, I call on Pierre Bourdieu's (1998) concepts of symbolic capital, violence and power. For Bourdieu, symbolic capital is what an oppressor possesses when a subject has accepted certain predicated divisions or oppositions. In this case, the act of predication itself does not call for an application of physical violence and is thus referred to as symbolic, while no less violent. An oppressor attains symbolic power when, thanks to the acceptance of predicated divisions or values, a subject not only submits to, but also identifies with the oppressor's agenda. Combined with Blumer's approach, Bourdieu's

concepts lend themselves well to a critical examination of the hegemonic position of the English language in minority contexts across Aboriginal North America.

1.9 Conclusion

As we have seen in this chapter, the ancestral lands of Inuvialuit are vast, their population relatively small, and the advancement of English nearly absolute. These realities, combined with the ongoing efforts of Inuvialuit and the territorial government to bring back Inuvialuktun as second language, make *Nunaqput* an ideal location to learn about Inuit identity under conditions of progressed language shift. While this study aims to contribute to the academic discourse on language and identity, it offers community voices and traverses literatures, first of all, to benefit Inuvialuit language planners. It is hoped that not only the reviewed literatures and collected voices, but also the theoretical stances, will provide fresh insight and inspiration to anyone actively involved in building the Inuvialuit Way.

Chapter Two - Literature review

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter I present a detailed review of literature relating to language shift and revitalization, particularly those involving indigenous contexts. I begin with a sketch of the Inuvialuit past in general, followed by recent Inuvialuit language history, in order to provide the reader with specific context to which the following reviewed information can be applied. This is followed by an introduction to several sociolinguistic concepts—ideas that directly informed my research design. Because language shift and revitalization in Aboriginal North America have unequivocally been tied to colonial realities, I include a section on the role of residential schools in language loss, as well as a psycholinguistic perspective on re-learning forgotten ancestral languages. To show how the discussed sociolinguistic concepts are practically played out in contemporary indigenous contexts of language shift and revitalization—and in order to ethnographically position this study—I include several recent case studies from the United States (and one from Scandinavia). Each of these cases provides pointers for my own analysis of the data and experiences collected during my stay in the Western Arctic. I conclude my review by taking a deeper look at the theoretical perspectives touched upon in the introductory chapter, which allows me to establish an epistemological framework that is meant to inspire the reader to view language loss and revitalization from an angle that seeks to disclose hegemonic patterns, while pointing to the potential of human agency.

2.1 General historical background

In the following paragraphs I summarize several milestones of the Inuvialuit past, closely following archaeologists David Morrison (2003a; 2003b; 2003c) and Robert

McGhee (1974), as well as well-known Inuvialuit author Eddie Kolausok (2003), with some reference to the memories of Inuvialuit elder Nuligak (Metayer 1966) and Canadian ethnologist-explorer Vilhjamur-Stefánsson[12] (1909; 1922a; 1922b), combining some of the few voices currently available in print for this period. The geographical, pre-historical, and historical contexts will aid the reader in following the later discussion.

2.1.1 Inuvialuit culture in context

What sets Inuvialuit apart from all other Inuit communities across the North American Arctic is perhaps the uniqueness of their region. With a dense combination of highly diverse ecozones, the traditional Inuvialuit settlement area was centered by the Mackenzie Delta with its thousands of lakes and winding channels, encompassing the Richardson Mountains in the west, and stretched along the shallow coast line of the Beaufort Sea. Surrounded by barren tundra, this land still provides Inuvialuit with access to two large caribou herds, muskoxen, moose, dall sheep, brown and polar bears, Arctic foxes, muskrats, wolverines, wolves, waterfowl, ringed and bearded seal, and bowhead and beluga whales (Morrison 2003a:5-6). It is also a place where intricate relationships between plants and people existed, as they harvested them for food, medicine, and as building materials (Bandringa & Inuvialuit Elders 2010). To this day, the unique land of the western Canadian Arctic constitutes an important characteristic of Inuvialuit identity.

2.1.2 From Paleoeskimo to Inuvialuit culture

Archaeologically, all Inuit share a common Thule culture heritage, which originated in Alaska a millennium ago and spread to Greenland in under two centuries (e.g. Condon 1996:14; Morrison 2003a:10). Among other things, the Thule culture shared

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[12] It has to be mentioned that some Inuvialuit elders, such as Vijlhalmur Stefansson's own Inuvialuit grandson have critiqued the explorer's ethnographies as errant due to "problems with the early translations from Inuvialuktun languages" (Lyons 2010:33).

a Japanese innovation of animal skin floats to aid in whale hunting, making it very successful and replacing previous Paleoeskimo (or Dorset) culture, which had begun to migrate from Alaska to Greenland some 3,000 years previously (Condon 1996:6-10; Wilson & Urion 1995:44-47). Although Inuvialuit descendants of the Thule culture were innovators themselves, markedly for their fish netting and beluga hunting techniques developed between 1300-1400, their material culture changed little over the half millennium between the culture's origins and its first contact with Europeans (Morrison 2003a:10). Thus a century-old trend of relative cultural consistency would soon come to an end.

2.1.3 Age of discovery: trade and epidemics

At the time of first European contact in the early 19th century, approximately 2,500 Inuvialuit lived across some 8 regional groups[13] between Barter Island and Franklin Bay, each group deriving their name from their village[14] used for the annual beluga hunt (McGhee 1974:7-8; Morrison 2003a:13-17). One of the largest of these villages was *Kitigaaryuk*[15], which consisted of a series of cross-shaped winter sod houses (*igluyuaryuk*) that were inhabited by extended families, some of them year-round. During the summer additional tents were pitched along the shore, allowing the population of the village to swell to approx. 1000 people (McGhee 1974:12; Morrison 2003a:19). While Inuvialuit culture was little affected by the many explorers of the 18th century, new fur trading posts of the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) in the lower Delta increasingly brought Inuvialuit into contact with Gwitch'in (Dene) neighbors, European goods, and

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[13] The exact number of regional groups is unclear and contradictory (see McGhee 1974:8).

[14] The suffix -*miut* stands for 'the people of' as exemplified in '*Igluyuaryungmiut*'.

[15] It is also now referred to as Kitigaaryuit and the official spelling is Kittigazuit, based on the spelling attempt of a non-speaker of the language prior to the standardization of Siglitun spelling (Heart 2011:30).

devastating epidemics (Morrison 2003b:57,68). But the most cardinal cultural transformations were yet to come.

2.1.4 The whaling era (1889-1908)

In 1894 the first whaling ships from San Francisco arrived at Herschel Island to spend the winter. Over the course of their many subsequent visits, these vessels brought Europeans, Siberian Eskimo, Alaskan Inupiat, Polynesians, and Cape Verde Islanders to the Beaufort Delta (Morrison 2003c:80). A flourishing multi-ethnic settlement was soon established at Herschel Island, where Inuvialuit and whalers intersected on a regular basis, and where many Inuvialuit women became mothers to children of ethnically diverse ancestry (Morrison 2003c:82). The influx of firearms and other new tools led to the abandonment of communal hunting and the traditional tool kit; even *umiaq*[16] and *qayaq*[17] were replaced by whaling boats (McGhee 1974:5; Morrison 2003c:84-85). In 1902 a measles epidemic led to the abandonment of the villages of Kitigaaryuk and Nuvugaq, marking "the end of traditional Inuvialuit life," and leaving only 150 Inuvialuit survivors by 1910 (Morrison 2003c:89). With the decline of caribou herds in Alaska, Nunataarmiut (Alaskan Inuit, or "inland people") who had come with the whalers from Alaska in the 1890s moved into the Mackenzie Delta where they became known as Uummarmiut (Morrison 2003c:91). By 1908 the whaling industry had wound down due to new alternatives to baleen[18], and because of a decline in the whale population (Morrison 2003c:108; Stefansson 1922a:40,61).

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[16] *Umiaq* is a traditional skin on frame built, sea worthy whaling boat that was also used to move entire households.

[17] *Qayaq* is the original Inuit word for the English adaptation of kayak. It is a highly specialized and sea worthy hunting boat for one hunter made from waterproof seal intestine, and is equipped with a harpoon, float, and other hunting gear for whaling.

[18] Baleen, also referred to as whale bone, is part of a whale's filter feeder system, which allows water to flow out of the mammal's mouth, while smaller animals remain in it. Because of its high flexibility, baleen was used in umbrellas, corsets, and other applications that now rely on plastics.

2.1.5 The trapping era and settlement expansion

As the last ships were leaving, some whalers stayed behind with their Inuvialuit wives in order to trade furs. The 1915 opening of a trading post at Herschel Island allowed all Inuvialuit to become systematic trappers in the wintertime (Morrison & Kolausok 2003:113-115). Between 1920 and 1945 some 50 trading posts opened across the Delta and Beaufort coast, eight of which were in Inuvialuit hands (Morrison & Kolausok 2003:115). In 1912, the Hudson's Bay Company opened a post at Pokiak Point, eventually sending the community at Herschel Island into decline, but giving rise to Canada's new fur capital, the multi-ethnic[19] community of Aklavik (Morrison & Kolausok 2003:116). Several Inuvialuit families were now exploring uninhabited land between Cape Bathurst and Victoria Island for the purpose of trapping, thereby influencing the formation of the communities of Sachs Harbour on Banks Island, Ulukhaktok on Victoria Island, and Paulatuk on the eastern mainland coast (Morrison & Kolausok 2003:121-128). The collapse of fur prices in 1949 subsequently pressed many families to trade life on the land for life in the new settlements where government family allowances were made to parents of school-attending children (Morrison & Kolausok 2003:128,130). With this transition, Inuvialuit entered into a new and uncertain era, which posed many unprecedented demands and opportunities.

2.1.6 Militarization and oil boom

In 1955 construction of 11 Distant Early Warning stations had begun on Inuvialuit land, providing modern training and employment to Inuvialuit (Kolausok 2003a:166-167). More jobs became available when the government decided in 1953 to replace

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[19] Uummarmiut, Metis, White, and Gwitch'in

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Aklavik, by building Inuvik[20] as part of prime minister John Diefenbaker's "Northern Vision" (Kolausok 2003a:170). While employment increased for a while, discrimination and social segregation were strongly felt during the early days of the new town (Kolausok 2003a:173). By 1958 Imperial Oil had come to Inuvik, to conduct seismic tests in the Mackenzie Delta. A significant strike on Inuvialuit land in 1970 triggered a genuine oil boom with all its jobs, money, and social problems (Kolausok 2003a:176-177). By 1975 oil was found also in the Beaufort Sea and a major pipeline was discussed, only to be halted by the collapse of global oil prices and a 10-year pipeline moratorium called for by the Berger Commission (Kolausok 2003a:178), giving Inuvialuit leaders time to work on a comprehensive land claim for the Western Arctic.

2.1.7 The advent of Inuvialuit self-determination

During the early 1970s, in the midst of an oil and gas boom, the Inuvialuit Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE) was formed to protect the rights of all its members, and to ensure that the oil industry would benefit Inuvialuit. In 1977 COPE submitted a regional land claim to the federal government, and after 7 years of negotiations the federal government signed the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) in 1984, with it creating the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) (Kolausok 2003a:179). The IFA stands for three core principles: "(a) to preserve Inuvialuit cultural identity and values within a changing northern society; (b) to enable Inuvialuit to be equal and meaningful participants in the northern and national economy and society; and (c) to protect and preserve the Arctic wildlife, environment and biological productivity" (IFA 1987:5). While full self-determination will come to pass only with the establishment of self-

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[20] Initially called "East 3," the monthly Aklavik Journal kept residents up to date on the building progress of Inuvik (Bern Will Brown 1996).

government (which does not stand to date), there exists a mandate to protect Inuvialuktun as part of the preservation of cultural identity mandated by the IFA.

2.2 Recent language history

Up to this point, I have touched on roughly 500 years of Inuvialuit past, providing a cultural and historical canvas against which I will now sketch the language history of Inuviluktun since the advent of sustained Euro-American (and Canadian) influence in the Delta region some 140 years ago. Although an account of the past may not strike the reader as essential to the discussion of contemporary sociolinguistic dynamics in an indigenous community, I believe that any honest examination of current language motivations and ideologies must assume an inseparability of a community's present circumstances from its historical course. Thus, beginning with a brief outline of an early event of language contact and pidginization (ca. 1870-1920), I will look at the rapid progression of language loss and revitalization efforts beginning in the 1940s.

2.2.1 The Herschel Island Trade Jargon

During the whaling era, Inuvialuit at Herschel Island used the *Hershel Island Trade Jargon* to communicate with international crews (Stefánsson 1909:218). This trade jargon was "[a] pidgin based on the Iñupiaq and Siglitun Inuktun dialects," for which there exist "data from about 1870 until about 1920" (van der Voort 1996:1083)[21]. Canadian ethnologist Vilhjalmur Stefánsson, in his personal account of life among the Mackenzie Eskimo, recounts that many of the outsiders stationed at Herschel Island were convinced that the extremely small vocabulary and inflection-lacking trade jargon represented the "real Eskimo language" (1922b:101). Up until 1920 there had been few

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[21] Vilhjalmur Stefánsson gives a first-hand account of the jargon in an article published in the American Anthropologist in 1909 (see Stefánsson 1909).

Inuvialuit with a command of the English language, and the presence of whalers, fur traders, and missionaries had little impact on the vitality of Inuvialuktun (Kolausok 2003b:204-205). However, according to King (1999:52), the rise of significantly larger Inuvialuit business ventures in the early 1940s ensured that the ability to speak English would become a serious asset alongside other skills attained through the presence of southerners.

2.2.2 Early advantages of English

A relatively early competence of English gave Inuvialuit an edge over federal attempts at regulating Delta affairs, particularly because Inuvialuit were aware of what was going on outside of their region, thanks to understanding English-speaking radio (King 1999:53). In this way, it would seem that knowledge of English as second language served Inuvialuit to their social and political advantage vis-à-vis other northern indigenous populations. However, Inuvialuit were interested in promoting English as second language on their own terms, which differed significantly from the federal course of action. Government surveys from the 1950s show that Inuvialuit were in favor of an education system that would further enhance the success of their already blossoming business ventures (King 1999:51). In this context Inuvialuit saw fluency in English as important, and sought an education system that would strengthen Inuvialuit culture and values, for which purpose it was considered essential that children stay with their parents, especially in the winter months when much of the cultural transmission took place (King 1999:54).

2.2.3 Residential schools and English-only ideologies

Following the Second World War, the language situation began to change more

dramatically, primarily as a result of implementing English as sole instructional language in residential schools after they had been taken over by the federal government (Patrick & Shearwood 1999:251). Donna Patrick and Perry Shearwood point to early reports of Wright (1946), Moore (1947), and Lamberton (1948), all of which considered English, rather than Inuktitut or French, as the most appropriate choice for an instructional language in Inuit education, a tendency that is mentioned in reports as late as 1964 (1999:251). Although exact statistics reflecting the impact of this path of action seem to be lacking, it has been reported that by the 1950s, competency in the use of Inuvialuktun was lost by a whole generation of children as the result of assimilative pressures put on students in these schools (Kolausok 2003b:205). Clearly the traumatic experiences brought upon Inuvialuit children and their families during the residential school era had nothing in common with previous Inuvialuit suggestions for a better education system in the delta region.

2.2.4 The Inuvialuktun Language Commission & Program

With the formation of COPE in the 1970s, the shared Inuvialuit concern for preservation of "cultural identity and values within a changing northern society," as later outlined in the IFA (1987:5), could be given formal attention for the first time. It was largely in response to this urgent concern that COPE founded the Inuvialuktun Language Commission in 1981, which consisted of a committee of fluent Inuvialuktun speakers chosen by members of the three variants of Inuvialuktun (Osgood 1985a:viii; Kolausok 2003b:205). This Inuvialuktun Language Commission formed the Inuvialuktun Language Program, an initiative that sought to address the very concerns set forth in the IFA regarding the rapid loss of Inuvialuit language and cultural heritage. However, according

to Lawrence Osgood, coordinator of the COPE Inuvialuktun Language Project in 1985, language revitalization activities initiated by the project were at first perceived by many Inuvialuit to be coming "from above" and consequently were initially met with opposition and skepticism (Osgood 1985b:ix). Over time however, Inuvialuit were increasingly in support of the project's activities, and financial assistance from the Government of Northwest Territories allowed for much needed linguistic research, curriculum development, community summer language camps, and a host of other specialized training courses under the committee's supervision (Osgood 1985b:ix-x). All of these activities were founded on a 'four-phase program,' which included the recoding, analysis, and description of Inuvialuktun dialects, the development of teaching materials and language instructors, the implementation of Inuvialuktun in the school system, and the promotion and oversight of Inuvialuktun into the future (Osgood 1983:xi). Today, many of the activities introduced under the Inuvialuktun Language Commission and Program are carried on under the auspices of the Beaufort Delta Education Council (BDEC).

2.2.5 The Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre

The department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) of the Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) maintains a Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) Program across all NWT communities. The learning centers that are supported by this program are responsible for implementing the department's mandate of teaching and promoting regional Aboriginal languages and culture through the production of educational materials and continuous support of teachers employed by the schools (cf. ECE 2005:34; NWTALP 2010:53). The Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (ICRC)

represents one of ECE's Teaching and Learning Centers in service of Inuvialuit culture and language and is supervised by the Beaufort Delta Education Council (BDEC). Although not directly funded through Inuvialuit resources, the center is operated by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and receives the majority of its annual funding from federal and territorial sources—primarily out of Aboriginal languages funding. While the ICRC is supervised by the BDEC, its work is carried out in fulfillment of the mandate set forth by the Inuvialuit Social Development Program, established under Section 17 of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA 1987:70) (C. Cockney to A. Oehler, personal communication, May 17, 2011). Considering its comprehensive mandate, the ICRC clearly shoulders some daunting responsibilities—a fact that is only magnified by many of the complexities involved in minority language maintenance.

2.3 Language, society and identity as a field of study

In order to place the situation of Inuvialuktun within a larger sociolinguistic context, the following paragraphs offer an overview of several applicable disciplinary concepts among which are language inequality, language ideology, language identity, and language shift. Finally, the role of language and identity in Aboriginal North America is discussed in order to point out some of the particularities regarding indigenous minority language contexts.

2.3.1 Language inequality

Donna Patrick discusses language dominance and how it is "naturalized" within larger structures such as the nation state (2010:177). She shows how language dominance is the outcome of a hierarchy that is established in the attribution of different values to languages and their varieties, as well as to those who speak them (Patrick 2010:178).

Because the creation of social boundaries is reliant on value hierarchies, the boundaries of which are flexible, construction of individual identity can encompass multiple and contradictory allegiances to both minority and majority groups (Patrick 2010:176). Language dominance can be achieved through what Patrick calls 'naturalization,' or universal acceptance of a language, which is implemented through hegemonic ideological processes (2010:177). The representation of a majority language as justifiably dominant is often accompanied by the representation of minority languages as homogenous, structurally inferior, and belonging to the past (Patrick 2010:178).

These tendencies in the minorization of some languages and the naturalization of others are not new. In fact, the promotion of unification and standardization of a dominant language variety has been attributed, among others, to romanticist thinkers such as Herder (1744-1803). For Herder the securing of a single national language was foundational to the effort of maintaining a singular national spirit. This is evident when he speaks of "one people, one fatherland, one language" ["ein Volk, eines Vaterlandes, einer Sprache"] (Herder 1883:347). To illustrate the nature of "Western dominant-language ideologies," Patrick (2010:179) lists five of the most prominent ones: 1) the 'ideology of contempt,' which sees minority speakers and their language as "barbarous," 2) the belief that some languages embody progress, lending themselves to modernity, while others do not, 3) that monolingualism is most efficient for the state, and that if minority languages are to persist, they must be modernized to the standards of the dominant language, 4) that state integrity is dependent upon keeping accepted languages to a minimum, and 5) that multilingualism is cognitively inhibitive to speakers (Patrick 2010:182). Although minorization of smaller languages has led to discrimination,

minority language maintenance has also served minority groups in maintaining unique cultural identities, although the flexible nature of identity, and the geographical dispersion of group members has caused ambiguity in deciding who belongs and who does not (Patrick 2010:184, 185). Language inequalities that are sustained by largely accepted language ideologies can also be found across the Beaufort Delta, where they have a heritage that leads back to the beginnings of English language instruction at public schools.

2.3.2 Language ideology

According to Paul V. Kroskrity, language ideologies are "beliefs, feelings, and conceptions about language structure and use which often index the political economic interests of individual speakers, ethnic and other groups, and nation states" (2010:192). More simply put, language ideologies attempt to rationalize the ways in which language is being used. However, in any given language situation, there usually exist many ideologies, each of which belongs to a particular context, and is drawn upon by the individual in relation to their social and cultural position. This perspective on language and behavior is relatively new to linguistics and anthropology.

Michael Silverstein was among the first to popularize a focus on language ideologies in linguistics and anthropology (Silverstein 1979:194). By drawing on Benjamin Lee Whorf's work, Silverstein pointed to the role of cultural ideology in justifying and directing the structure of language. Unlike Boasian anthropological linguistics, which favored an etic analysis of language behavior, this new field of study emphasized the importance of local interpretations and perceptions of language as integral to our understanding of language in general, and language meaning in particular.

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For Silverstein, language meaning refers to the non-referential functions of language, and with it he opened the doors to an 'ethnography of communication' (Silverstein 1998:410), a field concerned with the meaning that language attains in relation to circumstances, matters, and institutions.

Kroskrity identifies several conceptual angles from which we may examine language ideology. Language ideologies can be hegemonic when particular social or cultural groups benefit from a certain perception of language by others. This can be observed in 'standard language ideology' (Lippi-Green 1994:166), which is promoted by many nation states and usually represents the values of an upper middle class rather than those of its various citizens. According to Kroskrity it is important to speak of many language ideologies, because individuals always subscribe to multiple social groups, acquiring a bouquet of contradictory ideologies. In this context, a speaker may even be aware of these ideologies to varying degree (Kroskrity 2010:200-201). As will become evident in the final two chapters, standard language ideology influences all efforts of Inuvialuktun revitalization in the Western Arctic region. To better understand how existing language ideologies can influence a person's desire to learn or relearn an ancestral language, it is vital to take into account the role of language identity.

2.3.3 Language identity

'Identity' began to be featured in social science context in the 1950s and 1960s, and then not particularly in relation to language. Erik Erikson (1968) was among the first to call renewed attention to the subject in his work "Identity, Youth and Crisis." For Erikson, "identity formation employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation," a process in which the "individual judges himself in the light of what he

perceives to be the way in which others judge him in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant to them" (1968:22-23). Erikson's perspective clearly shares elements of Herbert Blumer's symbolic interactionism (1969) (discussed below), in which a person chooses the meanings of things in relation to circumstances, and through the social act of communication with the self. However, neither Erikson, nor Blumer were focused on language identity. According to John Edwards, linguistic aspects of identity came into focus only in the 1980s (2009:15-16).

Examining the differences between personal and social identity, Edwards observes that "[t]he essence of identity is similarity," as is evident in its Latin root 'idem,' referring to constancy in the personality of the individual (acting similarly throughout life), as well as constancy in the nature of the social group (expressed through shared history and tradition) (Edwards 2009:19). Edwards believes that because individual personality draws from all elements available to the individual in society, we cannot make a clear distinction between personality and social identity (2009:20). Language can be viewed as an indicator of individual identity, especially in terms of a person's 'ideolect' (i.e. combinations of accent, dialect, stress, intonation, etc.), for which reason ideolect can indicate affiliations to larger social groups and identities (Edwards 2009:21). Although individual identities constitute group identities (and vice versa), more relevant insight is obtained from the study of the simplified and generalized stereotypes that are generated between groups (Edwards 2009:22). Responding to the late-modern tendency among sociolinguists, to emphasize trans-nationalism and cosmopolitism, Edwards draws on Anthony Smith (1999), who shows that national allegiances remain the most powerful and inclusive of all collective identities to date (2009:22). Edwards shows how this has

been related to the fact that modernity largely eliminated the safety that once was found in smaller identities (i.e. church, kinship, and family), leaving individuals without guidance in their construction of purpose and meaning, for which reason "'imagined' ethnonational communities" are a natural response (Edwards 2009:23).

Edwards goes on to illustrate how groupedness is constructed and maintained, especially through the emphasis of ethnonational boundaries over cultural content, an idea sparked by Fredrik Barth (1969:24) in reference to societies that embody multiple economic subsistence strategies, yet share the same ethnic identity. Although identity is still asserted by Inuvialuit through affiliation with particular traditional subsistence practices, Inuvialuit political and economic negotiations with the state have favored a quasi ethnonational identity[22]. Dorais (1995) outlines a similar discrepancy between cultural and ethnic identity. His data stem from residents of Nunavut and Nunavik in the early 1990s, where Inuktitut was most closely associated with Aboriginal life ways. Here hunting and gathering activities constituted a sense of cultural identity. Yet, as citizens of the Canadian state, Inuit from Nunavut and Nunavik were also consciously representing themselves as one of many ethnicities within a larger national mosaic, where it was necessary to "define themselves as an organized collectivity" (1995:302). This observation reckons to ask what is the relationship between ancestral language loss and cultural and ethnic forms of identity maintenance. This is particularly pertinent in the case of Inuvialuit, where the desire to bring back the ancestral language is voiced by many. The following paragraphs explore what may happen in regard to cultural and ethnic identities when a shift occurs from the ancestral minority language to a majority language, as is the case with Inuvialuit.

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[22] I say 'quasi' because unlike many First Nations, Inuit rarely seem to speak of themselves as a 'nation'.

2.3.4 Language shift and ethnic identity

Joshua Fishman (1991) explains some of the ideological foundations for reversing language shift (RLS). He outlines the debate over whether one can be a true member of one's cultural group without speaking its language, and discusses the cultural agenda of RLS. He also examines the lexical advantages of heritage languages. Furthermore, Fishman asks: how is cultural identity impacted by language loss? Because so many ethnic groups (e.g., Jews, Irishmen, Puerto Ricans in the US) have maintained their ethnic identities well past language shift, it is common to believe that it is possible to be, e.g., Jewish, all the while speaking German, rather than Yiddish, or Hebrew[23]. Yet, cultural leaders (e.g. Jewish rabbis) are critical of language shift, because it inevitably loosens a person's connection to the "total ethnocultural pattern" (Fishman 1991:16) of the group, leaving behind a mere "ethno-cultural label-maintenance" (Fishman 1991:17), which affects the way in that cultural self-regulation occurs. RLS, then, is an attempt to increase "cultural-self-regulation" (Fishman 1991:17).

Fishman establishes that RLS is inseparable from a historical cultural agenda. He proposes, most promoters of RLS are unhappy with the state of their minority culture, and want to revert it to something they believe is more in line with their traditional cultural values (Fishman 1991:20). In this context, the belief is that cultural authenticity is secured only in conjunction with the heritage language, because it embodies the essence of the heritage culture. Although culture changes with time, and competing

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[23] It also has to be mentioned that in contemporary "multi-cultural" Canada the fastest growing ethnicity is "Canadian" (cf. Statistics Canada 2008:159). This may suggest a trend in the children of immigrants to purge themselves of a 'residual' sense of ethnic identity anchored outside of Canada, since in Canada such identities are relegated to the 'multicultural other' (c.f. Mackey 2002:149). In the US the trend has been a kind of "benevolent assimilation" by which the traces of ethnic origin are swept away as quick as possible (Ong 2003:73).

languages may begin to better reflect many of these changes, the advantages of indigenous lexicality are reflected in their pertinence to the "particular brand and content" of a given culture (Fishman 1991:22). This is also evident in the symbolic link that exists between culture and language in the minds of members and nonmembers. For members, language is often a pivotal element of identity, while in the case of a dying language it can also be symbolic of socio-historical disadvantages and increasing irrelevance (Fishman 1991:23).

In either case, for Fishman, attempts at reversing language shift are usually a form of cultural self-critique. Proponents of RLS claim that often there exists a difference between ethnic identity and true cultural continuity. Cultural continuity ensures that the "*Gestalt* or 'feel'" (Fishman 1991:27) of what a culture 'ought to be' remains, while identity can amount to a label with content untrue to actual heritage. In this vein, 'ethnic identity' that has survived language shift cannot stand for the same cultural content it once represented. For this reason, proponents of RLS have two culturally inspired goals: 1) to search the past for direction useful in the future, and 2) to reinforce cultural boundaries to increase cultural continuity across generations (Fishman 1991:28).

A good awareness of existing ideological drivers for language revival efforts in the ISR is beneficial not only to the academic observer, but to all who are involved in the design and delivery of Inuvialuktun programs. Inuvialuit language activists benefit from an understanding of possible discrepancies between their own ideological convictions relating to Inuvialuktun and the motivations of potential and current learners. Reflexivity of this kind allows language activists to make informed decisions for curricular design that would represent a form of cultural self-critique, as Fishman puts it, especially where

decisions are made regarding the teaching of ancestral language either as a symbol of cultural heritage, or as a communicative tool for day-to-day concerns.

2.3.5 Language and identity in Aboriginal North America

While the study of language in Aboriginal North America makes use of the same methods and perspectives as applied elsewhere by sociolinguists, Teresa McCarty and Ofelia Zepeda (2010) point out a number of specificities that they and others have encountered primarily in the American Southwest and Alaska. Firstly, they emphasize how essential it is to recognize the ties between people and ancestral land, if one wishes to understand issues of language and identity in indigenous communities, and hopes to overcome many of the consequences of colonialism. McCarty and Zepeda also show the importance of examining communicative repertoires, language attitudes, and ideologies in contemporary Native youth in order to gauge language shift. While my emphasis did not lie on communicative repertoires, I pursued language attitudes and ideologies through interviews.

McCarty and Zepeda point to language attitudes and ideologies in the context of North American indigenous communities. Here language attitudes are generally positive and negative towards ancestral languages and English, and language ideologies are also mixed. English is primarily viewed as the language of survival, of practicality, of social class and prestige, but also as a symbol of conquest and forced assimilation (McCarty & Zepeda 2010:329). Heritage language is perceived sentimentally, as a prime pillar of ethnic identity, as in need of protection, but also as a cause of linguistic shame. On the one hand, this is shame for the language's perceived 'backwardness' when faced by mainstream values. On the other hand, it is shame experienced as a result of individual

non-fluency in the language and the inability to satisfy community expectations. Such mixed and disjunctive ideologies inform learners' linguistic attitudes and can lead youth to think they have to make an either/or decision about their language practice (McCarty & Zepeda 2010:330-331).

2.4 Residential schooling and Aboriginal languages in North America

As McCarty and Zepeda have made evident, language attitudes within North American Aboriginal communities are inseparable from systematic hegemonic influence. In fact, the residential school model has arguably played one of the most influential roles in Aboriginal language loss across the continent. The following section provides a brief overview of the nature and impact of residential schooling from the perspectives of witness accounts, archival research specifically for the NWT, and current Inuit activism. The section concludes with a description of the residential school era and its legacy, which continues to influence communities to this day.

2.4.1 Witness accounts

Many scholars have devoted extensive attention to the historical analysis of the residential school era in recent years (e.g. Furniss 1995; Haig-Brown 1998; Miller 1996; Milloy 1999). In his detailed history of Native residential schools, J.R. Miller (1996) devotes only a few pages to the issue of Aboriginal languages. In these pages, he points out that the discouragement of Native languages continues to be remembered as one of the most prominent ways in which cultural assimilation was pressed upon students. Although many missionary-led schools vehemently opposed the use of indigenous languages, Miller takes care to point out some exceptions, especially where government and missionary views of Native languages differed, drawing on evidence that shows how

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some missionaries "opposed a total ban on the use of Inuktitut or Indian languages" (Miller 1996:200). He also shows how some missionaries were generally supportive of Aboriginal languages[24], and that it was government directive that pressured them to use an English-only curriculum. A common response in Anglican schools was to assign "different languages for different times" (Miller 1996:201). Miller points to evidence showing that at some schools students were whipped for speaking their language, while at other schools there were hopes to one day teach the Native language at least from grade five to grade six (1996:202). Miller also provides examples of cases in which English (or French) was learned more swiftly because it aided students from different linguistic backgrounds in communicating with each other (1996:203). Although there are some former residential school students who believe that their experience caused them no harm, the majority of individuals experienced intense cultural alienation through the application of language restrictions (Miller 1996:203, 205). It follows that the treatment of Indian and Inuit children in their use of indigenous languages differed between schools and principals, according to Miller.

2.4.2 An archival perspective

David P. King's (1999) MA thesis is the first historical research focusing specifically on the residential school experience of Inuit. While it does not focus on language per se, it goes into some detail regarding the impact of residential schools on language. His work is based on documents from government and church archives, concluding that both missionary and state approaches were the result of double standards and ethnocentrism evident in recordings of meetings and other crucial communication on

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[24] Perhaps missionaries sometimes took a more lax approach to English-only ideologies because the Bible was widely available in Inuktitut, rendering English superfluous to conversion (David King 1999:31).

matters of education. Until 1945, education in the north had been neglected by the state and thus lay in the hands of missionaries who generally did not teach life skills that were applicable to traditional Inuit subsistence economies (King 1999:31). When the federal government took control of education in 1958 a secular approach was taken and curricula from Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario were implemented across the Arctic, perpetuating pedagogical and epistemological discord between the various curricula (King 1999:60). Deliberate isolation from Inuit culture and social structure was implemented to prepare students for the coming "new north" which would be dominated by white society (King 1999:15). Four major residential schools were built: Chesterfield Inlet (1955), Yellowknife (1958), Inuvik (1959), and Churchill (1964), and their hostels continued to be run by either Anglican or Catholic churches (King 1999:63). Most former attendants of residential school in this study had attended the school in Inuvik. In 1970 control over these schools went to the territory, but major changes in the curriculum did not occur, and by the 1980s it was public knowledge that an entire generation of Inuit had been ill prepared for life in either Inuit or southern systems (King 1999:150). Although the Department of Northern Affairs strongly stressed the need for English in all northern schools, it never had a policy regarding the Inuit language itself, which allowed for some leeway of interpretation at each school (King 1999:158). Church and government officials had been aware of the schools' devastating effect on Inuktitut. They had also been informed of the fact that the loss of language would cause the loss of Inuit culture (King 1999:159,169). Inuktitut was seen as a primitive language unfit for the 'new north,' and thus Northern Affairs had decided against its inclusion in the syllabus, relegating its use to short extracurricular activities (King 1999:170). The extent of this neglect becomes

most apparent in the extensive measures Inuit activists have taken to bring healing to the victims of this system.

2.4.3 Inuit activism

In 2005 Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada (Pauktuutit) summarized the residential school trauma for Inuit and lay out a series of strategic steps to be taken toward individual and collective recovery from residential school trauma in a publication entitled *Sivumuapallianiq: Journey Forward.* Language recovery is listed as the number one priority in this context (Pauktuutit 2005:3,26). The text is directed toward survivors, relatives, and those involved in assisting three generations of Inuit children who were separated from their families to attended residential school (those who "went away") (Pauktuutit 2005:8). Although residential schools came later for Inuit than for First Nations (1860 in NWT), by 1963, 3,997 Inuit children were attending residential school (Pauktuutit 2005:8-9). Among the motivations listed for parents allowing children to be taken away are fear of losing government issued family subsidies, or that children would forcefully be removed. Both had occurred. While many Inuit parents believed education was important, they were often unaware of the abuse that took place (Pauktuutit 2005:9). Today many residential school survivors continue to live with a perpetual fear of punishment, which in some cases has led to a breakdown in the use of Inuktitut with children (Pauktuutit 2005:10). Parents of former students experience great anger and guilt, while many former students feel "they let their family down by being away" (Pauktuutit 2005:11). The 'Journey Forward' attempts to "increase awareness of the negative effects of residential schools for Inuit," while pointing out that better "access to Inuit-led healing programs," can "restore what was taken away from our families and

communities" (Pauktuutit 2005:18-19). It is reported that language loss breaks down communication with elders who carry traditional knowledge. Strengthening language and culture, on the other hand, reduces "non-Inuit policies and structures," while having a "healing effect on school survivors" (Pauktuutit 2005:26).

While only a few Inuvialuit residential school survivors were among the voices that came to contribute to this study, it is reasonable to ask what the impact of an older generation's experience might be on that of younger generations. Among such elders would have been several parents and grandparents of younger participants, many of who attended residential school in Inuvik. Transitioning now to a First Nations context in Alaska, the following author provides a brief but concise picture of how the magnitude of residential school atrocities is not only underestimated by majority culture, but also continues to effect the internalization of failure among many Aboriginal students today.

2.4.4 Residential school repercussions

Caskey Russell (2002) discusses various aspects of the relationship between language revitalization and the boarding school experience in the United States, specifically for Tlingit of Alaska. He opens his article by drawing a connection between language, worldview, and spiritual wellness. Because a culture's language is able to communicate fine tuned aspects of a unique worldview, there likely exists a connection between the "spiritual malaise"[25] of some Aboriginal communities and language loss. To illustrate this point, Russell points to the various languages that were spoken by adherents to Christianity throughout the ages of church history and how each of them shaped the perception of this world religion. Russell points to residential schooling as an example of deliberate symbolic violence. It is violent in that its repercussions are covered up by

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[25] This is a term first introduced in a Tlingit context by Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer (1994:93)

'cognitive dissonance,' the act in which past and present colonizers "whitewash [...] past actions" (Russell 2002:98). For Russell, the two primary tools used in the United States to systematically assimilate Indians were religion and education. Both systems were rooted in the fear of applied violence, a violence that was not theoretical, but directly applied through "deliberate separation" of children from their parents and "ritualized shame" as punishment for conversation in the mother tongue (Russell 2002:99-100). Russell points out that, within an oppressive system, the potentiality of an application of violence is sufficient for "... people [to] punish themselves ... through a deep sense of shame" (Skutnabb-Kangas 1982 in Russell 2002:100). Here shame is being rationalized by new ideologies. Schools are thus a means by which "norms and ideology" are "confirm[ed]" and "inculcate[d]" to such an extent that the student cannot retrace the origin of these values by which she now judges herself (Russell 2002:101). One consequence of such 'mis-education' is that "Indian children have internalized failure..." to the extent that, sometimes "success is equated with being non-Indian." (Russell 2002:101). Russell shows how for Tlingit "[t]he truly insidious aspect of structural violence is that the promise of Indian education was itself a lie" (Russell 2002:101). This is hardly surprising, given the fact that some school principles possessed little or no knowledge of Aboriginal languages and consequently misjudged these languages as incapable of expressing complex thought[26]. For Russell, bilingualism in the United States is an issue that has less to do with language and more to do with power-relations. For this reason the survival of a language is directly tied to institutional power structures, and the

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[26] Steckley (2008: 72) describes a similar example of colonial ignorance regarding expressive depth of Aboriginal languages, focusing on Inuktitut.

revival of a language largely dependent upon the support of these structures (Russell 2002:104).

2.5 Heritage language as second language

Russell's observations seem to ring true also for much of the Inuvialuit context where anguish is expressed over the 'foreign' nature of the education system, a fact that is likely not going to change until an Inuvialuit self-government will be able to affect more significant changes. Meanwhile, heritage language as second language continues to represent a real struggle in the ISR, which is mirrored across many similar sites in North America. In the following section I outline a psycholinguistic perspective on relearning 'forgotten languages,' and then turn to two case studies in the Southwest United States and Alaska, which are concerned with the role of human agency in minority language reacquisition and the symbolization of ancestral terminology.

2.5.1 Psycholinguistics and forgotten languages

In recent years, more research has been conducted on language memory in individuals who were exposed to a heritage language during childhood. Jeffrey S. Bowers, Sven L. Mattys, and Suzanne H. Gage (2009) summarize an experiment conducted to assess whether or not language exposure during childhood can benefit the relearning of a language in adult years, even if the individual has "forgotten" it since (Bowers et al. 2009:1064). Because exposure to language in early life is cardinal in order for a speaker to develop "native-like competence," it is thought that implicit memory retained from childhood would give an adult re-learner advantage (especially in pronunciation) over adult new-learners (Bowers et al. 2009:1064). The participants for their study were 7 English mother-tongue speakers who had learned either Hindi or Zulu

as a second language during childhood and 4 native English speakers who had not been exposed to either Zulu or Hindi during childhood. In a pre-test, monolingual English speakers and participants with a language background were asked to match narrated Hindi and Zulu words to English words on paper. Both groups scored similarly, showing the extent to which the participants with language background had undergone language loss. After only 30 similar matching sessions, "2 individuals under the age of 40 with a Zulu background ... and the 1 individual under the age of 40 with a Hindi background [...], showed dramatic and selective improvement for the [unique sound] contrasts in their respective "forgotten" language" (Bowers et al. 2009:1066). Although an early life language can be entirely forgotten, "the current findings provide clear evidence of preserved implicit knowledge of a forgotten language" (Bowers et al. 2009:1066). The data also suggests that individuals who have been isolated from the forgotten language for more that 40 years have no retention of it, this however will need further research to be confirmed. The authors conclude that even minimal exposure to a language and its unique sounds throughout life can help guard against language loss. In the case of residential school survivors who are now attempting to relearn the language of their childhood, these findings are very encouraging.

However, the majority of individuals who are engaged in one form or another of ancestral language acquisition are of a younger age and have no direct experience of the target language. Instead, many of these younger learners grow up in homes where the language is not spoken at all. For such learners, one might think, the ancestral language would be acquired much like any other second language. This is not quite so, however.

As the following authors reveal, the dynamics surrounding ancestral minority languages in indigenous contexts are quite specific.

2.5.2 Who decides when to learn? A perspective from the American Southwest

Teresa L. McCarty, Mary Eunice, Larisa Warhol, and Ofelia Zepeda (2009) report on a long-term ethnographic study in the American Southwest, conducted across seven schools, each of which had significant Native American enrollment. In this study, the researchers examined "the impact of Native language shift and retention on American Indian children's language learning, identity formation, and school performance" (McCarty et al. 2009:292-293). Based on their data, the authors argue that youth's language behavior constitutes agency that sets language policy in the home[27] (2009:292). They refer to Harrison, who has shown how youth often act as "tiny social barometers" that are "acutely sensitive to the disfavored status of their elders' language..." (Harrison 2007:8). In their data, McCarty et al. not only found that there exists a 'continuum' of Aboriginal language proficiency in bilingual Navajo students in some settings, but that there also exist different varieties of English use, as well as forms of translanguaging, depending on social context. Within these complicated linguistic ecologies, the authors identify "Indigenous-language insecurity and shame" (McCarty et al. 2009:300) as relating to a fear of ridicule in the presence of elders and peers, much along the lines of other authors cited in this review. However, McCarty et al. also report shame for Aboriginal language use itself, especially in contexts where the status of English is socially ranked higher than that of Aboriginal languages. Shame, based on feelings of

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[27] My four-year-old son provides an example of implicit language policy made at home. While I attempt to speak to him in German only, he has told me: "Mommy and I speak English."

unworthiness, can cause students to conceal the desire to speak or learn a heritage language. In spite of differing forms of shame, there persists a "symbolic link between the Indigenous language and a unique Indigenous identity" (McCarty et al. 2009:302), which leads to disjunctures between existing language ideologies within communities. It is amidst these ideological disjunctures, heteroglossy, hybrid repertoires, and conflicting ideologies that "implicit language policies" manifest themselves (McCarty et al. 2009:302). The authors refer to Hornberger (2006) who suggests that such linguistic ecologies may provide unprecedented "ideological and implementational spaces" (in McCarty et al. 2009:302) that can be used toward the revitalization of Aboriginal languages. The authors believe that it is necessary to utilize existing peer pressure by turning it around and using it as a positive force in the creation of avenues where language can "engage issues of relevance in their everyday lives..." (McCarty et al. 2009:303).

Many of McCarthy's observations can be transferred directly to the Inuvialuit context. Even in a setting where little to no Aboriginal language is being used on a daily basis, unwritten language policies can regulate where, when, and why it is or isn't used. After all, implicit language policies and agency of young language planners are lived out through activities, time, and space. The following study provides practical examples of how varying degrees of fluency were negotiated in a swiftly progressing language shift scenario in Alaska. While language shift in Inuvialuit may have progressed beyond the Alaskan example, the study helps throw light on some of the dynamics that come to play in the use of Inuvialuktun among new speakers of varying competency levels.

2.5.3 An example of tokenization in Yup'ik terms

Leisy Wyman (2009) reports on a longitudinal study of language shift among Yup'ik youth, conducted between 1992 and 2001. Wyman was able to witness the transition between students who were considered the last "real speakers" and their younger siblings who assumed English as dominant or sole language of communication (Wyman 2009:338). Among Yup'ik, language had traditionally been considered part of larger subsistence and land claims, which served as primary markers of identity. Consequently, "adult responses to changing youth practices fed vicious cycles of increasing doubts about reduced resources for bilingualism" (Wyman 2009:336). The author shows how Yup'ik language resources are still formed across varying activities, over time, and in different locations (i.e. in- and outside of school), emphasizing how the educational system continues to influence language retention and loss. After the community's bilingual school program was deemed ineffective in the 1980s, English became the main language of instruction. From then on, children began using primarily English after school, shaping local youth culture. Surrounding communities had been affected similarly, and inter-community mobility of students did not provide better language resources.

Youth were aware of community expectations regarding Yup'ik fluency, an expectation that was accompanied by a growing language ideology that positioned Yup'ik as a marker of ethnic identity, traditional values, and socialization with elders (Wyman 2009:340). Although the secondary student population of the village was divided into fluent-, minimal-, and non-speakers by 2001, even speakers who claimed to have 'forgotten' their language were still using Yup'ik terms and simplified Yup'ik

demonstratives in English, when referring to the seal hunt. According to the author, such language behavior "counter[s] the common assumption that youth who speak dominant languages in endangered language communities orient away from local practices, physical spaces, and/or marginalized identities" (Wyman 2009:343). Even in younger and less secure generations of Yup'ik speakers, single terms are used as a form of tokenism connecting the speaker to the community and to higher status among peers (Wyman 2009:345). These findings leave the reader wondering what will happen when even this Yup'ik tokenism will no longer be part of Yup'ik English speaker's repertoires. Will they cease to feel themselves as Yup'ik? The following study attempts to provide us with some clues on how to best answer this question.

2.6 Language revitalization and Indigenous identities in North America

McCarty et al. (2009) and Wyman (2009) have hinted at the existence of disjuncture in language ideologies within Aboriginal speech communities in the two previous case studies. I will now take a closer look at more concrete examples of ideological disjuncture in the context of language shift and identity; because similar observations were made for the Inuvialuit situation, as will become evident in chapter four. Let us now turning to two very insightful comparative accounts from Hopi, Navajo, and Pueblo contexts.

2.6.1 'Lived' versus 'spoken' identity in Hopi

The study of language and identity, especially in indigenous context, has been a busy field in recent scholarship around the world (e.g., Huss & Lindgren 2010; May 2010; McCarty & Ofelia Zepeda 2010; Nicholas 2010; Schiffman 2010). Sheila Nicholas (2010) examined language shift among the Hopi people, looking at the role of ancestral

language in the lives of Hopi youth. The author observes diminishing use and function of the Hopi language as the direct result of modernity (especially through the educational system), leading to the question of whether a contemporary Hopi identity can be lived without proficiency in the heritage language. Through a selection of quotes from research participants, Nicholas gives voice to two contradictory, but not mutually exclusive, perspectives. On the one hand she stresses that not only is it a prerequisite to be fluent in the Hopi language to engage in tribal politics, but the very cultural knowledge of Hopi is encoded in the language and cannot be transmitted without it. For this reason, young adults find it difficult to teach their children about their cultural heritage in English. Language is also at the heart of Hopi personality and thus, a viable future for the Hopi way of life depends on bilingualism and biculturalism. On the other hand, the author asserts, "there are many ways that one can experience culture, language only being one of them" (Nicholas 2010:142). "I live Hopi, I just don't speak it" is a common quote throughout the article (Nicholas 2010:137). Thus, being Hopi does not require knowledge of the language, because one is Hopi by birthright, and because "thinking, feeling, and acting" Hopi are all based on the ancestral work ethic of "corn as a way of life," which is the foundation of a shared Hopi identity (Nicholas 2010:138, 139). In conclusion, Nicholas finds that the continual importance of traditional practices, such as engaging in oral tradition, encourages youths to relearn their heritage language, thereby forming an integral part of their identities. While the survival of traditional practices may encourage language retention and even revival, there also exist conflicting language ideologies among young re/learners, as the following study further confirms.

2.6.2 Disjunctive language ideologies in Navajo and Pueblo

Tiffany S. Lee (2009) reports on data collected from two studies in the American Southwest, inquiring into the role of heritage language in the lives of Navajo and Pueblo teenagers and college students. In her data she identified themes of respect, shame, marginalization, identity, and agency in relation to heritage language. Her research problem was based on two main questions. Firstly, why did parents, who had been raised in a K-12 Navajo immersion curriculum, choose to raise their own children in English? And secondly, what influenced language choice at home, at school, and in the community? (2009:307) Her research found that a sense of Aboriginal identity, as well as language choice, among youth is influenced by two opposing understandings: Firstly, Aboriginal language retention is paramount to Aboriginal identity, which is called for by the community, and secondly, English is essential to larger economic and societal expectations (Lee 2009:308). Lee connects the second point to an agenda of national identity: the state promotes English as a *modern* language and Native languages as *traditional* or reminiscent of the past (2009:310). This ideology speaks directly to Native youths' ideas about the relevance of their heritage language[28]. Under the theme of respect, Lee found that all participants respected their heritage language—often in relation to an understanding of a shared heritage that is to be understood in its depth only through the language, as well as out of respect for their elders who spoke the language exclusively (Lee 2009:313).

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[28] For an excellent commentary on the division of society (in 17th century Europe) into "rural (or aboriginal), lower class, ignorant, old-fashioned, indigenous - in a word, *provincial* - versus urban, elite, learned, cosmopolitan, that is to say, *modern*" class based on language and language use, see Bauman & Briggs (2003:2).

In terms of shame, the data suggested that language was not a cause, but that shame or embarrassment was felt about one's self for not being able to speak the language. As a result, youth would not participate in community activities that strengthen speaking skills for fear of embarrassment in front of elders (Lee 2009:313-314). Conversely, the strength of Native identity was found to stand in relation to a speaker's fluency. In terms of marginalization, participants in this study showed that "modernity, economic development, and social integration" are stronger causes for language shift than "repressive language policies of schools," because they come from within the community (Lee 2009:316). Participants expressed agency once they had realized the communal denial of language shift, and saw that they were able to influence their families to work against it. Especially when judged for not being fluent in the heritage language, participants were able to remain confident of their Navajo identity because they felt that they were making an effort in learning the language, while helping their community move in that same direction (Lee 2009:316-317). In order to see how this tendency of cultural reformation may accommodate language retention without abandonment or rejection of more traditional forms of identity, I will now turn to a Sámi example from Finland that invites us to consider a future for heritage language within a non-stereotypical environment.

2.6.3 Agency and stereotype deconstruction in Sámi

Juha Ridanpää and Annika Pasanen (2009) offer a look at how the deconstruction of ethnic stereotypes can contribute to a more dynamic sense of identity. Language revitalization plays a significant role in this effort. Their case study focuses on Inari-Sámi Mikkal Morottaja, son of the Inari-Sámi language activist Matti Morottaja. Mikkal,

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known as 'Amoc,' is the first rapper to sing in Inari-Sámi. According to the artist, the use of his language in music is important because it represents the fight for survival and self-preservation. Part of this agenda is to strengthen the pride of young Sámi to "feel proud of their language and culture" (Ridanpää and Pasanen 2009:214). Part of this effort is predicated on the development of new words to express non-traditional 'gangsta'-style lyrics that find their cultural origin in urban North America. By 2005, Mikkal's popularity among young Sámi listeners was accompanied by a growing desire to learn Inari-Sámi, and by a strengthened pride in the community. The authors conclude that pride increased as the result of artistic transcendence of stereotypes of backwardness that exist for Sámi culture among non-indigenous Finns and among Sámi. The authors assert the importance of deconstructing stereotypes, while simultaneously using them in order to reaffirm an identity. By self-consciously appropriating elements of the majority culture without succumbing to their hegemonic sway, the artist does not "'demand' justification for the old tradition through his music, nor does he try to bring the marginalized and partly destroyed heritage back, but rather he is striving to sustain the culture and language through the practice of modern urban culture" (Ridanpää and Pasanen 2009:225-226). As a result, Sámi culture and language emerge twice strengthened, at least for this individual.

2.7 Theoretical perspectives: Blumer & Bourdieu

Ridanpää and Pasanen's case is a perfect example of the transcendence of hegemonic oppression that can occur when agents identify common language beliefs and deliberately revolt through everyday forms of resistance, to borrow a term coined by James C. Scott (1985). Having reviewed a number of sociolinguistic concepts, the impact and role of residential schools, specificities of heritage language as second language, and

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Aboriginal language revitalization and identity, I now conclude this chapter with a view to two theoretical perspectives. These perspectives lend themselves to a critical analysis of language attitudes and ideologies as they are encountered throughout this literature review, and in the data presented in chapter four.

2.7.1 Symbolic interactionism

As pointed out in the introduction, my theoretical approach has in part been guided by Herbert Blumer's (1969) qualitative paradigm of symbolic interactionism. According to Blumer, a person develops meanings of things based on how other people view him or her in relation to the thing, but also as the result of internal communication with the self (Blumer 1969:4-5). Through the social act of communication with the self, a person "selects, checks, suspends, regroups, and transforms" the meanings of things in relation to the circumstances she finds herself in (1969:5). This interpretation becomes "a formative process" in which meanings are flexible tools guiding individual action (Blumer 1969:5). With language as the object of study, a person's relationship to it grows from how the person perceives others to see her in view of that language, and from the personal process of interpretation of these perceived meanings. Using the terms of sociolinguists, we might speak of circulating language ideologies and/or perceived language attitudes that play upon the minds and actions of potential and current language learners. To better understand how these meanings, attitudes, and ideologies (which often are of hegemonic nature) come to act upon a person, I will employ Pierre Bourdieu's (1998) concepts of 'symbolic power' and 'symbolic violence.'

2.7.2 Symbolic power and violence

For Bourdieu, symbolic capital is "perceived through categories of perception that are the product of the embodiment of divisions or of oppositions" (Bourdieu 1998:47). These divisions can be imposed by a powerful entity on a less powerful individual, constituting an act of symbolic violence. In John B. Thompson's introductory elucidation of Bourdieu's concept, symbolic power is dependent upon "active complicity" by the oppressed (1991:23). The idea being, that "[d]ominated individuals are not passive bodies to which symbolic power is applied, as it were, like a scalpel to a corpse" (Thompson 1991:23). Instead, it is absolutely necessary that the subjugated themselves are firm believers in the legitimacy of the powers that be. The reason why the oppressed accept symbolic power to work against them is summed up in what Bourdieu calls *méconnaissance* ('misrecognition') of power, meaning that the disadvantaged interpret 'invisible power' exercised against them as something legitimized by a shared belief, rather than identifying it as being arbitrary and thus rejecting it (Thompson 1991:23; Bourdieu 1991:60). Symbolic violence takes place when the dominated individual—in service to the oppressor—begins to judge her own behavior according to the values of the dominant population. To quote Bourdieu directly, "symbolic power ... can be exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it" (Bourdieu 1991:164). Thus, symbolic violence constitutes a means by which hegemony can be perpetuated without any direct or immediate application of physical force.

In other words, symbolic power can function only where the majority of people share a common belief in the legitimacy of the institutions that uphold the class order. To

Bourdieu, "[o]ne only preaches to the converted" (1991:126). What he means is that, in order to derive personal fulfillment, external recognition, and justification of purpose from a role assigned to oneself by an accepted institutional framework, the framework itself must be embraced by all others, the "*consensus omnium*," or else the assigned role is subject to laughter and belittlement (Bourdieu 1991:126). But Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power is perhaps most clearly illustrated in its ability to exert itself through invisible violence, which takes place in the mundane day-to-day activities of people. These acts are violent because they demand of the dominated party "an attitude which challenges the usual dichotomy of freedom and constraint" without being visible or audible to those who are not predisposed to submission (Bourdieu 1991:51). Consequently, it is not the dominating party that visibly or even consciously intimidates the dominated, but rather it is their mere presence that is interpreted as intimidating by the oppressed, resulting in self-censorship. "Thus, the modalities of practices, the ways of looking, sitting, standing, keeping silent, or even of speaking ('reproachful looks' or 'tones', 'disapproving glances' and so on) are full of injunctions that are powerful and hard to resist precisely because they are silent and insidious, insistent and insinuating" (Bourdieu 1991:51).

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to draw together a host of literatures, all of which potentially speak to the specific language situation of Inuvialuktun. The selection is the result of many months of research that took place largely prior to the collection of primary data. Much of this literature influenced the design of this research in a manner that could be referred to as deductive, a quality I will touch on in the next chapter. At the

same time, the literature review, a process of research that generally takes place while the anthropologist is not yet in the field, for me took place during a semester spent at the university, after I had moved to Inuvik. For this reason the selection of literature reflects my previous experience of the Inuvialuit language.

Chapter Three – Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In chapter one I discussed the rationale for selecting the community of Inuvik as research site, outlined the project's purpose and aim, and positioned it within its academic and regional contexts. Chapter two provided a general historical overview of the Inuvialuit past with a brief excursion into recent Inuvialuit language history. Given this regional context, the chapter also gave a brief summary of the state of sociolinguistics, providing basic disciplinary tools necessary to examine minority language scenarios. Chapter two also examined the role of individual and collective traumatic experiences, focusing especially on residential schooling and its impact on language behavior in Aboriginal communities today. These historical realities led to the review of some unique features of Aboriginal Language Acquisition (ALA), which were explored through several empirical examples. The chapter then examined the role of ancestral language in contemporary Aboriginal cultural identities pointing to often-disjunctive language ideologies. Finally, several theoretical means to identify and disentangle such ideologies were offered through the views of Herbert Blumer and Pierre Bourdieu. This chapter provides a summary of the ethics and methods that were applied in obtaining the qualitative data of this study. It also chronicles my experience as an outsider and as a researcher in some detail.

3.1 Ethical considerations

Individual perceptions of identity and language attitudes are very personal concepts that are not easily given adequate voice through statistical surveys. For this reason I used a qualitative approach focusing on the stories of people and their personal

ideas regarding these issues. Clearly, such research requires utmost respect on behalf of the researcher towards all individuals participating in such a knowledge-generating relationship. From my perspective, research is a relationship in which researcher and participant are equal knowledge seekers. Conducting research together should be a mutually enriching experience for all involved. In my work I attempted to follow the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2 2011) used by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), ethical code of the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies (ACUNS 2003), as well as the ethical code of the American Anthropological Association (AAA 1998). But beyond these general guidelines for researchers working in indigenous communities, I specifically looked to the direction given by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the national Inuit representative organization, and the Nunavut Research Institute (ITK/NRI 2007). One of their emphases is a good relationship with the community.

3.1.1 Community access & community partners

In the summer of 2008, my family and I embarked on a preliminary community visit of Inuvik from Prince George, B.C. where I was then studying for a Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology at the University of Northern British Columbia. During our ten-day stay, which overlapped with the Great Northern Arts Festival of that year, I was able to connect with several major institutions in Inuvik. Especially important was my first encounter with Catherine Cockney of the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre. She kindly introduced me to a series of Inuvialuktun language materials, which the center had been pivotal in producing. Realizing the potentially negative effects of a researcher showing up in a predominantly Aboriginal community, exclusively for the period of their

proposed research, I decided to move to Inuvik with my family two years prior to conducting any research. In January of 2009 my family and I moved into a row house on Mackenzie Road, the community's main street. Our move allowed us to experience the daily life of Inuvik residents throughout the fluctuation of the seasons. We were privileged to participate in countless public events, and built rewarding relationships with community members.

Throughout the three years of living in Inuvik, I was able to maintain a good relationship with the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Center, as well as get to know many of the staff and students at Aurora College. It was clear from the beginning that the ICRC would be my primary community partner and that Aurora College would play an important role in upcoming research. While coming to know many residents through social gatherings and community participation, I was also introduced to the Inuvialuit Community Corporation's (ICC) language program, and to various language offerings provided in early childhood care, preschool, kindergarten, primary school, and high school. Community access and rapport thus occurred on multiple levels over an extended period of time. I believe the years our family spent in Inuvik increased the credibility of this researcher.

3.1.2 Community collaboration

In designing this research project I called on community input from the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (ICRC), which resulted in a re-definition of some of the project's objectives. While I was initially focusing only on issues regarding language and identity, talking to the staff of the ICRC helped make the study more applicable to language planners of Inuvialuktun. The result was a stronger focus on language attitudes

and motivations for learning Inuvialuktun. This was a new focus for which I have to thank the ICRC. Further guidance and creative input from ICRC staff also ensured that questions vital to their work were included in the design. For this purpose I discussed questionnaires and interview schedules with Catherine Cockney at the ICRC, and remained open to changes until May of 2011 when I submitted my application for a NWT research license through Aurora Research Institute (ARI).

3.1.3 Research partners and local co-researchers

After receiving approval from UNBC's research ethics board (Appendix VI), setting up a formal Research Relationship Agreement between my community partner organizations and myself (Appendix VII), and receiving a NWT research license (Appendix X), I was able to start collecting data beginning in August of 2011. I sought to encourage my co-researchers to think of our conversations as stepping-stones to their own further inquiries on language-related issues. The objective was to view my co-researchers not as passive informants or research subjects, but as reflexive knowledge-seeking individuals who possess the agency necessary to derive equal benefit from this project, an approach advocated by several authors (e.g., Wilson 2008:73,77; Smith 2008:26-27; Freire 2000:67,90). Through interviews and focus groups, but also through informational sessions and taught classes, a number of potential and current learners of Inuvialuktun were given the opportunity to explore their own views on language. As a student of other languages, including Uummarmiutun at the time, many of these explorations into language and identity became a mutual sharing ground where I too was able to relate my experience, albeit as an outsider.

3.1.4 Informed consent & remuneration

Prior to participating in this project, each willing research partner signed a consent form (Appendix I & II), which familiarized them with the purpose and goals, benefits, approach to dissemination of results, data use, and potential risks of the study. As part of this consent, each research partner also indicated whether they would choose to remain anonymous, or to be credited in name, in all future publications that would draw on their statements. Because a number of co-researchers were under the age of 18, a special consent form was made available for school attendees. This form had to be taken home for review and signed approval by a parent or guardian prior to any research participation by the minor.

In the attempt to have this study and my reasons for conducting it remain as transparent to the community as possible, all consent forms, questionnaires, and interview schedules, together with other official documentation were made publically available via the project website at *inuvialuktun.unbc.ca*. This potentially enabled any interested party to review interview questions prior to a scheduled interview. The extent to which use was made of this access by research partners is not clear. The website address was advertised through project-related flyers distributed at all participating organizations (and handed out with every consent form), as well as on posters that were hung at several points prominent locations throughout the community (e.g. post office, café, copy shop, etc.).

While the time of all co-researchers was deeply respected, I was not able to pay an hourly rate for interview participation. Instead, as a sign of gratitude for time volunteered to this study, each co-researcher received a $15.00 gift card for the Internet-based Apple music store *iTunes* and was entered into a raffle for an iPod Touch music

player. The Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing Environments paid my research assistant a summer research assistance award[29] for which I had applied previously. It must be clear, however, that no form of remuneration, however small or large, implied any claim of data ownership by this researcher.

3.1.5 Ownership and accountability

Data ownership was important to protect from the beginning. As part of the application process for a research license in the NWT, the community partners and I decided to enter into a Research Relationship Agreement (Appendix VII), which would guarantee community ownership[30] of all collected data. Such an agreement carries with it ethical implications of anonymity and confidentiality, which were addressed in the participant consent form, and signed by all co-researchers prior to participation. The research licensing process calls for approval from all Aboriginal groups that might participate in the research. Because this project focused on Inuvialuktun, I sought permission only from the Inuvialuit review board, which meant that I was able to interview only Inuvialuit beneficiaries.

In terms of the selection and representation of gathered data, (i.e. recorded voices, completed questionnaires, and /or field notes) I made every effort to represent community voices as impartially as possible. Nonetheless, selection and arrangement of data in this thesis are affected by my personal subjectivity as author/observer. Consequently, I am

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[29] A side concern of this research (not covered in this thesis) was the influence of Aboriginal language revitalization on mental health in Inuvik. I applied for the Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing Environments' Summer Student Research Assistant Award, an award that can be obtained on behalf of undergraduate students who join a research project during the summer months. Findings specifically relating to mental health, language, and identity will be published separately.

[30] According to the First Nations Centre (2007:4), *ownership* "refers to the relationship of a First Nations community to its cultural knowledge / data / information. The principle states that a community or group owns information collectively in the same way that an individual owns their personal information. It is distinct from stewardship [or possession]."

responsible for all resulting error or bias. The raw data collected for this project and the insights obtainable from it belong to the community. My communication strategy regarding the research project and its findings are aimed to include five specific strategies recommended by ITK/NRI: 1) to present in the community and at the schools involved in the study, 2) to host an informational website containing downloadable documentation regarding the research project, 3) to provide copies of transcripts, audio and video (where applicable) to research partners upon request and with the written consent of the respective interviewee, 4) to provide hardcopies of the final thesis to all institutions involved, and 5) to distribute brochures summarizing the project and its findings, to all community partner institutions involved.

3.2 Data collection

The methods used in this study included semi-structured interviews, focus groups (semi-structured group interviews), questionnaires, and participant observation. In the following paragraphs I will briefly explain the rationale for each method, as well as its application within anthropological and Indigenous studies contexts, beginning with participant observation. I will then outline population focus in terms of age and gender distribution, and conclude with a note on each of the interview sites that were accessed.

3.2.1 Participant observation

Traditionally, participant observation is a long-term process in which the researcher participates to some degree in the daily routines of people, all the while recording in 'field notes' what she observes during this period of cultural immersion (e.g., Delamont 2007:206; Bernard 2006:344). It is an activity by which the learning observer attains a deeper understanding of the dynamics that are at play in the lives of

research partners, and of the "consequential presence" of the researcher herself (Emerson et al.1995:3). Participant observation and reflection were part of my community immersion over a period of two years prior to interviewing. By living in Inuvik over the course of two complete annual cycles, I was able to participate in many of the daily activities of Inuvialuit community members. Activities ranged from traveling through the Mackenzie Delta over ice in the depth of winter, and on water in the height of summer, to chatting with local skidoo mechanics and hanging out with elders at the local super market. It involved playing, laughing, and enjoying country foods at many a feast, attending community language lessons, and spending time in homes and churches where elders were still speaking and singing in Inuvialuktun. While my findings are primarily based on data collected through interviews, my participatory observations greatly aided in interpreting and grounding recorded voices. Between personally experiencing community life, as well as studying field-specific literature (or the local weekly newspaper), and gathering focused interviews and questionnaires, there was a kind of triangulation at work that is hoped to help insure some degree of accuracy.

It must be noted, however, that in the past anthropological field observations have had a tendency to be translated into 'authoritative' textual representations of 'the other.' In such texts, a detached third person (or 'voice of God') would declare an author's conclusions as though they were scientific fact. Beginning in the mid-1970s, the ideology that upheld textual interpretation as a largely neutral act began to collapse, leaving the discipline in somewhat of a crisis of representation. Critics of traditional anthropological "text making and rhetoric" now pointed to "the constructed, artificial nature of cultural accounts" (Clifford 1986:2). Consequently, "a literary consciousness to ethnography"

(Marcus 1986:263) emerged in anthropological texts of representation. This more reflexive approach acknowledges the dynamics of power that invariably influence all ethnographic writing, suggesting a less authoritative tone on behalf of the author and a more literary reading. This critique of traditional ethnographic tone is further echoed in a collision of traditional anthropological texts on Inuit with contemporary Inuit representations of self in an "era of Inuit empowerment" (Searles 2006:90)[31]. My field observations and interview excerpt selections must therefore be seen in light of these developments: they are non-authoritative, always subjective, and never free of power dynamics.

3.2.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires have traditionally been used to obtain statistical data (Bernard 2006:252), but in more recent years have also been used by social scientists to supplement their interpretative-ethnographic observations, especially in the case of specific phenomena with a relatively low variance applied not to a 'universal' (i.e. statistical) reality, but to particular social populations (Gobo 2007:414). Following this example, I administered a total of 10 detailed questionnaires (Appendix IV & V). Two current learners, seven potential learners[32], and one language specialist responded to questionnaires. The goal was to probe for possible changes in attitude that might result from being involved in the actual learning process. Because the population and phenomenon under study were demarcated, I was able to use the questionnaires within a qualitative paradigm. In retrospect it would have been of significantly more benefit to

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[31] For a humorous but critical Inuit response to past and present 'authoritative' representation of Inuit by non-Inuit in publication, view "Qallunaat! Why White People are Funny," directed by Mark Sandiford with Zebedee Nungak, 2006 National Film Board of Canada.
[32] These would have been individuals who were not actively engaged in formally or non-formally acquiring Inuvialuktun as a second language at the time.

include the questionnaire content as a structured section with all interviews that were conducted. This would have ensured that all research partners would have been exposed to the questionnaire content. On the other hand, not all individuals who were invited to participate in interviews agreed to take part, while some were willing to work through the questionnaire one-on-one. Since I read the questions to the co-researcher and allowed for often-elaborate answers, the administrative process of the qualitative questionnaires may be considered a form of structured interviewing.

3.2.3 Semi-structured interviews

A total of 20 semi-structured individual interviews were recorded, and an effort was made to equally distribute interviews between genders. However, due to an evident female bias in most adult Inuvialuktun classes[33] (and most post-secondary learning environments), this was not achievable. While interviews were conducted with a number of current learners, there existed a numerical bias toward potential learners.

As with the static questionnaire, the semi-structured interview is based on a schedule, or outline of questions, which helps direct the course of the conversation. However, unlike the questionnaire, this kind of interview allows the interviewee to pursue questions and issues that go beyond the schedule, while remaining relevant to the topic. As such, the semi-structured interview is a moderated communication in which "actually conversing with people enables them to share their experiences and understandings" (King and Horrocks 2010:11). At the same time, the moderator recognizes that the semi-structured interview—being a conversation—does not reflect or

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[33] While the fall of 2010 may not have been a representative term for Uummarmiutun evening classes offered through the Inuvik Community Corporation, I was the only male student in attendance then. In the Aboriginal Language and Culture Instructor Program (ALCIP) at Aurora College, my research assistant Dwayne Drescher was the only male student.

reiterate the interviewee's world or views as much as it is instrumental in creating them (King and Horrocks 2010:17). In this very sense, the semi-structured interview is a site in which two or more conversation partners co-produce meaning. While this realization of interview-as-conversation democratizes the research process, it also calls for increased reflexivity on behalf of the conversational moderator to analyze her own role in the production of meaning through conversation (Åkerström et al. 2007:321). Åkerström et al. (2007:322) show how new meaning is produced when the voice of the interviewer is transcribed with equal accuracy as that of the interviewee. In their example, àn initial transcription of the interviewer's voice had been simplified, thus masking a sense of embarrassment in the interviewer's voice that became evident only upon a detailed re-transcription (2007:322). Such discoveries reveal how meaning is established through discourse, rather than merely through detached solicitation.

Some ethnographers argue that interview data is de-contextualized data, because it is not the product of naturally occurring social interaction (e.g., Emerson et al. 1995:140). By tying interview data in with long-term participant observation, ethnographers attempt to re-contextualize such data. In doing so, they produce what some would call "proper ethnography," in which the term "participant observation is used to cover a mixture of observation and interviewing" (Delamont 2007:206). However, to concur with Emerson et al. (1995:140), it must be mentioned that the semi-structured interview, in which voice recording equipment is applied, differs in nature from the ethnographic interview that is recorded non-verbatim in written field notes. At the same time, it can be argued that the recorded interview takes place in a social context also, however 'unnaturally occurring' it may seem. All interviews during my fieldwork were

arranged for, placing them into a 'not naturally occurring' domain. At the same time, most interviews took place within educational facilities, which already stand in association with themes revolving around language, education, cultural change, etc. Therefore, the degree of 'unnatural occurrence' for semi-structured interviews may have varied from person to person and location to location.

3.2.4 Group interviews (focus groups)

Focus groups originate from the world of market research, but they are also used widely in academia, among other things for their ability to identify the content and tone for potential questions to be included with questionnaires (Bernard 2006:233). Most importantly, focus groups can produce conversation that broadens the way we think about an issue (Macnaghten and Myers 2007:68) because they can "provide prompts to talk, correcting or responding to others, and a plausible audience for talk that is not just the researcher" (Macnaghten and Myers 2007:65). Furthermore, Macnaghten and Myers point out that "focus groups work best for topics people could talk about to each other in their everyday lives – but don't" (2007:65). In this research the goal for focus groups (or group interviews) had been twofold. Firstly, they were expected to generate information that may not have become apparent through questionnaires or individual interviews alone. Such data consisted of intra-group communication on the topic of Inuvialuktun, providing a window on language-related discourse among peers. Secondly, these group interviews were to provide an opportunity to explore issues of individual and collective agency in regard to language policy and behavior. Most of all, however, the group interviews aided in settings where individuals felt intimidated by the invasiveness of a one-to-one arrangement. Because the group interviews followed the same interview

schedule as the individual interviews, it is most accurate to view them as merely another interview format. There were four group interviews, ranging from two to 12 individuals.

3.2.5 Population focus: age and gender

As a qualitative study, the aim was not to provide a random and statistically valid population sample, but to focus on a relatively small group of individuals, exploring their relationship with Inuvialuktun on a deeper and more personal level, primarily through ethnographic interviews. This aim was accomplished in the successful recruitment of a total of 45 individuals who participated in an individual interview, a group interview, or a questionnaire[34]. Initially, I had planned to work with members of three gender-balanced age groups: (A) 16-19, (B) 20-39, and (C) 40-59, while focusing on the young adult group. The goal was to rely on teenagers (A) and the middle aged (C) only to identify possible differences that might occur in relation to age. Unexpectedly, four individuals aged 6-15 (Z) became available for interviewing during fieldwork and were added for breadth.

The breakdown of the 45 individuals according to age was as follows: 4 individuals were between the ages of 6-16 (8.9%), 5 individuals between 16-19 (11.1%), 27 individuals between 20-39 (60.0%), and 9 individuals between 40-59 (20.0%). Consequently, as had been anticipated, the highest percentage of individuals was young adults (B) at 60%, followed by the mature group (C) with 20%. The remaining 20% was divided nearly equally between primary and high school aged persons. The 4 youngest co-researchers came from the Inuvialuktun language program at Samuel Hearne Secondary School (SHSS), while the teenagers were recruited from the community, Aurora Learning Centre, SHSS, and Aurora College. The young adults were recruited

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[34] Five people participated in both an individual interview and a questionnaire.

largely from Aurora College and the community, while the mature group consisted primarily of students attending the Aboriginal Language and Cultural Instructor Program (ALCIP) at Aurora College.

In terms of gender balance, I had initially feared it would be exceedingly difficult to recruit men for at least two reasons: Firstly, because I was going to approach individuals via educational institutions, while such are known to have a bias toward female enrolment in the Delta Region, especially at the college level[35]. Secondly, it seemed that women were professionally engaged with issues of language almost exclusively[36]. This female bias is consequently reflected in the gender distribution of my co-researchers: Out of 45 individuals 30 were female (66.7%)[37] and only 15 were male (33.3%). To ensure participation of men, we had to recruit primarily from outside the institutional context (i.e. within the community) through snowball sampling, a form of respondent-driven sampling that relies on the recommendation of friends and acquaintances of individuals already participating (Bernard 2006:192).

Because young men were often reluctant of being interviewed on their own, group interviews were resorted to on several occasions. Reasons for this reluctance may have been multiple. One possibility is that, because interviews took place primarily within educational facilities, they may have been associated with an academic context in which some males may not have felt comfortable after graduating from there (in the case of high school), or in which they would have constituted a visible minority (in the case of Aurora

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[35] According to Aurora College, "[f]emale postsecondary students outnumber male students by a ratio of more than 2:1" (Aurora 2006:27).
[36] The language commissioner of the NWT, the employees of the ICRC, and all Aboriginal language teachers from pre-K through 12 in Inuvik were women at the time of research.
[37] It has to be mentioned that the female sample was boosted by a group interview of 12 women studying at Aurora College.

College). In either case, the actual reasons for group interview preference in some males remain unknown to me.

3.2.6 Interview sites

Four main sites served as recruitment hubs for co-researchers. While site selection invariably played a role in who came to participate in the study, each site provided access to a wide variety of individuals who originated not only from varying sectors of the community, but also from several different communities across the ISR. Although the research license limited my data collection to the community of Inuvik, partnering with Aurora College allowed me to speak to individuals who had come from the communities of Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour, Aklavik, and Tuktoyaktuk. A brief overview of the four main interview sites follows.

Figure 2 - Samuel Hearne Secondary School   Photo: A. Oehler
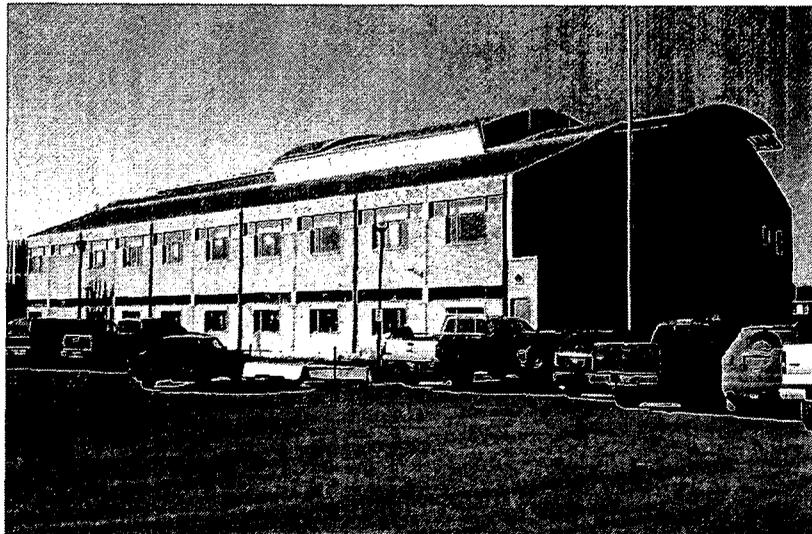
Figure 3 – Aurora College (ALCIP)   Photo: A. Oehler
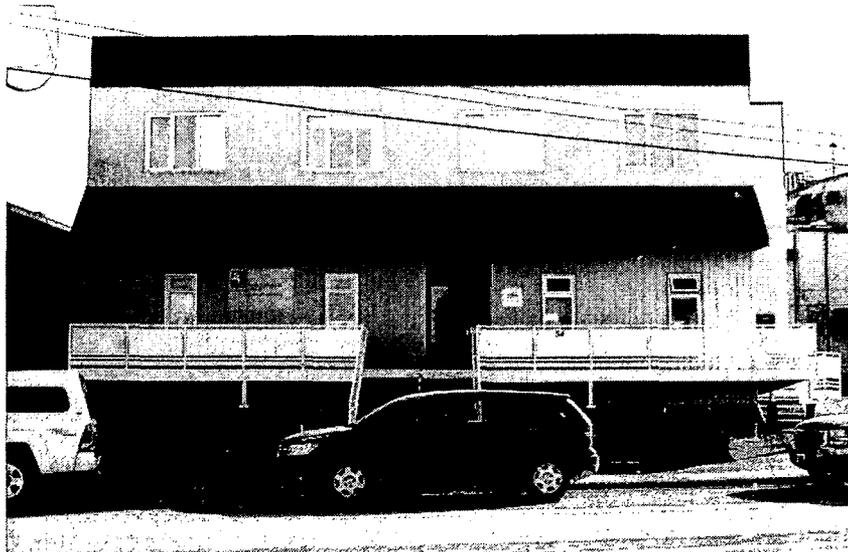
Figure 4 – Aurora College Community Learning Centre   Photo: A. Oehler

Figure 5 – Community of Inuvik   Photo: A. Oehler

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3.2.6.1 Samuel Hearne Secondary School

Four children from two 7th grade classes that were visited volunteered to be interviewed individually or in a group setting at Samuel Hearne Secondary School (SHSS). The school had a student population of approx. 400, with a teaching staff of 30, and one Inuvialuktun teacher who administered the Inuvialuktun language curriculum for grades 7-12 on an optional basis during school times. The school's junior high and high school level Inuvialuktun instruction program had been the result of a concerted effort between the Beaufort Delta Education Council (BDEC), the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (ICRC), and the department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) which had begun in 2003[38]. At the time of the study the majority of attendees were of Inuvialuit heritage.

3.2.6.2 Aurora College

Aurora College was offering a 2-year Aboriginal Language and Culture Instructor Program (ALCIP) during the time of the research. The program was preparing future Gwitch'in and Inuvialuktun instructors, who upon completion of the program would be able to work within the school system as language and cultural instructors. The majority of students were between 40 and 59 years of age. Several members of the Inuvialuktun section were interviewed individually, while four preferred a group interview. The only male student of the program was willing to work with me as research assistant throughout the course of my fieldwork. Interviews were also conducted with Aurora College students who did not belong to ALCIP. A group interview with 12 female Inuvialuit students from the Teacher Education Program (TEP) was conducted toward the end of the data

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[38] Inuvialuktun as second language at SHSS (retrieved March 19, 2012): http://www.bdec.nt.ca/our-schools/second-language.shtml

collection period. In addition to collecting data, I was also given the opportunity to hold workshops and lectures for the students of both ALCIP and TEP, among other things on the foundational concepts underlying the research.

3.2.6.3 Aurora College Learning Centre

A number of individual interviews and questionnaires were administered to students attending classes at Aurora College's learning center, a satellite campus in town that offers educational upgrading to community members. Much like the main College campus itself, the student population here was predominantly female. With the help of the center's staff, I was able to call on the collaboration of a number of students over the course of several weeks to meet one-on-one, discussing language attitudes, especially with the help of the questionnaire.

3.2.6.4 Community at large

With the help of my research assistant Dwayne Drescher, I was able to locate a number of young Inuvialuit adults who were willing to participate in an interview. Some of this recruitment occurred with the aid of the social network *Facebook*, a medium that lends itself to *non-probability sampling,* producing higher response rates than traditional chain referral techniques, due to the researcher's profile information and group membership being visible to potential respondents, thus increasing their level of confidence in the researcher (Baltar & Brunet 2012:57). An additional advantage was that individuals were able to click through to the research project website where they could familiarize themselves with the nature of the research, enabling individuals to make an informed decision about participation. The downside of all *non-probability sampling* is that it can lead to a bias in the population sample due to the utilization of existing

networks, thus making any kind of generalization difficult. However, it seems that the snowball technique served well within the small demographic context of the ISR, where it provided me with a number of young adults representing varying ethnic, economic, and geographic differences[39].

3.3 Methods of analysis

As discussed previously in my ethical considerations, data analysis, or hermeneutics, is a problematic issue especially for any non-indigenous anthropologist writing about observations made within an indigenous community. Nonetheless, every qualitative researcher must commit to interpreting the data that he/she has collected. Where analysis is an open collaborative process that includes research participants, the goal of a democratized research design may have succeeded. Even so, it is understood that the final text of any ethnography always remains a production of new meanings based on subjective description, analysis, and interpretation (cf. Wolcott 1994:15).

3.3.1 Inductive & deductive approaches

To arrive at a subjective but descriptive text, I first transcribed all recorded interview data with the help of my research assistant, and then applied a mixed method for analysis. Because I had already familiarized myself with comparative ethnographic findings in the literature, a thematic approach to data analysis seemed most natural to me. In either case, it would have been exceedingly difficult to read collected data without naturally scanning them for phenomena known from other contexts described in the literature. At the same time, the themes I found in the literature help establish a conceptual framework for presentation and analysis of my data. Rather than bedevil a

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[39] While all research partners were Inuvialuit beneficiaries, several shared a mixed heritage (Gwitch'in, Caucasian, Russian, Sámi, etc.). Individuals also belonged to families of various degrees of socio-economic influence and originated from five of six Inuvialuit communities.

'top down' deductive approach, I have employed it to the extent that I thought would benefit the community partners who were integral in establishing what some of the questions would be. At the same time, I have tried to keep my mind as open as possible to the discovery of the unexpected, and of reoccurring themes in the text, in keeping with inductive tradition.

3.3.2 Methods from an epistemological perspective

As a qualitative observer I came from an interpretive-experiential perspective, which influenced the way in which I approached data collection. Following thinkers, such as Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), who distinguished between social and natural reality, I assumed that each requires separate methods of exploration. Safia Azzouni (2010) points out that Dilthey made a distinction between 'explaining' [erklaeren], fit for natural reality, and 'understanding' [verstehen], or 'experiencing' [erleben], better fit for the study of social reality (Azzouni 2010:63-64; King and Horrocks 2010:13-14). He also stressed that the 'context of life'[40] [Lebenszusammenhang] could not be 'explained,' especially not in positivist terms (Azzouni 2010:63). Instead, it had to be 'experienced' as by a poet who offers an "objectivation of the single and subjective experience" (Azzouni 2010:65). Such a deliberately subjective approach, which according to Dilthey stands closer to poetics than positivist delineation, also echoes critique aimed at the claim to "transparency of representation and immediacy of experience" (Clifford 1986:2), which was discussed previously. Given this direction, I view data collection not as

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[40] Dilthey's 'context of life' in many ways parallels aspects of Native Science as defined by Aboriginal thinker and educator Gregory Cajete (2004). For Cajete "systems of relationships" are understood and expressed metaphorically "through abstract symbols, visual/spatial reasoning, sound, kinesthetic expression, and various forms of ecological and integrative thinking" (2004:51). In Dilthey's terms, we might say that, Native Science is closer to human nature than Western Science, because it poetically seeks to *understand* rather than to explain.

representative of a separate reality, but rather as being interconnected with the act of data gathering, arising out of the discourse that research itself produces.

These epistemological assumptions lead a researcher to become a contextual-constructivist observer. The contextual view states that people experience their own lives in the context of "cultural and historical meaning systems," and that the researcher is also "active in data generation" (King and Horrocks 2010:20), i.e. worldview, or epistemology. The constructionist view adds that language, through which these views are expressed, is not merely referential in nature, but that it has power to shape social reality, because social meaning is produced through discourse (King and Horrocks 2010:21). In this view, the social and historical meaning systems that provide context to social experiences are the product of social discourse. Thus it becomes evident that the constructionist mechanisms that generates social meaning through discourse tie directly into Blumer's second premise of symbolic interactionism, namely that meaning is seen as "arising in the process of interaction between people" (Blumer 1969:4). To give an example of a constructivist perspective along these lines, we might refer to Natasha Lyons' explanation of Inuvialuit 'social memory' as the product of social interaction among Elders: "Depending on the individual or group assembled, any set of reminiscences will privilege certain memories at the expense of others" (Lyons 2010:25). Contemporary Inuvialuit identity is in large part based on how Inuvialuit see their past, a view that is 'constructed' through the social discourse of Elders (Lyons 2010:26). This 'constructivist' concept can also be used in relation to interviews, because they are forms of deliberate discourse that shape ideas, rather than merely reproduce perfectly fixed notions. In fact, there is a good chance that interviews will provide the time and space for

research partners to think anew about their relationship to Inuvialuktun, thereby generating particular assertions or associations they may not have entertained previously. These new associations and ideas may forever affect how interviewees view themselves in relation to their language. The interviews in this study must then be seen from a constructivist perspective, in this very sense.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I set out with a series of ethical considerations, ranging from issues surrounding community access and community partners and collaboration to informed consent, data ownership, and researcher accountability. Given the growing sensitivity and inclusiveness of qualitative academic community-oriented research, these issues lay at the very heart of every effort made under this project. Given this community orientation, I summarized my methods of data collection, which ranged from participant observation and questionnaires to semi-structured interviews and group interviews (focus groups). My population focus followed in terms of age and gender distribution in the sample, which was followed by a description of the various interview sites that were used. Finally, I mentioned my method of analysis and interpretation, which were both inductive and deductive in nature and framed by the phenomenological tradition, as pointed out in my epistemological perspective.

Chapter Four – Findings

4.0 Introduction

Much in line with other researches on Aboriginal North American language contexts, my research found that cultural identity in Inuvialuit is maintained primarily through traditional practices that relate a person to the land. Leisy Wyman pointed out a similar situation for Alaskan Yupik. In Yupik communities, even where the majority of community members had adopted English, language shift did not necessarily reduce the degree of involvement in traditional on-the-land activities (Wyman 2009:343). Sheila Nicholas made a similar observation in Hopi context where many young individuals no longer knew their heritage language, yet claimed to "live Hopi" (Nicholas 2010:137). Both examples echo my findings, which indicate that Inuvialuit cultural identity is being maintained in the absence of ancestral language. Throughout the interviews most research partners insisted that it was possible to be fully Inuvialuit even if one was not able to speak Inuvialuktun. However, such statements do not necessarily indicate that the ancestral language has lost its value as a marker of cultural heritage. In fact, there exists a degree of ideological disjuncture.

4.1 Ideological disjuncture

As Nicholas and other scholars have pointed out (e.g., Meek 2010; Kroskrity 2010; Lee 2009), there exists ideological disjuncture in other similar language contact scenarios. Several Inuvialuit individuals expressed that cultural wisdom is imbedded in stories told by elders. They also believed that such stories are best communicated in Inuvialuktun - not English. To truly benefit from such cultural data, it is paramount for a person to understand the heritage language. In fact, several young individuals looked with

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uncertainty to the day when they would have to teach their own children and grandchildren about their cultural heritage without being able to relate these stories in Inuvialuktun. Thus, my research confirms the findings of others in regard to the existence of divergent language ideologies often held by one individual. Charlie, a young Inuvialuit man, perhaps gave the best example of this disjuncture by saying that he was a true Inuvialuk without Inuvialuktun, while the language did remain important – all in one sentence: "You don't need [Inuvialuktun], but it's sort of crucial." If Charlie had been Hopi, he might have said, "I live Hopi, I just don't speak it" (Nicholas 2010:137). Charlie makes the point that his heritage language is both important and not important at the same time. Inuvialuktun is not important as a communicative vehicle for Charlie, because he can conduct traditional activities speaking English. But at the same time, Inuvialuktun is "crucial" to him as a marker of the past, and therefore should not be lost entirely. In this context then, language takes on a symbolic role.

4.2 The symbolic value of Inuvialuktun

The majority of my research partners did not speak Inuvialuktun. While most of them had been exposed to varying degrees of optional school-based language lessons earlier in life, the knowledge they had retained from those days was minimal and did not amount to any degree of fluency. Neither had these individuals recently engaged in any other form of Inuvialuktun acquisition, such as evening classes or concerted effort to learn from relatives who are elders. A smaller number of research partners were in the process of becoming language instructors through a college program. These individuals held varying degrees of fluency in their respective dialects and represented a small group of language specialists. From all accounts, Inuvialuktun was not seen as a communicative

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tool for most community members, with the exception of elders who at the time of residential schooling had already been too old to attend, or had found other ways to evade a system well remembered for its systematic destruction of heritage language. Consequently, for most other community members, Inuvialuktun had become a vestige of the past, of a way of life no longer economically feasible[41] in the town of Inuvik.

However, because many individuals knew a few words of Inuvialuktun, they did feel connected to their cultural heritage through language. This limited knowledge of the ancestral tongue was primarily of symbolic nature, as it did not allow individuals to freely communicate with their elders. Those who knew a significant number of Inuvialuktun terms still lamented their inability to form coherent sentences. Although it was often expressed that Inuvialuktun was important as an indicator of Inuvialuit cultural identity, in the same breath individuals would ascertain that not being able to speak the language did in no way detract from their being Inuvialuit. Consequently, the language retains a symbolic function, but this function is not sole proprietor to the maintenance of cultural identity. Instead, other cultural markers dominated this function. Among them were participation in on-the-land activities, such as hunting, trapping, whaling, fishing, and camping, as well as participation in traditional drum dances and songs, the making and wearing of traditional clothing, traditional games, and values such as sharing and spending time together with the elders.

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[41] Hunting and gathering have become integral parts of mixed economies for most Canadian Inuit (cf. Poppel & Kruse 2009). It is increasingly difficult to maintain a life style entirely reliant on substance hunting, since ammunition, modern transportation, and other necessities require financial resources that are provided through employment. For many co-researchers, Inuvialuktun was associated with a way of life that existed only prior to the introduction of highly mixed economies.

4.3 Inuvialuktun acquisition and identity

Although Inuvialuktun did not seem to serve as primary marker of Inuvialuit social or cultural identity, almost all potential learners were certain that acquiring their heritage language would increase their pride as Inuit and strengthen their personal and collective cultural identity. Individuals anticipated such qualities as greater self-confidence, deeper connection with the land, and the ability to communicate with their grandparents, thereby attaining access to their stories. However, the great demands in terms of time and resources required to attain a fluent knowledge of Inuvialuktun seemed to outweigh the relative benefits of the language. This was especially true in light of the fact that Inuvialuktun was not perceived as a necessity, but merely as a precious benefit to anyone already belonging to the Inuvialuit community.

Looking at the data, it seemed as if the desire to learn the ancestral language fluctuated throughout life. Several children attending primary school expressed a desire to learn the language, an enthusiasm that was encouraged by their language instructors and elders. According to Wallace Goose, a primary school boy, learning Inuvialuktun is very important: "I enjoy speaking Inuvialuktun and I enjoy learning about it. I really, really like [my people] and I'm still learning how to pronounce Inuvialuit stuff and all that, but it is still a lot of fun." During the teenage years, however, this desire often recedes, in part due to the onslaught of youth-oriented global media, but also because teenagers realize that the majority of their own parents are not able to speak their heritage language, and that English is the only language in which serious economic transactions take place. This wave of disinterest in ancestral language is often reversed by the time an individual enters a long term relationship, has children, or matures in other ways, which

bring about a stronger desire to know where one comes from. Usually this occurs around the age of 20, or 30. As noted one young anonymous mother: "When I was younger ... it wouldn't really bother me, but now that I'm older and have a child I want to learn [Inuvialuktun]. I want to be able to tell [my daughter] words, tell her stories. All I can do is tell her what I remember in English." However, there were also several examples of individuals in their forties, especially women, who felt a strong desire to learn their heritage language, or to relearn it if they had spoken it as children but lost it in the course of residential schooling. With the coming of age there also emerges a growing awareness for the urgency with which the language must be protected because the sole carriers of the ancestral language are quickly passing away.

4.4 Language ideologies: born of (and giving birth to) definitions of self

One of my primary goals in studying language and identity in the community of Inuvik was to obtain a better understanding of the role that heritage language played in contemporary Inuvialuit definitions of identity. It was my hope that such an understanding could then be applied to current and future efforts of language revitalization. Joshua Fishman's (1991) work initially introduced me to the idea of language and identity in the context of revitalization. Fishman maintains that attempts to reverse language shift (RLS) go hand in hand with an agenda, held by RLS proponents, to revert the current state of a given culture to something they consider more in line with its traditional heritage, an intention rarely shared by all members of any given ethnic minority. Such RLS motivations, he points out, are not centered on efficiency but are irrational. At the same time, these motivations are "authentic" and "unique" because they seek to protect what sets the group apart as "themselves" (Fishman 1991:20). Most of my

own findings in Inuvik echoed Fishman's observations. My research partners represented a spectrum of voices spanning from one end of the debate to the other: There were those who yearned for a return to the old ways of life, coupled with a strong desire to bring back the language as a medium of day-to-day communication, and there were those who believed that Inuvialuit culture would live on into the future even without a fluent knowledge of Inuvialuktun, or any knowledge of it at all. The later far outweighed the prior for reasons I describe in this chapter.

Before delving into an analysis of existing beliefs about the use and role of language, it is important to establish markers that individuals identified as representative of Inuvialuit culture and identity. In other words, I am making the assumption that how individuals perceive their own heritage language is influenced by how they define themselves in the present world, and vice versa. In the following section I focus on definitions of Inuvialuit social identity, using Blumer's (1969) perspective of symbolic interactionism. In the second part of this chapter I examine the role of language ideologies relating to Inuvialuktun, as seen through Bourdieu's (1991) concepts of symbolic power and violence. I divided the chapter into two sections, each with its own theoretical lens, because my aim is to highlight the strengths of each perspective. Blumer's (1969) interactionist model lends itself particularly well to an analysis of identity formation arising from social discourse, while Bourdieu's (1990; 1991; 1998) viewpoint provides a focus on power relations, institutional constraints, and the dynamics of habitus that perpetuate social realities and co-govern language behavior.

4.5 Definitions of identity: Blumer's perspective

In the following paragraphs I examine some of the definitions of Inuvialuit identity that were collected through interviews, questionnaires and field observations. In doing so, I assume a symbolic interactionist perspective. What sets the symbolic interactionist research approach apart from other approaches, according to Blumer, is that it not only focuses on *action*, but that human activity "begins with an inner impulse rather than with an external stimulus" (1937:192)—an impulse that is "tantamount to tension and discomfort," and which "impels the organism to act" (Baugh 2006:13). In other words, human communication is not merely a stimulus-response affair, but collective and individual interpretation play a major role in formulating a response. Among the fathers of this idea were Charles H. Cooley, W. I. Thomas, George H. Mead, and Herbert Blumer (Vryan et al. 2003:367). Blumer, one of Mead's former students, offered a widely recognized interpretation of symbolic interactionism in which he summarized the concept into three main notions: 1) Individuals act on things in relation to the meanings they have for them, 2) such meanings are produced through interaction with others, and 3) how a person acts in relation to such meanings is dependent on how he or she interprets them individually (Blumer 1969:2-5). In the context of this study this leads to at least two questions: 1) How can Blumer's scheme be used to examine identity, and 2) what is a useful explanation of identity given his scheme?

Gregory Stone (1962), a former student of Blumer's, provided an explanation of identity that suits itself very well to the symbolic interactionist perspective: "One's identity is established when others *place* him as a social object by assigning him the same words of identity that he appropriates for himself or *announces*. It is in the coincidence of

placements and announcements that identity becomes a meaning of the self" (Stone 1962:93 quoted in Vryan et al. 2003:368; emphasis in original). Stone's explanation can easily be applied to an Inuvialuit context: If an Inuvialuk were to assert his group membership on the basis of participating in hunting activities, then his *announcement* that he is a hunter would have to be confirmed by social others who ascribe the same meaning to the act of hunting, i.e. that it is an accepted marker of social identity and, secondly, that he indeed is known to participate in this act. Stone's explanation is useful, because it acknowledges the constructivist view that language not only possesses referential qualities, but that it is endowed also with the power to shape social identities. In this case, the symbolic meaning of hunting is established through discourse among social agents, while personal identity remains open to individual interpretations of the meaning of hunting.

Vryan et al. allude to the fact that the founders of symbolic interactionism "did not directly address the concept of identity in the way they did the related, extensively explored, concept of self" (2003:367)[42]. For this reason, the authors present several facets of identity that have been explored by interactionists since the concept of identity has become more established in sociocultural and linguistic circles. Among the identity-related topics explored by Vryan et al. are, identity in light of "creativity and conformity," identity in terms of fluidity or stability, identity as produced by social contexts and vice versa, identity that asserts similarities and differences within and between groups, and identity as based on allegiance to multiple social others (2003:378-384). In this chapter I

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[42] The differences and similarities between social and personal identity were discussed in chapter two based on a summary of John Edwards' (2009) explanation.

follow several of these dimensions of identity, making use of Vryan's et al., couplets (e.g. "freedom-constraint") to arrange material from the interviews and field observations.

4.5.1 Inuvialuit identity in light of freedom and constraint

Freedom and constraint always seem to be present at the same time. There may exist freedom for a student, for instance, to experiment within a certain musical genre, but at the same time there may be constraint to stay within the genre itself. The tendency of most Chicago school interactionists was to follow Mead in stressing creative freedom (i.e. agency) over structural approaches (e.g., Gergen 1982; Valsiner 2000:37) that emphasize social constraint and imposed guidelines for personal behavior and creative identity enactment (Vryan et al. 2003:380). I select three examples dealing with the tension between freedom and constraint in relation to defining Inuvialuit social identity: freedom and constraint in reference to a) land as marker of identity, b) the selection of identity markers, and c) use of traditional versus contemporary identity-related narratives. These examples are pertinent because traditional markers of Inuvialuit identity, such as ties to land, fluency in the ancestral language, and blood ties, are becoming increasingly problematic.

However, to this day, one of the most common associations made in regard to Inuvialuit identity is knowledge of the land. To know the ways of the land, and to know one's own way around the land are considered key factors to surviving on the land. Sitting in a heated class room at Aurora college, together with five young Inuvialuit men, Scott was the first to point out that knowledge of the land continued to live on in all the men who were present: "We may sit in a warm room, but we still know our way around the land." Looking for ways to explain to me what is the Inuvialuit Way, another young

man, Charlie, said with pride: "It is the way we survived in such harsh environments." For him and the other men, the Inuvialuit Way was embodied in the ability to survive on the land. However, this common marker of Inuvialuit identity is becoming increasingly problematic for a generation that has much more restricted access to a traditional life style. For Brent, a high school student, the Inuvialuit Way consisted primarily of traditional activities he had seen in old videos during his childhood. Although his father had been hunting and skinning animals as he was growing up, Brent was certain of himself that he could not survive on the land in the way his ancestors had—"not even for a week." In his opinion, people of the past had been "one hundred percent Inuvialuit," while people of the present were "probably ten percent" Inuvialuit, if measured by their active knowledge of traditional survival skills. While Scott and Charlie established their Inuvialuit identity in conformity to the traditional importance of knowing the land, Brent sought greater freedom in defining what it meant to be Inuvialuit in the modern world, especially in light of his preparations to attend college somewhere in the south.

In spite of the strong ties to the land, young people often must leave the region for education or employment in the south. In such cases alternative markers of identity become even more important. For Alecia, a young woman in her early twenties, it was clear how difficult it would be to maintain an Inuvialuit identity when away from the land, especially when raising a child in the city: "It would be hard because a lot of the stuff that we do practice, we practice in the Delta. In the city you can't just go out the back door and be out on the land. Go to your backdoor in the city and you're in someone else's backyard!" Alecia felt free to move to a big city in the south, but she also felt constrained in her ability to pass on her culture and identity to a child in the absence of Inuvialuit land.

Inuvialuit social identity may not depend on a single marker of identity, but it does seem that most other markers tie into notions of the land in some way. At the same time, in response to the question, "How would you describe the Inuvialuit way?" an anonymous young woman replied that it is "who we are—the people." In her words, "it doesn't matter where we are, we're still Inuvialuit. This is still us." Consequently there may be a slight difference between *being* Inuvialuit and *feeling* Inuvialuit. One's status as a beneficiary is not affected by lifestyle or location of residence. The degree to which one lives according to the Inuvialuit Way, however, is not prescribed by one's ancestral or legal status.

While an Inuvialuit city dweller is not able to bring the land with her to the urban locale, she may continue speaking or learning her heritage language while away from home. However, even a perfect knowledge of the language would not replace lacking ties to the land. This was confirmed during a group interview at Aurora College, where a female college student in her early twenties clarified that "you can't say that somebody who knows his language is more Inuvialuit than the next person. Maybe the person that practices the language doesn't go out on the land." Thus Inuvialuit social identity is contingent not on a single marker, but all other markers tend to be evaluated in terms of the relation to land. While this may hint at a democratization of access to Inuvialuit identity, freedom of choice remains within the confines of collectively legitimized 'cultural activities,' the strongest one being the land.

Another display of freedom and constraint in defining Inuvialuit identity is illustrated in the different ways two young women related to story telling. One young lady at Aurora College stressed the importance of freely telling stories from the land. What she meant were not legends, but accounts of what happened to one's ancestors,

friends, or even oneself on the land. She felt a sense of responsibility to keep old stories in circulation, but also to add new personal stories to this canon: "There is a lot of oral history today that needs to be shown, and much of it is based on your knowledge, your experience. After all we do live in this area. If you have resources, speak up! Speak up of your own experience. Resources meaning the Internet, libraries, previous oral history projects, etc." The latter part pointed to non-traditional means through which on-the-land experiences could be communicated to people in cities far removed from the land. Another young anonymous woman pointed out that ancestral language and cultural knowledge could also benefit from modern technology: "We could use modern electronic devices to communicate with each other, like we [already] do, connecting with [each other] globally. And then at the same time still have that connection to your culture and identity." Her point was that adopting modern information technology did not contradict one's efforts of maintaining a sense of collective cultural identity. Instead, these media could be used to strengthen cultural awareness. However, not all individuals shared the same enthusiasm for modern stories and technology, as pointed out another young woman: "Old stories are different because most of them involve hunting or helping one's mother with sewing. All our stories [of the current generation] are of skidooing for fun and about activities for their own sake rather than for other people." This woman felt that a core cultural value was missed in most stories told by young people, and that therefore they were different from those told by the elders. Here one person emphasized the importance of freely voicing new experiences as genuinely Inuvialuit, while the other person was missing conformity to traditional values. Yet both women communicated

Inuvialuit identity in relation to land, and through stories, thus conforming to a larger cultural consensus about what is and is not Inuvialuit.

4.5.2 Fluidity and stability of Inuvialuit identity

Role theorists, in the tradition of Mead (1934), when speaking of the fluidity and stability of identity, generally refer to personal, situational, and social spheres (e.g. Antonucci et al. 2010:436). Personal identity changes only in as much as an individual undergoes cardinal life changes. Situational identity on the other hand is flexible so as to be able to adapt to the demands of any given social setting (e.g., Ting-Toomey 1999:36). Social (or cultural) identity is relatively stable because it is established through the presence of largely unchanging social settings. By adapting to the nature and demands of any given social setting, the constancy of that setting is ensured, thus solidifying social (or cultural) identity (Vryan et al. 2003:381-382). In societies undergoing major socio-cultural transitions, such as Inuvialuit, social settings also experience a high degree of transformation, which in turn calls for adaptation, affecting the formation of identity. The following examples look at changing social settings and how they are culturally accommodated. Some of these social settings pertain to increased cross-cultural intermarriage; accelerated technological modernization; and contemporary presentation of an ethno-culturally fluid past.

As is evident from Inuvialuit history since the whaling era, there have existed various ethnic components that make up Inuvialuit society. Today intermarriages between Gwitch'in and Inuvialuit, or between non-Aboriginal individuals and Inuvialuit are quite common. These influences can challenge blood-ties as marker of Inuvialuit identity, which were mentioned to play an important role. For Barbara, a middle aged

Inuvialuktun instructor at the college, "you are Inuit if you have the blood". One young lady's response to this reality was to emphasize culture-specific upbringing over descent: "It's the way my mom and dad raised me. I'm not pure Inuvialuit. I don't have [purely] Inuvialuit blood, but it's the way my parents raised me. I grew up knowing that I was Inuvialuit, and that that would never change." Thus, the Inuvialuit Way is not merely a matter of descent, but also a matter of upbringing that is often decided upon by where parents in an inter-ethnic marriage choose to reside (i.e. on Inuvialuit, Gwitch'in, or non-Aboriginal land). Because ethnic belonging of offspring is officially recognized in the choice of becoming either a Gwitch'in or an Inuvialuit land claims beneficiary[43]—an allegiance that does not have to correspond to personal cultural upbringing—there exists a degree of potential fluidity in the identity of many young Inuvialuit. Scott, a mature student at Aurora College remarked, "it's not unusual to see someone who has a little bit of a different culture or ethnicity in them. Right away you know that they are half-breed. It's not hard to tell and it's pretty common. I think that's one of the parts of modern Inuvialuit in my generation." While this 'modern Inuvialuit' component of hybrid ancestry may be challenging for some individuals in establishing their personal identity, it is no longer possible to imagine Inuvialuit society without this openness to the world. The ability to accommodate change in the ethnic fabric of Inuvialuit society is therefore an integral component of its social stability.

While traditional on-the-land practices continue to be closely associated with the Inuvialuit Way, several individuals who since have become respected elders were among

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[43] A beneficiary of an Aboriginal group is a person drawing on the financial dividends generated through the administrative business activities conducted with land claims settlement funds. A person can only be the beneficiary of one group at a time, and therefore expresses a degree of personal belonging by making that choice. In the case of children of mixed ancestry, often this choice will be based on which group they had the most exposure to as they were growing up.

the initial modernizers, perhaps redefining the Inuvialuit Way for the 20th century. In fact, according to Scott, "probably the best guy to tell you about innovation would be Eddie Gruben, my dad." Eddie Gruben is the founder of 'Tuktoyaktuk's E. Gruben's Transport Ltd.,' the largest privately held company in the Mackenzie Delta region. Mr. Gruben was also one of the directors of COPE and a signatory to the IFA. According to Scott, his grandson:

> "He's 93 years old now and he always told us stories of how 'you have to change with the times.' He said that that was his key to success. One funny moment was when we were watching a TV program once, and he saw an elder on the show talking about how everything should go back to the old ways. And my dad said: 'Forget this guy! If I need light, I just go over here and do this [flicks light switch]. If I need a fire, I just turn up the thermostat. That's all!' So you just have to take the good with the bad and try to make it better. That's all."

From this conversation it seemed that Scott had largely accepted his father's rationale for life. While some individuals identified modernization as a potential threat to the integrity of the Inuvialuit Way, most considered deliberate participation in modern ways of life as a rational extension of the age-old ability of Inuvialuit to adapt to changing environmental demands. Thus, in the context of modernization, change can also be seen as a form a socio-cultural stabilization.

Another example of a new practice that reinforces social identity, especially for a younger generation, is Inuvialuit Day. This became evident during my visits with the Inuvialuktun language program at Samuel Hearne Secondary School, where I was able to speak to several pre-teen students who were part of the program. When asked about what

sets Inuvialuit culture apart from other cultures represented within the community of Inuvik, the children generally mentioned language, life style, clothing, and other traditions. However, Angie Edwards' first association with Inuvialuit tradition was Inuvialuit Day. Inuvialuit Day is celebrated annually on June 5 to commemorate the Inuvialuit Final Agreement of 1984. It is a day filled with drum dancing and an on-the-land foods cookout in front of the Inuvialuit Corporate Group office building. Inuvialuit Day is a new tradition that represents an historical occurrence that predates Angie's birth. For her this commemoration constitutes part of her Inuvialuit identity, along with other markers, among them the consumption of traditional foods, such as beluga oil and skin. Several younger Inuvialuit children seemed to have a more consistent picture of their ethnic heritage under the Inuvialuit ethnonym, than did older generations who were more cognizant of the cultural and linguistic conglomeration that has taken place under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement. Wallace, for instance, saw himself as being Inuvialuit, not Siglit, Uummarmiut, or Kangiryuarmiut, while ultimately he spoke of himself as "Inuvialuit-Canadian," alluding to an identity that ties into the larger national mosaic. These generational changes in the validation and interpretation of historical occurrences bring about the kind of social stability that is generally associated with the formation of nation states.

4.5.3 Inuvialuit identity in social contexts of cause and effect

As point out Vryan et al. "identities simultaneously create and are created by social contexts" (2003:382). A common application of this interplay is found in the study of work (e.g., Shaffir & Pawluch 2003; Hughes 1993), where labor is used to construct personal identity, as well as to form a "sense of the identity of others" (Gibson 2010:14).

At the same time, it may be argued that the changing demands put forth by individuals belonging to professional associations facilitate changes to the social context of labor, which in turn shape these individuals' identities. An example of how Inuvialuit cultural identity is both the cause and the effect of social contexts can be illustrated in the pre-contact mode of Inuit life that created a social context for seasonal games. Inuit played these games for the purpose of entertainment, but also to hone survival skills needed on the land. After Inuvialuit had transitioned to a sedentary life style within permanent communities, the social context of survival-related games became obliterated. However, in 1970 "increased interest in traditional activities led to the formalization of the Northern Games through the establishment of the Northern Games Society" (NGS 2009; IRC 2010). Transformed to fit the needs of contemporary Inuvialuit identity, the old social context of Inuit games was reintroduced, and is now celebrated every five years, helping create distinct social and cultural identities. The contemporary social context of Inuvialuit games has also become a showcase of cultural pride to the world when the games were featured at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. The following examples show cause-effect scenarios in which Inuvialuit identity shapes social contexts while these social contexts in turn shape Inuvialuit identities. Selected social contexts include communication at the intersection of environment, self, and social others; interaction between Inuvialuit and the federal government; and interaction between Inuvialuit and other Inuit within the wider context of nationalism.

Because Inuvialuit identity is expressed in relationship to land and animals, many individuals and families spend time at hunting camps, especially in spring and summer. Hunting camps represent social contexts that reflect traditional Inuvialuit social identity.

At these camps individuals, who live and work in town for most of the year, adapt to an on-the-land life style (i.e. situational identity). During these extended times out on the land, individuals are able to experience a connection to the natural environment, which is then shared and legitimized in face-to-face interaction with social others. How such experiences can impact the course of action in an individual's life becomes apparent in Dwayne's account: "What really got to me was being out on the land, grabbing those fish, hunting the animals. Being there in the middle of nowhere—that silence, hearing the wind and everything. I felt as if I knew that where I was standing, my ancestors had lived. They had done this all day, everyday." For Dwayne a connection to his ancestors is established by participating in their activities. He continues: "I had this sense of my ancestors' past, and that is what really touched me: I was growing up. I was getting in-tune with myself and with my identity. I knew that one thing had to be done and that was the language aspect." The cause-effect scenario takes place here in that Dwayne's Inuvialuit identity gave him access to the social context of summer camping on the land. His on-the-land experience reinforced his identity and set the trajectory for his higher education, namely to become a high school teacher and Aboriginal language and culture instructor.

Another social context for Inuvialuit has been the land claims process in which Inuvialuit leaders and the government of Canada have communicated extensively. Conversing with Catherine Cockney, a specialist for Inuvialuit culture and history, and director of the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre, helped me gain a better understanding of the significance of the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) of 1984 in terms of Inuvialuit identity: "The day that our land claims were signed defined us. It defined who exactly we

are, right down to the government of Canada. It is a bill that stated who we are, where our land is, and what is important to us." Catherine described how the IFA represents an agreement between two parties, demanding mutual recognition. Prior to the ratification of land claims, "we were just called Eskimos. But now it is official with the government of Canada that we are Inuvialuit." Although 'the real people' have always considered this territory their homeland, Catherine recalled her joy and disbelief on the day the agreement had been achieved: "I was so amazed on June 5, when they signed the agreement in Tuktoyaktuk. I was actually out in the bush with my mom, when we heard live on the radio that, 'Oh my god they did! They did do it!'" Inuvialuit desire to protect their livelihoods and identity was the cause that formed the social context of land claims negotiations. The effect of this social context was a new and strengthened sense of Inuvialuit identity.

With the settlement of land claims, Inuvialuit and other Inuit may be said to have entered, what Searles (2006) has called, an era of Inuit empowerment. Given these circumstances, yet another social context for identity-related discourse has arisen, namely that of Inuvialuit rights as citizens of Canada (cf. Stern 2006). This social context is exemplified especially well by the activities of the Canadian Rangers, "a sub-component of the Canadian Forces (CF) Reserve," and to whom belong Inuvialuit members in the ISR, that "provide patrols and detachments for employment on national-security and public-safety missions" (National Defense 2011). As a non-Aboriginal outsider I had always perceived the integration of Aboriginal and national identities as ambiguous due to a history of colonialism. However, conversing with a young Inuvialuit Ranger, I learned of the ease with which many young Inuvialuit men and women were able to

reconcile their pride of being Inuvialuit and Canadian at the same time. According to Catherine Cockney, protecting the Inuvialuit Way was important precisely because "it is unique, and it is part of Canadian history. We should acknowledge the Aboriginal history of Canada." The view of Inuvialuit heritage as part of a larger framework of Aboriginal history in Canada, and subsequently situating it within Canadian history at large, resonated with what I had heard among younger people. On the question of reconcilability between Inuvialuit and Canadian identities Catherine said: "I don't think there is any conflict. It is just like what Jose Kusugak came up with for the new logo of ITK. His slogan is 'First Canadians, Canadians First.' This means that we are Aboriginal people—Inuit people—but we are also Canadians." Her use of Kusugak's slogan ties Inuvialuit into the greater pan-Inuit context, while it affirms Inuvialuit rights as Canadian citizens.

4.5.4 Constructing Inuvialuit identity in similarity & difference

Stone's (1962) idea that identity comes into being only when individual *announcement* is confirmed by social others who *place* the individual in the same category is illustrated especially well in examples of perceived similarity and difference within and between groups. It is widely understood that cultural identity is based on the perpetuation of accepted understandings of difference and similarity between one's own group and those of others (cf. Burke 1969:22; Erikson 1968:50). Thomas A. Acton and Gary Mundy (1997), for instance, have illustrated the construction of identity through similarity and difference in their book *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*. In their ethnographic context, shared patterns of mobility were juxtaposed to patterns of sedentary life, generating basis for similarity and difference. The following examples rely

on Stone's (1962) emphasis on aspects of identity expressed through recognition and affirmation of cultural practices; common sensations of loss within the group; and the conscience of unique social, cultural, and environmental traits of the group.

A common way to affirm Inuvialuit identity is through engagement in, or association with, 'cultural activities.' Among other things, I observed how such activities included hunting, trapping, drum dancing, Inuit athletic games, sewing, consumption of on-the-land foods, and storytelling. Perhaps one of the most prominent markers of cultural identity among these is hunting, as a young woman in the education program at Aurora College remarked: "Everybody realizes that I am hunting. That's how my people keep their tradition alive. My husband goes out and hunts. He brings his kids out hunting. That's what my people rely on. That's probably the only tradition they have alive, that and their dancing." In this statement, the student announces her identity by affiliating herself with a traditional practice. She also points out that through her participation she is being placed into her announced identity by social others (i.e. "my people" and presumably outsiders as well) who "realize that she is hunting." Another similar way to establish identity was voiced by a student of the same program who pointed out the significance of comparison to non-Inuit groups residing in nearby territory. For her the Inuvialuit Way was established in "the way they hunt and trap. It is different from the Gwitch'in because they have different animals—Inuvialuit have Polar Bears." Invariably, the polar bear serves as a cultural symbol, setting Inuit apart from First Nations. Thus, Inuvialuit identity can also be expressed in discourse focusing on the comparison between animals harvested by each group.

While the Inuvialuit Way is seen as a set of traditions that continue into the present, an awareness of the possibility of their loss surfaces in conversations. In order to express the importance of hunting and the ancestral language as a cultural markers of Inuvialuit identity, a young Inuvialuit man rhetorically asked, "what if we lost our hunting now? What if it were gone forever? What if we were to lose our language?" The speaker assumed a hypothetical tone here, which was echoed by another young man in the room: "It is like saying, 'what if we were to lose our land or our animals?'" Hunting, language, land, and animals all have been threatened to varying degree, but because all of these markers also remain to varying degree, the questions remain hypothetical. Yet, according to Dwayne, much had changed in the Inuvialuit Way: "I see it broken down into pieces. The only time you see someone wearing traditional clothing is during a celebration or a wedding. It is just a lot simpler to buy a pair of clothes [than to make them]." Another young man bemoaned the impact of Western individualism: "I think we lost our togetherness. We always had feasts and everything together. For instance, somebody would bring home a Caribou. They would share it with whoever was at that camp. We lost that togetherness. Today it is 'everybody for themselves'" Yet, as an outsider I participated in many community feasts where food was shared, and witnessed how families shared on-the-land foods with their relatives across the region. While social identity continues to be derived from a common appreciation of the Inuvialuit Way, a collective awareness of it being under threat seems to play into contemporary Inuvialuit identity as well.

Many elements of Inuvialuit social and cultural identity are either shared by neighboring groups (e.g. hunting, resource sharing), or they are cultural adaptations to

outside influences (e.g. Scottish square dancing, or *jigging*). Simultaneously, a number of uniquely Inuit or Inuvialuit cultural features are being maintained. For the young women at Aurora College, one of these culturally unique features was the polar bear hunt, in which at least one of them had participated. Beluga hunting and food processing, together with traditional drum dancing, were also seen as original features that set Inuit apart from First Nations. One social context in which cultural juxtapositions of this kind can enter discourse is the Muskrat Jamboree in Inuvik, which takes place on the frozen Mackenzie East Channel annually in April. Here Inuvialuit, Gwitch'in, and non-Aboriginal people mingle to enjoy traditional games and on-the-land foods. To further distinguish Inuvialuit identity from other Inuit identities in the Canadian Arctic, Dwayne emphasized the role of landscape: "My thought is that we are not on the tundra. We are in the taiga, in the Delta. And we adapted to the trees, and that is what really makes us different, it makes us stick out from most other Inuit." Thus, there exist several levels at which similarity and difference finds expression across social inter- and intra-group contexts.

On a final level of differentiation, Inuvialuit identity is asserted on an intra-group level, where individuals establish dialectal differences and in-group boundaries. Thus, Inuvialuit subdivide into Siglitun-speaking Tuktoyaktukmiut, (including residents of Sachs Harbour and Paulatuk), Uummarmiutun-speaking delta residents (Aklavik and Inuvik), and Kangiryuarmiutun-speaking Ulukhaktokmiut. Although a more or less solid political allegiance between the groups has been established since the 1970s under COPE, especially elders continue to point out dialectal differences that reassert regional specificities. Especially for younger persons who voice an interest in establishing a stronger Inuvialuit identity by learning their heritage language, assertion of these regional

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differences can lead to significant demotivation. The following excerpt from Twyla, a young mother and college student, profoundly illustrates the impact of linguistic taboos[44] on language revitalization. Twyla's son had spent his first two years with his Inuvialuit grandparents, which exposed him to his heritage language, while her generation grew up in an English-only environment:

"I did [attempt to learn the language] a few years back, because they were always talking about how 'your language is dying,' and 'it's important,' and 'you need to teach your children.' And my son, all he knew was Inuvialuktun until he came home. And then he started joking and talking with my grandparents in a fun way, talking about me, and I knew they were [talking about me too]. And I'd sit there and ask myself, 'what are they saying?' He said, 'I don't know. You should know!' So with that I started taking Inuvialuktun classes at IRC. And I was really proud of myself because I was learning a little bit. And I went back to my grandparents and [began] saying sentences in the ways that I was being taught in the language class. And I got in trouble because I was learning Siglitun, and we're Uummarmiut. So because I got into so much trouble from my grandparents, 'that's not our language,' 'that's not our dialect,' I—I don't know—I just, I quit. I told them, 'at least someone is trying to teach me.' That was my throw back at them, because they weren't teaching me. I had to go to somewhere else and learn a different dialect, which is very similar to ours. But because I got in trouble for that, now I'm afraid—discouraged—to learn the language because of that.

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[44] 'Taboo' was a term used by some of my co-researchers when they referred to the strictness often encountered among their elders not to tolerate the use of words from other dialects.

Because I was told from my two year old, 'You should know what they're saying,'

and that was like a slap to my face. I want[ed] to learn the language. I tried."

While my research partners related such mixing of dialects to me as a kind of taboo,

which was not to be trespassed even by learners, it can be argued also that such intra-

group differentiation contributes to the affirmation of Inuvialuit identity.

4.5.5 Inuvialuit identity in the context of multiple social others

Symbolic interactionists stress the singular and consistent nature of personal

identity (i.e. personality) across varying social contexts, while pointing out that both

situational and social identities are fluid and multiple (Vryan et al. 2003:384). It is

commonly understood (if not uncontested) that personal identities are rooted in memory,

similarity and psychological continuity (cf. Noonan 2003:9-10; Edwards 2009:19). This

becomes evident in the following examples, which look at Inuvialuit social and cultural

identity in the contexts of coexisting local and global allegiances; overlapping regional

identities; and hierarchy between ethnic and national identities. In either case, the

singularity of personality is always juxtaposed with the multiplicity of social identities to

which any given individual subscribes.

As is evident from Inuvialuit history, the way of life in the Mackenzie Delta and

Beaufort coastal regions has always been marked by innovation. What once was the

schooner has now become the iPad. Yet, as one female college student expressed, identity

is situational and it can be derived from multiple sources simultaneously: "We can use

modern electronic devices to communicate with each other, as in fact we do to connect

with others globally. At the same time, we can still have that connection to our culture

and identity." This student explained that Inuvialuit cultural identity was derived from

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traditional activities, and that it coexisted alongside modern cultural identity that was derived from participation in a world defined by advanced technological innovations. The fact that one social identity is not overwritten by the emergence of another also becomes evident in Alecia's remark that juxtaposes geographic localities: "I think it is important to know exactly who you are and where you came from, and to hold on to that. I have lived in places in the south [where I have found that] you can take the girl out of the Delta, but you can't take the Delta out of the girl." Evidently Alecia has experienced multiple social identities across urban and rural environments. For her, switching between social contexts does not result in the loss of any one social identity she holds.

As much as individuals are able to switch back and forth between urban- and Delta-related social identities, they also seem to fluctuate between diverse regional identities. Overhearing a tantalizing statement that suggested that residents of Ulukhaktok did not feel they belonged under the Inuvialuit ethnonym, I attempted to clarify with my middle-aged female research partners, how they felt in terms of regional allegiances. Acknowledging that "Inuvialuit" may not be the best term to use, her Ulukhaktokmiut friend responded: "I am still an Inuk, though." A third person interjected, "it's just labeling. Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun—those are just labels. We are all Inuit." The reason that one of the conversation partners did not feel that people from Ulukhaktok should be identified under the term Inuvialuit likely stems from the fact that 'Inuvialuit' historically has been applied to the coastal people of the Beaufort Delta region, namely Siglit, who live primarily in the communities of Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, and Sachs Harbour. For my middle-aged research partners regional group names and names for regional language variants indicated that further social identities existed for them, underlying the collective

sense of being "Inuvialuit." Each of them held sustained allegiances to regional identities, which were not as strongly developed in younger generations born or raised after 1986 when the Inuvialuit Final Agreement was signed.

Finally, the weaving together of cultural, regional, ethnic, and national allegiances into one personal identity does not seem to occur without some differential value attribution by individuals. As mentioned previously, the act of bridging Aboriginal and national identities had always struck me as a deeply ambiguous experience. But in my conversations with young Inuvialuit men and women, I found relatively little ambiguity. The following excerpt from a conversation with a young Inuvialuit man seems to be representative of other conversations I have had: "I still consider myself to be Inuvialuit, even when I speak English, because it is my heritage culture. My grandmother came from Alaska [Inupiat] and my grandfather came from Russia. I feel like I am Inuit, even before the Canadian passport and things came in." The fact that he attributes his Inuit identity to Russian and Alaskan Aboriginal ancestry suggests a sense of regionally defined identity, as well as a sense of pan-Inuit identity. The order in which he announces ethnic and national allegiances—first Inuit, then Canadian—may be indicative of a perceived hierarchy of identities. Of course, this hierarchy may have been part of a situational identity that adapted to his perception of me as an outsider interested in Inuvialuit culture and identity. To clarify the order of his allegiance, the young man emphasized: "I am more proud to be Inuvialuit than Canadian." Personal identity is thus based on allegiance to multiple social others, whether ancestral, regional, national, or global, while situational identity can lend this tapestry hierarchical order.

Having shown Inuvialuit identity in terms of its cultural, ethnic, social, situational and personal dimensions, it is my hope that this examination will serve as a valid contribution to our understanding of the context in which Inuvialuktun language revitalization finds itself embedded. As other researchers have shown in neighboring field settings across Aboriginal North America, the relationship between language and identity remains vital, even where language shift has occurred, and where a sense of collective cultural identity is increasingly maintained through non-linguistic markers of identity. By having provided some perspectives on what are "unique Indigenous identities," to borrow McCarty's et al. (2009:302) term, I will now attempt to illustrate their symbolic link to Indigenous language. Hornberger (2006) speaks of "ideological and implementational spaces" within these highly nuanced cultural and linguistic hybridities that must be claimed for the benefit of ancestral language revitalization (in McCarty et al. 2009:302). To be able to build on such insights, we must familiarize ourselves with how identities are negotiated, and what ideologies are most prevalent.

4.6 Language ideologies: Bourdieu's perspective

Having examined some of the dynamics that play into the formation, maintenance, and transformation of Inuvialuit identity, as seen from a symbolic interactionist perspective, I now take a closer look at existing language attitudes and beliefs surrounding Inuvialuktun. As Caskey Russell (2002) showed in the context of residential schooling in the United States, religion and education were used in service of the state to systematically assimilate Native individuals. Caskey indicated how the state appropriated both systems to inculcate fear through the potential application of violence. Such violence became manifest in the separation of children from their parents as well as

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through pubic shaming as a form of punishment for conversation in the mother tongue (Russell 2002:99-100). While this type of violence is no longer applied against the use of Aboriginal languages, I apply Bourdieu's (1991) concepts of symbolic power and violence to identify the continued marginalization and stigmatization under which Inuvialuktun perpetually suffers, and which are made evident in often unconscious or tacit language attitudes held by many individuals in the Inuvialuit community itself.

Although Inuvialuktun is now officially protected under the legislation of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), there continues to exist a marked inequality between Aboriginal languages of the territory and national official languages. The language requirement for participation within the economy at territorial, national, and global tiers further reinforces an existing attribution of lower status to ancestral languages. The neglect of heritage languages at the national level (vis-à-vis English and French [45]) becomes evident in the internalization of language hierarchies within individuals based on accepted values of 'efficiency,' 'practicality' or 'good sense' in an increasingly neoliberal state. Not only does Bourdieu's (1991) perspective of symbolic power account for the mechanisms at work within this deliberate marginalization of minority languages, it also lends itself to closer examination of dynamics involved in the isolation or relegation of Inuvialuktun to specific cultural and social domains.

In the following paragraphs I apply Bourdieu's (1990; 1991; 1998) theoretical perspective to the situation of Inuvialuktun, particularly in regard to several language ideologies I was able to identify in the interview data. Among the ideologies examined here are internalization of language hierarchies, acceptance of language inequalities,

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[45] Although French is a minority language in the Northwest Territories, a large percentage of higher waged employment across the territory is offered through the federal government. Bilingualism is an asset in several of these positions.

relegation of language to an historical domain, and satisfaction with a symbolic meaning for Inuvialuktun. Finally, I also take a brief look at language attitudes toward Inuvialuktun as they were measured by the questionnaires. The aim of such a presentation of data is to show that what might look to an outsider like a free choice for or against the daily use of Inuvialuktun can in fact be identified as an outcome of larger historical and contemporary coercive processes that impose symbolic violence on the potential learner. Symbolic violence in this sense stands for the situation in which a dominated individual—in service to the oppressor—begins to judge her own behavior according to the values of the dominant population. Because I interviewed individuals who are members of a minority, data regarding internalization, acceptance, relegation, and satisfaction can be analyzed in terms of the extent to which they represent responses to demands set by the majority population.

4.6.1 Internalized language hierarchies

While speaking to Inuvialuit individuals of different ages, genders, and occupations, I noticed that there seemed to exist a commonly accepted hierarchy of languages. This hierarchy was established on the basis of how each individual assessed a language's usefulness. While each language may have its own use and importance for the individual, the most pervasive criteria for evaluation seemed to be a language's relative economic value. A young woman who was upgrading her education at the community learning center, explained: "My dad thought that in high school I would be better off studying French than Inuvialuktun. It would mean more job opportunities for me." Her father's advice to learn French instead of Inuvialuktun was based on a concern for her future financial security, which would arguably benefit from knowledge of both official

languages. Because salaried work has become an integral part of Inuvialuit society, favoring minority languages over dominant ones has become in the minds of many people economically disadvantageous. Beverly, an Inuvialuktun language instructor in training, spoke of her frustration with parents who were not interested in sending their kids to Inuvialuktun classes because these were perceived as counter productive to their children's education.

Another young woman at the learning center told me: "I love languages! I think it's good to know there are so many languages out there. The three languages I want to speak are English, French, and Inuvialuktun." The order she applied here seems indicative of the region where she lives: English is seen as indispensable to all daily affairs, French is considered highly useful for higher and nation-wide employment, and Inuvialuktun serves as a regional marker of identity. In other words, this young woman was well aware of the value of knowing multiple languages. Indeed, her emphasis was on "languages" at large, not heritage language. In fact, she listed Inuvialuktun last, indicating that it may be of high cultural value, but not of equal priority when compared to English or French in a national 'equal opportunity' environment. In Bourdieu's (e.g., 1991:192) terms, symbolic power functions in this situation because a majority of people shares a common belief in the legitimacy of the institutions that call for and uphold this linguistic and cultural hierarchy (i.e. the Canadian state). To further illustrate this point, I will now turn to an example of how Aboriginal leadership is perceived to be dependent upon the acceptance of this language hierarchy.

4.6.2 Language inequality and Aboriginal independence

Majority language and minority identity seem to exist in a kind of symbiotic relationship characterized by power differentials. One individual commented on why she thought English was so powerful throughout the region. According to her, people could see that "some of the most powerful nations" were predominantly English speaking. She also referred to these powerful nations as "big people," indicating a kind of subordinate position taken by smaller numbered peoples. Identifying an existing inequality between minority and majority peoples and their languages, she concluded that submission to this reality was inevitable: "If you're going to do business, it needs to be in English." Another individual emphasized that: "In the Aboriginal world everything is in English. Now you can't only speak one language and be an executive president of some big corporation." This argument is of uttermost importance given the fact that the relatively high degree of Inuvialuit regional independence is maintained in part through the success of Inuvialuit-owned corporations, a leader among them being the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC). Because Inuvialuit leadership and self-regulation are largely exercised through such corporations, which in turn depend on national and global economic connectedness, it is not surprising that several individuals drew a symbolic association between economic connectedness (e.g. as exemplified by year-round road access) and majority language. Both had been brought to the region from the south, and both were enabling Inuvialuit to participate in the global market economy. Consequently, the benefits of contemporary Inuvialuit independence were perceived by many to be dependent upon collective acceptance of the dominant status of English in the region.

While Bourdieu refers to individuals as being affected by symbolic power, every corporation is made up of individuals who understand that, "in order to derive personal fulfillment, external recognition, and justification of purpose from a role assigned to oneself by an accepted institutional framework, the framework itself must be embraced by all others, the '*consensus omnium*,' or else the assigned role is subject to laughter and belittlement (Bourdieu 1991:126). Thus, Inuvialuit individuals who wish to become leaders within given institutional frameworks realize that knowledge of English is a foundational expectation, if not prerequisite to success. In fact, if the very success of COPE, the organization that negotiated Inuvialuit land claims in the 1970s, was aided only in part by its members' early ability to negotiate with the government of Canada in English, then the very legitimization of Inuvialuit identity, and the permanent placement of the ISR on the map of Canada, stand in direct relation to the use of a non-Aboriginal language. In light of the political and economic stakes that were and continue to be at play for Inuvialuit, the concern over language inequality seems to recede to the background. This raises the question of what happens to a heritage language that enjoys high respect in all generations, yet is not seen as lending itself to the material and economic survival of the group[46].

4.6.3 Relegation of Inuvialuktun to the historical domain

While some lament was expressed over the current marginalization of Inuvialuktun in the ISR, such regrets did not seem to spurn a major increase in the number of individuals actively seeking to learn the language. Instead, given alternative

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[46] This question is particularly intriguing because, to this day, Inuvialuit cultural identity is largely associated with skills to thrive in a physical environment (i.e. the material world). One conclusion could be that economic rationale presides over non-economic cultural sentiments, and that the tangible business world mirrors subsistence activities traditionally conducted on the land.

markers of identity, ancestral language seemed to take the role of a beneficial supplement to Inuvialuit identity assertion at best. A young woman expressed that an Inuvialuk's ability to speak "only English" would in no way render him or her less Inuit than "any other Inuvialuk." In fact, she observed that "some people are strong in their tradition, while others are not as strong," and that the ability to speak Inuvialuktun "could be beneficial" in this strengthening process. Given present circumstances, "English could be used to communicate in the modern world," while Inuvialuktun would keep communication open with elders who are consulted for stories of the past. At least two things are made apparent in these statements, which are representative of most individuals that participated in the interviews. Firstly, most individuals do not perceive Inuvilauktun as a prerequisite for community membership. Rather, it is seen as optional. Under these circumstances a gradual disappearance of the language would seem inevitable (e.g., Nicholas 2010; Lee 2009; Crystal 2000:77). Secondly, Inuvialuktun is perceived as a marker of cultural strength, and therefore of benefit to all who would like to deepen their sense of connection to Inuvialuit heritage. In either case, however, there exists no immediate imperative that would lead to self-directed language acquisition efforts.

While the use of English as communicative tool of the present is perceived as a necessity, there exist moral grounds on which the death of the heritage language is not to be accepted: "I think Inuvialuktun is important in a more historical sense, for lack of better word. I don't know how relevant it is in advancing within a modern society—if that is your goal, and it seems to be for a lot of people—but to let the language die seems completely wrong." The idea that knowledge of Inuvialuktun was primarily 'important in

a historical sense,' while not being required to confirm ethnic or cultural belonging, was echoed in many interviews. How the lack of such knowledge separated individuals from sharing an intimate knowledge of the past is evident in that one must understand Inuvialuktun to benefit from the vast library of Inuvialuit oral accounts that were recorded among elders in the 1970s and 1980s, and which are now housed in digital format at the Inuvialuit Cultural Heritage Centre. Being relegated primarily to the domain of history, heritage language seems to be viewed by younger individuals at best as an auxiliary resource to identity.

The relegation of heritage language to an historical domain is further aided by a belief in the relative inseparability of stories from Inuvialuktun. In relation to how Inuvialuktun features in the perpetuation of the Inuvialuit Way, one individual responded: "It is our history. I think it is important to make sure that it is carried on to the next generation." Here stories that have their proper existence only in the ancestral language are equated with history itself. This makes good sense for at least two reasons: a) the very term 'Inuvialuit Way' seemed to be understood as representing primarily the ways of Inuvialuit in the past; and b) stories are a common vehicle for the transmission of the past in all oral cultures. It is not surprising then that individuals identified a potential connection between unique cultural knowledge and the ability to speak and understand Inuvialuktun: "We would learn so much more from the elders who spoke our language. We'd have so much more knowledge and so many more stories, because a lot of the stories that are passed down are converted into English. But maybe they missed something. Maybe your cultural wisdom would be stronger if you had our language." This young woman seemed to express fear that in the course of translation something of

cultural significance might be lost. Her concern may either have had to do with the poor quality of a translation by an individual who does not know the language well enough, or with the idea that there exists a degree of untranslatability between the two languages. In either case only an intimate knowledge of the language would overcome these concerns. That such an intimate knowledge of the heritage language is going to be transmitted from one generation to the next seems unlikely, given the currently accepted language hierarchy and associated beliefs in the sufficiency of Inuvialuktun as a symbolic component of cultural identity.

4.6.4 The symbolic meaning of Inuvialuktun

While conversing about the significance of various cultural markers for Inuvialuit identity in the contemporary world, one young man remarked, "Inuvialuktun should be considered important too. When I have kids I want them to learn the language. At least they should know some sentences. But I know that they are not really going to speak it fluently." Apparently this young man felt a need for intergenerational transmission of Inuvialuktun, but at the same time he already anticipated relatively poor success in regard to fluency. Instead of being upset with the factors that inhibit full language retention, he seemed to accept them. Another person believed that even if a major revitalization effort were to be undertaken by the community as a whole, such effort would serve primarily a symbolic purpose: "If a large number of people really tried hard to learn Inuvialuktun, and if they were learning more and more and began to teach their younger kids, then at least the language would stay around—even if it is not a fluent knowledge of the language, at least people would be trying, right? They would be trying to learn it and trying to teach their kids about it." Outlooks of this kind indicate that a continual attempt

at language acquisition itself exemplifies reverence for cultural heritage. The degree of fluency obtained through such attempts, however, is not prioritized at this point. Instead, an expression of appreciation and respect for the past comes to fore, and an effort to ensure that Inuvialuktun "stays around." Given the time and effort required to learn any language to a degree of fluency, a symbolic approach to heritage language is perceived as more rational.

Although equipped with a strong passion for the maintenance of her heritage language, a middle-aged Inuvialuktun teacher in training seemed to accept the fields of application given to Inuvialuktun these days: "It's okay. There is a time and place where Inuvialuktun or Inuinnaqtun can be spoken, and that is within a group of elders that are speaking their language. If you want to listen and get Inuvialuktun back, that's where you should be." This uncontested relegation of Inuvialuktun to the realm of the elders and of the past is a manifestation of the constraints put on the heritage language by society. As the following example shows, such constraints are an integral element of the current accepted order, which is also transmitted to the next generation. Bourdieu refers to this process as habitus. Habitus ensures social reproduction by governing daily practices. Accepted domains for minority language use fall under habitus. Habitus teaches individuals to desire only things within socially acceptable reach. Notwithstanding, children who are introduced to the language during the first years of their primary schooling will often develop a keen desire to learn the language, a desire that is quenched only when they are introduced to the accepted reality of language inequalities, or the boundaries of habitus. As points out Catherine, who has grandchildren of her own: "Most of them wish they knew the language and they wish their parents would try to teach them.

My grand daughter is eight and I just wish I could speak Inuvialuktun, because she wants to learn it. She really wants to learn it." She continues: "When they get to be teenagers, they realize that their parents don't speak the language and they just accept the fact that their parents or grandparents are not going to teach them. So they move on. It's not their fault; it's just that they come to understand reality." Thus, what children come to see as reality is the extent of the habitus with which they grow up.

This habitus is further exemplified by Brent, a college student who for many years participated in Inuvialuktun classes while in school: "When I was little I always thought that everybody must speak this language a little bit. But now ... I realize, that a lot of people never did, and that is weird." It is evident from this passage that even as a child Brent did not expect people to be fluent in Inuvialuktun. Quite the opposite; he had expected everyone to be familiar with at least a symbolic amount of the language. Having graduated from high school, Brent—like many of his peers—possessed a "little bit" of Inuvialuktun knowledge, allowing him to refer to it as a symbolic marker of his Inuvialuit heritage. No longer a child, Brent also realized that his childhood anticipation of one day being able to communicate with others in his heritage language was largely disappointed by the small number of people actually able to converse in it. In terms of where he stood on language revitalization as a young adult, he said: "I don't really have an interest [in the language]" with the exception, perhaps, of a few symbolic words and phrases.

4.6.5 Language attitudes toward Inuvialuktun

Having presented some of the language beliefs held by representatives of at least three generations, I now turn to a brief summary of the questionnaire findings that were conducted with 10 individuals, most of whom were young women. The questionnaires

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covered an extensive range of topics regarding language attitudes and ideologies that helped triangulate my data (i.e. informal observations – interviews - questionnaires). While the questionnaire findings confirmed my interview and observational data, they intentionally gathered data on language attitudes that the interviews did not probe for. Among such data were comparative ratings of Inuvialuktun vs. English in terms of musical, poetic, and practical values. The idea for such a comparative assessment came from Leoš Šatava (2005:68), who has conducted extensive attitudinal research in Sorbian minority language learners of eastern Germany. While the data presented here is not representative of Inuvialuit as a community, or even of the 45 research partners, the questionnaires themselves suggest a promising direction for future research. The selected results shown here are meant only to give a glimpse of the type of data more extensive research may provide.

Based on an excerpt of language attitudes by scale (Appendix IV), three out of ten individuals thought Inuvialuktun was more musical, while another three thought English was more musical, and yet another three saw them as equal. Ten out of ten persons thought that English was easier to learn than Inuvialuktun. Eight out of ten thought that Inuvialuktun was very interesting, while English was less interesting, and nine out of ten thought that Inuvialuktun was slower, or significantly slower than English. Four out of ten thought Inuvialuktun was less useful than English, while five thought it was equally useful. Nine out of ten people thought Inuvialuktun was either equally or more important than English, and at least eight out of ten individuals thought Inuvialuktun was either equally, or more friendly than English. In this small non-representative test sample[47], we

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[47] Only 10 individuals completed the questionnaire, 1 of whom was between 16-19, 2 between 40-59, and 7 between 20-39. Of the 10 individuals 9 were female and 1 was male.

can see that the sound of the language does not stand out in terms of its perceived musicality vis-à-vis English. In terms of ease or learnability, English clearly won out, indicating that all perceived Inuvialuktun as difficult. In terms of interest, Inuvialuktun won out over English, meaning that the majority was somewhat intrigued by the language. Inuvialuktun was also perceived by most as being slower than English. In terms of importance, Inuvialuktun was rated higher than English, and the majority also saw it as being more friendly than English. What could be learned from such data is that there exist a number of attitudes toward Inuvialuktun that positively set it apart from English.

4.7 Conclusion

The first part of this chapter focused on markers of Inuvialuit identity. It presented data that indicates a continuum between two extremes: individuals who conform primarily to markers of traditional Inuvialuit identity (i.e. on-the-land practices), and individuals who seek freedom in defining contemporary Inuvialuit identity, especially in light of technological advancements and participation in a globally-shaped culture. However, wherever a person might fall between these extremes, the ancient Inuvialuit Way with its land-related activities always remains a deeply respected symbolic marker of collective cultural heritage to all. While some families are still able to spend the majority of their free time at camps on the land, other families no longer have the means to do so. The increasing divergence between traditional ways of being Inuvialuit (i.e. living on the land) and modern ways of being Inuvialuit (e.g. in the board room) are indicative of a society in transition. Although many individuals share in both worlds, not all do so to the same degree. Blumer's (1969) interactionist perspective lends itself to an

analysis of the social contexts from which changing notions of identity arise. A better understanding of how social, cultural, and ethnic identities come to be is important if we wish to assess the role that language plays in each of these. A major conclusion from the findings was that contemporary Inuvialuit social identities are increasingly perceived as non-dependent on spoken ancestral language. The result of this development is that Inuvialuktun is seen primarily in relation to the past. As such, the language acquires symbolic status, and to maintain it in this capacity it is sufficient to transmit keywords and phrases to the next generation as tokens of one's heritage.

The second part of the chapter focused on several shared beliefs that were found to solidify the role of Inuvialuktun in contemporary Inuvialuit identity. Bourdieu's (1991) perspective lends itself to an examination and interpretation of commonly held language beliefs, because it identifies them as being of benefit primarily to those in power over the social actors who subscribe to them. Therefore, the beliefs of some Inuvialuit that 'it is too late to revive Inuvialuktun,' or 'it is too impractical to use Inuvialuktun in the modern world,' can be seen as beneficial not so much to Inuvialuit but to the larger nation which shares no interest in maintaining functional capacity of minority languages. At the same time, following thinkers such as Joshua Fishman (1991), acceptance of beliefs that are in line with those in power generally represents the only rational choice for individuals and groups that must ensure their economic survival in a rapidly changing world. In this light, the findings of this study point to a consensus in the majority of research partners that Inuvialuktun is unlikely to come back as a functional medium of day-to-day conversations, but that it will survive into future generation as a symbolic marker of Inuvialuit heritage and identity.

Chapter Five – Conclusion

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was twofold. Firstly, I attempted to gain a better understanding of how several Inuvialuit individuals assessed the importance of Inuvialuktun as shared marker of Inuvialuit cultural identity. In conversing with community members of various ages, I therefore often asked how they felt about their ancestral language in the context of daily life. Secondly, I sought to obtain a better understanding of existing beliefs relating to the heritage language and its role in the Inuvialuit community, because such information might aid language activists, planners, and curriculum designers in refining materials geared toward language maintenance. By building on positive sentiments already held by community members, local language activists could raise awareness, interest, and motivation in potential and current learners (cf. King 2009; Hornberger 2006; McCarty et al. 2009). In this concluding chapter I briefly discuss both research aims and provide a number of recommendations to local language planners. I conclude with a brief look to future sociolinguistic research in the ISR in light of hybridity studies.

5.1 Linguistic beliefs & Inuvialuit community

Not one of the 45 individuals I worked with had ever heard another community member comment negatively about existing efforts to keep Inuvialuktun alive. All individuals were certain that the community was in support of revitalizing Inuvialuktun, even if this did not translate into an effort to learn the language. The majority of research partners were also confident that the image of the language was positive throughout the region and beyond. One research partner noted that, while non-Aboriginal educators had

in the past condemned the use of Inuvialuktun, today's educators referred to elders who possess a fluent knowledge of their heritage language as "language specialists." Thus, previous contempt had changed to respect. Given the fact that the image of Inuvialuktun is quite positive, and that its status is officially recognized and protected within the NWT, younger generations of Inuvialuit no longer suffer from the shame that was impressed on the parent and grandparent generation through the residential schools. However, the need to use English in all business affairs with the outside world has led to internalized language hierarchies. These hierarchies rarely favor Inuvialuktun and usually list English as first priority, French as second priority, and the heritage language as a third option at the level of personal and regional identity marker lacking economic incentive. This differential value attribution to languages is based on a labor market rationale.

Furthermore, it is understood that Aboriginal independence under the current state of affairs is largely contingent on acceptance of a general Aboriginal language inequality. Aboriginal leaders must therefore speak English in order to be able to effectively negotiate the wellbeing of their own people in contemporary Canada. Consequently, Inuvialuktun is left with a marginal role. For the majority of individuals from all age groups, the heritage language is therefore relegated predominantly to an historical domain, where it is associated with a unique Inuvialuit past that is recorded in oral accounts of the elders. Hence, Inuvialuktun and continuous revitalization efforts associated with it are primarily given symbolic meaning. Community members sincerely hope that, given this symbolic weight, Inuvialuktun will endure well into the future as a strong marker of Inuvialuit identity. Given current efforts to familiarize younger generations with a basic understanding of Inuvialuit cultural heritage and language as part of the school system, a

symbolic association with Inuvialuktun will likely survive the elders who are currently the only mother tongue speakers. While the availability of language and culture instruction programs in the school system serve as a motivation to engage in language acquisition, there also exist a number of motivators within the community that are not directly tied to the offerings of the school system. It is here that I recommend more work be done in terms of highlighting how these existing motivators can be expanded.

5.2 Motivators for language acquisition

While Inuktitut still enjoys the role of primary communicative device for many individuals in Nunavut, Inuvialuktun in the ISR has largely shifted to symbolic use. A direct comparison is therefore not appropriate. However, Inuvialuit individuals do look to the larger Inuit context in relation to language, and Nunavut is usually the first object of comparison. Thus, some individuals expressed a kind of jealousy for the language abilities of many Nunavumiut while they also stressed that the ISR was economically more advanced, an advantage few were willing to give up. The belief that economic disadvantage (i.e. geographic isolation) and minority language maintenance go hand in hand seemed to be an accepted fact for most research partners. Yet, several individuals reported that when they saw a child from Nunavut speaking fluently in his or her native Inuktitut tongue on TV, they longed to see the same in the ISR. Other motivations mentioned for Inuvialuktun revitalization by individuals were that a regional identity would become visible again; that it would grant Inuvialuit an identity in the south; that it would strengthen the identity and integrity of the community by providing an inside language; that curiosity for what elders were saying would be satisfied; and that it would be easier to follow through with a sense of responsibility to pass on the language and

heritage to one's own children. All of these notions can be expanded and build upon by language planners in their design of promotional media.

Several individuals also provided constructive suggestions for what they thought was important to them if they were to learn the language. Among these suggestions was an Inuvialuktun immersion program akin to what local elementary and high schools were offering for French. To further raise the profile of Inuvialuktun among youths, and to increase awareness for and the desire to speak the language, a youth conference was suggested. A common mention of discouragement to learn the language was that there were no peers to communicate with. On the other hand, many individuals said that if peers already spoke some Inuvialuktun, then they would want to learn it too. Some also mentioned that if more options for night classes existed, they would be more likely to attend. Another observation was that having to go to the south for education inhibited continued language study, especially after high school graduation. If more post secondary education opportunities were to be offered in Inuvik, the likelihood of continued language involvement would be increased. Also, there existed the belief that if Inuvialuktun learning materials were to make better use of modern technology, perhaps learning the language would become easier. In either case, many individuals felt that having a learning partner with whom they could study the language materials together would greatly influence the level of their motivation. Following, I would like to offer a few ideas that are intended to encourage the continued efforts of community-based language planners, instructors, and activists. These ideas are based on data volunteered by my research partners during the study:

5.3 Some recommendations to language planners

1. *'Language homes' away from home:* It was repeatedly mentioned that Inuvialuktun was a marker of Inuvialuit pride and identity, especially when away from home. Yet, being away from the ISR is also one of the most challenging factors in language maintenance. Developing clubs or programs at colleges and universities most commonly attended by Inuvialuit may reduce the language loss that occurs during the transition from high school to post secondary education in the south.

2. *Maximizing coming-of-age potential:* Many young adults who are in their 20s and 30s experience a renaissance in their interest for their cultural and linguistic roots. Programs and materials specifically geared to young parents who are searching for ways to impart their cultural heritage to their young children represent an opportunity to introduce concerted language study.

3. *Facilitating learning partnerships:* A common benefit mentioned in relation to language acquisition was having a 'study buddy.' By setting up peer networks in each community (online or otherwise) that can be consulted to find like-mined individuals who can be contacted as study-partners for formal, informal, and personal Inuvialuktun study, may increase the number and success of learners.

4. *Working towards increased dialectal acceptance[48]:* It was repeatedly mentioned how individuals had abandoned their efforts of learning Inuvialuktun as a direct result of criticism they had received for using the wrong dialect in a given community. Such experiences may be reduced by propagating an image of Inuvialuit unity through diversity, especially among young people. To accomplish

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[48] In chapter four I point out the role of dialectal differentiation in elders as a marker of regional identity.

this, a greater acceptance of all three dialects across the six communities of the ISR would be necessary. This could be accomplished in part by displaying dialectal variation as a welcome indicator of regional belonging.

5. *Introducing new sources of motivation for language revitalization:* Raise language awareness in teenagers by hosting innovative language events, such as a youth language conferences with speakers from other northern minority language groups in order to facilitate a public exploration of existing motivations for language revitalization. For instance, young indigenous language activists from Fennoscandia or Russia could be invited to share their motivations for learning and maintaining their ancestral languages. Young Inuvialuit learners would thus be invited to potentially see their own heritage language in a completely new light.

6. *Exploring alternative linguistic domains:* The profile of Inuvialuktun in the eyes of teenagers and young adults could potentially benefit from an opening up of venues for language use that are not directly associated with the historical domain. By introducing language associations that connect the past with the future, language domains could be diversified and perceptions of language relevancy may be increased. An example of this is the deliberate attempt to deconstruct stereotypes that continue to exist for the use of Sami dialects[49].

5.4 Conclusion

Knowing that language is not the only means by which cultural identity is maintained in many Aboriginal contexts across North America (c.f., Kwatchka 1992, 1999; Tulloch 1999; 2004; Nicholas 2010), the question remains whether cultural identity

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[49] For a good example of new language domains refer to the work of Juha Ridanpää and Annika Pasanen (2009), summarized in the literature review.

can be sustainably reproduced when land and blood ties become increasingly problematic as well. If a large percentage of the community were not to consider Inuvialuktun essential to the maintenance of cultural identity, then the survival of the language as a viable mode of day-to-day communication would clearly be in jeopardy. Such an assessment is often referred to as "prior ideological clarification[50]" (Grenoble & Whaley 2006:171). However, language could still be used as an auxiliary marker of cultural heritage, especially if expressed through the tokenized use of common words and phrases that would grant heritage language symbolic meaning (cf. Wyman 2009:345). If access to land-related activities becomes increasingly difficult due to wage labor and stronger ties with southern culture, then the human-environment relationship is bound to assume symbolic meaning as well. Finally, if emphasis on ancestry as traced through blood ties increasingly gives way to multi-cultural heritage resultant from intermarriage, then Inuvialuit cultural identity is likely going to slide towards a stronger emphasis on ethnic identity.

In reference to Canadian Inuit at large, linguist Louis-Jacques Dorais suggests the possibly that with the increasing loss of the heritage language "more fundamental cultural identity will [...] grow weaker and weaker for want of ancestral linguistic support," as opposed to ethnic identity, which is retained by "social and political relations a native group maintains with the majority society" (2010:272). Like Fishman, Dorais points to the mere symbolic value that ancestral language begins to assume when ethnic identity starts to take the place of a deeper cultural identity. While these observed tendencies ring true for a good part also in Inuvialuit context, I would like to argue that it is *because* of

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[50] Prior ideological clarification refers to the preliminary research that is ideally conducted in communities that have undergone language shift in order to establish the extent to which a community would be in favor of planned revitalization efforts.

the perceived loss of Inuvialuktun that Inuvialuit continue to stress their relation to the land. While I cannot make any projections as to the future of Inuvialuit cultural identity, the relatively strong ties that are being maintained with the land within the community of Inuvik, and even more so in outlying communities, do suggest some stability in current hybrid identities. Whether the maintenance of Inuvialuit hybrid identities will be successful in future generations remains an open question. Further research within the field of hybrid identities should examine whether cultural hybridity in the Inuvialuit context contributes to social and cultural stability, or whether it is merely an intermediary stage in the larger assimilation to 'Canadian culture.'

Appendixes

Appendix I - Adult Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Purpose & Goals:

Alexander Oehler, a graduate student in interdisciplinary studies (Anthropology/First Nations Studies) at the University of Northern British Columbia, is conducting an interview, a focus group, and/or administering a questionnaire as part of his master's thesis research entitled *"Inuvialuit language and identity: perspectives on the symbolic meaning of Inuvialuktun in the Canadian Western Arctic."* As a research participant/co-investigator, I understand that I was chosen as a participant for this study because I am an Inuvialuit beneficiary, and I realize that Alexander Oehler will interview me based on a series of open-ended questions, a focus group, and/or a questionnaire as part of the research project.

Benefits:

The findings of this study are hoped to provide a better understanding of the role of Inuvialuktun in the lives of current and potential Inuvialuktun language learners. The gathered data is also expected to point out motivational factors encouraging or discouraging current or potential learners of Inuvialuktun. Insights gained from this study will benefit Inuvialuit community language planners and educators (IRC, ICRC, Aurora College) in the preparation of language teaching materials and Inuvialuktun promotion. As participant/co-investigator, I will also receive a $10.00 iTunes gift card upon completion of the questionnaire, and will be entered in a draw for an iPod.

Dissemination of Results:

I understand that the results of this study will be made available to the public in electronic format via a project-related website located at: *Inuvialuktun.unbc.ca*. Printed summaries of research findings will also be made available at the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre. Additionally, Alexander Oehler is planning to hold several public presentations, disseminating research results to the community of Inuvik, which will be announced on the project web site.

Data Use:

I understand that Alexander Oehler will use data collected through my participation in interview(s), questionnaire(s), and/or focus group(s) for the purpose of his Master's thesis. Alexander Oehler will record and transcribe all interviews for his use. He will also share the transcripts of interviews, along with questionnaire data, with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC), the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (ICRC), Aurora College, and the Beaufort Delta Education Council (BDEC) for their reference. Alexander Oehler will keep copies of the original sound files in a safe location for a period of up to one year past the defense of his thesis, after which time all recordings in his possession will be destroyed permanently. Alexander Oehler may use transcribed research data for academic writing and publication in academic journals, books, and conference presentations after the original voice recordings have been destroyed. As a research participant, I understand that I can choose to remain anonymous, or be credited in name in all of Alexander Oehler's future publications and in all data shared by indicating my choice below:

I choose to remain anonymous: ___	I choose to be identified by name: ___

Potential Risk: I realize that given the small research sample size, and the small size of Inuvialuit communities, perfect anonymity on a community level may not be achievable. Even if I chose to remain anonymous in all publication and/or intra-organizational data sharing, there may remain the risk of direct or indirect association between my person and the data I provided, allowing the partnering organizations, other project participants, or community members to identify me. For this reason perfect confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, which could possibly lead to the use of information in a manner potentially disadvantageous to me. I also realize that Alexander Oehler cannot take responsibility for the use of the data by IRC, ICRC, Aurora College, or BDEC.

I understand and agree that the information I have given to Alexander Oehler in our interview(s), focus groups(s), and/or questionnaire(s) of the following date(s), MONTH:_____ DAY:_____ YEAR:_____ will be treated as follows:

1. In the case that I opt to remain anonymous, this consent is given on the understanding that Alexander Oehler will use his best efforts to guarantee that my identity is protected and my confidentiality maintained, both directly and indirectly.
2. I participate in this study freely and understand that I may terminate my participation in the interview, focus group, and/or questionnaire at any point and can withdraw from the research process at any time.
3. In the case of an interview or focus group, audio and/or video recordings and/or hand written notes will be made during our discussion. I can request discontinuation of electronic means of recording at any time during our discussion, or opt against electronic means of recording all together, in which case hand-written notes will be taken.
4. All names will be removed from data before it is shared with IRC, ICRC, and Aurora College, in case I opted for anonymity.
5. During the period of data collection (May 1. - December 20., 2011) all recorded data will be stored by Alexander Oehler in a secure location in his private residence at 52 Bootlake Road.
6. I can request a transcript of my interview by contacting Alexander Oehler by phone: 867-777-3706, via postal mail: P.O.Box 2576, Inuvik, NT, X0E 0T0, or by email: oehler@unbc.ca.
7. All parties to the interview, focus group, and/or questionnaire will retain a copy of this agreement.
8. I understand that if I have any comments or concerns I can contact Dr. Bouchard at (250) 960-5643, or the Research Ethics Board at UNBC at (250) 960-6735 or by email at reb@unbc.ca.

NAME: _____   SIGNED: _____   DATE: _____

RESEARCHER: _____   SIGNED: _____   DATE: _____

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Appendix II - Consent Form for Minors

CONSENT FORM for MINORS *(parent/guardian signature required)*

Purpose & Goals:

Alexander Oehler, a graduate student in interdisciplinary studies (Anthropology/First Nations Studies) at the University of Northern British Columbia, is conducting an interview, a focus group, and/or administering a questionnaire as part of his master's thesis research entitled *"Inuvialuit language and identity: perspectives on the symbolic meaning of Inuvialuktun in the Canadian Western Arctic."* As parent or guardian of a potential research participant/co-investigator, I understand that the dependent was chosen as a participant for this study because s/he is an Inuvialuit beneficiary, and I realize that Alexander Oehler will interview him/her based on a series of open-ended questions, a focus group, and/or a questionnaire as part of the research project.

Benefits:

The findings of this study are hoped to provide a better understanding of the role of Inuvialuktun in the lives of current and potential Inuvialuktun language learners. The gathered data is also expected to point out motivational factors encouraging or discouraging current or potential learners of Inuvialuktun. Insights gained from this study will benefit Inuvialuit community language planners and educators (IRC, ICRC, Aurora College) in the preparation of language teaching materials and Inuvialuktun promotion. As participant/co-investigator, the minor will receive a $15.00 iTunes gift card upon completion of the questionnaire, and will be entered in a draw for an iPod.

Dissemination of Results:

I understand that the results of this study will be made available to the public in electronic format via a project-related website located at: *Inuvialuktun.unbc.ca*. Printed summaries of research findings will also be made available at the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre. Additionally, Alexander Oehler is planning to hold several public presentations, disseminating research results to the community of Inuvik, which will be announced on the project web site.

Data Use:

I understand that Alexander Oehler will use data collected through my participation in interview(s), questionnaire(s), and/or I understand that Alexander Oehler will use data collected through my participation in interview(s), questionnaire(s), and/or focus group(s) for the purpose of his Master's thesis. Alexander Oehler will record and transcribe all interviews for his use. He will also share the transcripts of interviews, along with questionnaire data, with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC), the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre (ICRC), Aurora College, and the Beaufort Delta Education Council (BDEC) for their reference. Alexander Oehler will keep copies of the original sound files in a safe location for a period of up to one year past the defense of his thesis, after which time all recordings in his possession will be destroyed permanently. Voice files will be transcribed either by Mr. Oehler, or by his research assistant Dwayne Drescher, who has signed a confidentiality agreement and will assist in data collection. Alexander Oehler may use transcribed research data for academic writing and publication in academic journals, books, and conference presentations after the original voice recordings have been destroyed. As a research participant, I understand that I can choose to remain anonymous, or be credited in name in all of Alexander Oehler's future publications and in all data shared, by indicating my choice below:

I choose for the participant to remain anonymous: ___	I choose for the participant to be identified by name: ___

Potential Risk: I realize that given the small research sample size, and the small size of Inuvialuit communities, perfect anonymity on a community level may not be achievable. Even if I chose for the minor in my care to remain anonymous in all publication and/or intra-organizational data sharing, there may remain the risk of direct or indirect association between the minor's person and the data s/he provided, allowing the partnering organizations, other project participants, or community members to identify her/him. For this reason perfect confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, which could possibly lead to the use of information in a manner potentially disadvantageous to the minor. I also realize that Alexander Oehler cannot take responsibility for the use of data by IRC, ICRC, Aurora College, or BDEC.

I understand and agree that information provided by the minor of my care to Alexander Oehler in their interview(s), focus groups(s), and/or questionnaire(s) of the following date(s), MONTH:_____ DAY:_____ YEAR:_____ will be treated as follows:

1. In the case that I opt for the minor of my care to remain anonymous, this consent is given on the understanding that Alexander Oehler will use his best efforts to guarantee that my dependent's identity is protected and her/his confidentiality maintained, both directly and indirectly.
2. The minor of my care participates in this study freely, and I, the guardian, understand that my dependent may terminate participation in the interview, focus group, and/or questionnaire at any point and can withdraw from the research process at any time.
3. In the case of an interview or focus group, audio and/or video recordings and/or hand written notes will be made during the discussion. My dependent can request discontinuation of electronic means of recording at any time during the discussion, or opt against electronic means of recording all together, in which case hand-written notes will be taken.
4. All names will be removed from data before it is shared with IRC, ICRC, and Aurora College, in case I opted for my dependent's anonymity.
5. During the period of data collection (June 1 - December 20, 2011) all recorded data will be stored by Alexander Oehler in a secure location in his private residence at 52 Bootlake Road.
6. I can request a transcript and/or sound file of my dependent's interview by contacting Alexander Oehler by phone: 867-777-3706, via postal mail: P.O.Box 2576, Inuvik, NT, X0E 0T0, or by email: oehler@unbc.ca.
7. All parties to the interview, focus group, and/or questionnaire will retain a copy of this agreement.
8. I understand that if I have any comments or concerns I can contact Dr. Bouchard at (250) 960-5643, or the Research Ethics Board at UNBC at (250) 960-6735 or by email at reb@unbc.ca.

NAME OF MINOR: _____

NAME OF UNDERSIGNED PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

SIGNED: _____   DATE: _____

RESEARCHER: _____   SIGNED: _____   DATE: _____

Appendix III – Interview Guide

Inuvialuktun Study – Interview Guide 1.1

1. How would you describe the Inuvialuit way?

2. What are your thoughts on protecting a unique identity?

3. Why is (or isn't) language important in keeping the Inuvialuit culture alive?

4. Has the increase of English changed Inuvialuit culture? (How so, or why not?)

5. Are Inuit from Nunavut who speak Inuktitut 'more' Inuit than Inuvialuit who speak only English? Why or why not?

6. What would change in today's culture, if every Inuk spoke Inuvialuktun?

7. How would people feel about themselves if they knew the language?

8. How has learning your language changed the way you feel as an Inuk? (Has it?)

9. How do you feel about the changes of the past 60 years?

10. What are your thoughts on national languages?

11. Today English is the language used by most Inuvialuit. Is this a good development? (Why, or why not?)

12. Some people may not be in support of Inuvialuktun. What kind of opinions have you heard?

13. Do people look up to Inuvialuktun as a language, or do they look down on it? (Inuvialuit & southerners)

14. Has your ancestors' experience in the residential schools influenced your relationship with Inuvialuktun?

15. What motivates you to learn or teach Inuvialuktun?

16. How do you feel about Inuvialuktun as a language of the future?

17. Can language study heal us?

18. What are your thoughts on the generational gap?

19. Do young Inuvialuit have an interest in speaking Inuvialuktun? Why, or why not?

20. Has your own attitude towards Inuvialuktun changed over the years?

Appendix IV - General Questionnaire

A) The following 7 questions are concerned with language exposure. Please answer either yes, or no:

1	I am currently enrolled in Inuvialuktun language lessons	Yes / No
2	I have taken Inuvialuktun language lessons in the past	Yes / No
3	I have learned (some) Inuvialuktun in an informal setting (i.e. outside of school)	Yes / No
4	Some of my relatives use Inuvialuktun in the home	Yes / No
5	I am exposed to Inuvialuktun on a daily basis	Yes / No
6	I know several people who are fluent in Inuvialuktun	Yes / No
7	I speak/understand other languages besides English and Inuvialuktun.	Yes / No

B) Please carefully consider the following characteristics in relation to Inuvialuktun. After each characteristic, select the answer that is closest to your opinion. Would you say you agree a lot, agree a little, are neutral, disagree a little, or disagree a lot? Then do the same for English: (1 = Agree a lot, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree a little, 5 = Disagree a lot)

Inuvialuktun is:

	1	2	3	4	5
Musical					
Poetic					
Beautiful					
Funny					
Easy					
Interesting					
Colorful					
Popular					
Modern					
Quick					
Useful					
Important					
Scientific					
Alive					
Strong					
Rich					
Friendly					
Warm					
Natural					
Close					

English is:

	1	2	3	4	5
Musical					
Poetic					
Beautiful					
Funny					
Easy					
Interesting					
Colorful					
Popular					
Modern					
Quick					
Useful					
Important					
Scientific					
Alive					
Strong					
Rich					
Friendly					
Warm					
Natural					
Close					

C) How would you rate your musical preferences if Inuvialuktun lyrics were available for the following genres? Please indicate your preference on a scale of 1 to 5. (1 = Like a lot, 2 = Like, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Like a little, 5 = Do not like)

1	Traditional Inuvialuit song	1 2 3 4 5
2	Pop	1 2 3 4 5
3	R&B/Soul	1 2 3 4 5
4	Rock	1 2 3 4 5
5	Hip-Hop/Rap	1 2 3 4 5
6	Folk	1 2 3 4 5
7	Country	1 2 3 4 5
8	Metal	1 2 3 4 5
9	Singer/Songwriter	1 2 3 4 5
10	Electronic/Dance	1 2 3 4 5

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D) Please carefully think about the following statements. After each statement, select the answer that is closest to your opinion. Would you say you agree a lot with the statement, agree a little, are neutral, disagree a little, or disagree a lot? (1 = Agree a lot, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree a little, 5 = Disagree a lot)

1	I like to hear inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
2	Inuvialuktun is central to our culture	1 2 3 4 5
3	It is too late to revive inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
4	English works fine as the only language in the ISR	1 2 3 4 5
5	It is difficult to learn inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
6	Public administration should use inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
7	Knowing inuvialuktun gives you a better chance in finding a job	1 2 3 4 5
8	I would like to spend part of my free time learning inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
9	Inuvialuktun should become a commonly used second language in the ISR	1 2 3 4 5
10	I have a responsibility toward my ancestors to learn inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
11	Schools should teach more practical subjects than inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
12	To maintain inuvialuktun means to look backward more than forward	1 2 3 4 5
13	In the ISR inuvialuktun should be the primary language	1 2 3 4 5
14	Everyone should decide for her/himself whether to learn inuvialuktun or not	1 2 3 4 5
15	Southerners should learn inuvialuktun if they want to work here	1 2 3 4 5
16	In future generations inuvialuktun will become stronger in the ISR	1 2 3 4 5
17	To be a good inuvialuk, I should understand and speak inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
18	Euro-Canadians look up to inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
19	Inuvialuktun should be a mandatory subject in our schools	1 2 3 4 5
20	There should be more radio and TV programming available in inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
21	On-the-land is the best place to learn and speak inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
22	Inuvialuktun can be used to express modern life	1 2 3 4 5
23	Gwitch'in have high respect for inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
24	Inuvialuktun can only express the life ways of our ancestors	1 2 3 4 5
25	Revitalizing inuvialuktun is an urgent concern for inuvialuit leaders	1 2 3 4 5
26	There are inuvialuit cultural concepts that can only be expressed in inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
27	In town is a good place to learn and speak inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
28	Inuvialuktun is deeply connected to a traditional life style	1 2 3 4 5
29	Stories of our elders are just as beautiful when they are told in English	1 2 3 4 5
30	English and inuvialuktun are equally capable languages	1 2 3 4 5
31	Inuvialuktun is a very important element of inuvialuit identity	1 2 3 4 5
32	Inuvialuktun has a good image in the ISR	1 2 3 4 5
33	Inuvialuit identity is defined by a particular life style	1 2 3 4 5
34	Learning and speaking inuvialuktun distances me from mainstream culture	1 2 3 4 5
35	Each inuvialuktun variant (dialect) must be kept alive in its own right	1 2 3 4 5
36	It makes practical sense to revive inuvialuktun now	1 2 3 4 5
37	Knowing English has always been economically beneficial for our people	1 2 3 4 5
38	It is necessary to have many speakers of a language to keep it alive	1 2 3 4 5
39	It would make sense to bring inuvialuktun closer to Eastern Arctic Inuktitut	1 2 3 4 5
40	Our economy would benefit if learning inuvialuktun were required for employment	1 2 3 4 5
41	For a successful revitalization, inuvialuktun must become more standardized	1 2 3 4 5
42	Serious inuvialuktun learners belong to a special 'in-group'	1 2 3 4 5
43	I feel myself to be an inuvialuk	1 2 3 4 5
44	Traditional objects should keep their inuvialuktun names	1 2 3 4 5
45	To be an inuvialuk, it is important to live in the ISR	1 2 3 4 5
46	It is important that traditional foods keep their inuvialuktun names	1 2 3 4 5
47	Peers look up to those who have more knowledge of inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
48	I feel myself to be a Canadian, regardless of citizenship	1 2 3 4 5
49	I am more respected by my community if I know some inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
50	My peers and I can be competitive over who knows the most inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

51	To have a life partner of the same ancestral/cultural background is important	1 2 3 4 5
52	It is sufficient for modern inuvialuit identity to know a few words in inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
53	It is important to have a given name inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
54	It is important to know that we have three distinct language variants	1 2 3 4 5
55	To be a true inuvialuk, it is important to speak and understand inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
56	Our language may have changed, but our cultural values remain the same	1 2 3 4 5
57	You should know which language variety (dialect) your ancestors belonged to	1 2 3 4 5
58	All three inuvialuktun varieties (dialects) are equally important	1 2 3 4 5
59	I identify closely with the language group and variety of my ancestors	1 2 3 4 5
60	I would like to give my children inuvialuktun names	1 2 3 4 5

E) In your opinion, which of the following languages, spoken in the north, is the most prestigious?

___ Kalaalisut (Greenland)
___ Inupiaq (Alaska)
___ Inuktitut (Nunavut)
___ Sami (Scandinavia/Russia)
___ Icelandic (Iceland)
___ No opinion

E1) If you chose a language, what do you associate with that language? Provide some keywords:

F) In your opinion, which of the following Inuvialuit varieties (or dialects) is the most prestigious?

___ Siglitun (Tuktoyaktuk, Sachs Harbour, Paulatuk)
___ Uummarmiutun (Aklavik/Inuvik)
___ Kangiryuarmiutun (Ulukhaktok)
___ No opinion

F1) If you chose a variant (or dialect) what do you associate with it? Provide some keywords:

G) What *three* genres would you best like to listen to in Inuvialuktun?

___ Traditinal inuvialuktun songs
___ Hip-Hop/Rap
___ Metal
___ Pop
___ Rock
___ Folk
___ Electronic/Dance
___ Country
___ R&B/Soul
___ Singer/Songwriter

END OF GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE
Thank you for your participation and don't forget your iTunes Card!

Appendix V - Questionnaire for Current Learners

Inuvialuktun Questionnaire – Current Learner Supplement   1

H) The following questions are intended for individuals who are currently participating in Inuvialuktun language lessons. Please carefully think about the following statements. After each statement, select the answer that is closest to your opinion. Would you say you agree a lot with the statement, agree a little, are neutral, disagree a little, or disagree a lot? (1 = Agree a lot, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree a little, 5 = Disagree a lot)

1	I joined Inuvialuktun classes because I heard good things about the instructor	1 2 3 4 5
2	My grandparents would like me to speak Inuvialuktun with them	1 2 3 4 5
3	I study Inuvialuktun because I enjoy the intellectual challenge	1 2 3 4 5
4	My grandparents expect me to make an effort to learn Inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
5	Knowledge of Inuvialuktun increases my sense of belonging to the community	1 2 3 4 5
6	As I am learning Inuvialuktun, I am becoming a stronger Inuvialuk	1 2 3 4 5
7	Since I have begun to learn Inuvialuktun, my view of the language has changed	1 2 3 4 5
8	Taking Inuvialuktun classes increases the value of my education	1 2 3 4 5
9	I am learning Inuvialuktun because it will help me learn other languages	1 2 3 4 5
10	I want to use Inuvialuktun to communicate with friends	1 2 3 4 5
11	Studying Inuvialuktun is my personal choice	1 2 3 4 5
12	Learning Inuvialuktun helps me form a personal identity	1 2 3 4 5
13	I am preparing for the future by studying Inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
14	I am somewhat fearful of speaking Inuvialuktun in public	1 2 3 4 5
15	I want to please my relatives by learning Inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
16	My parents encouraged me to attend Inuvialuktun classes	1 2 3 4 5
17	I like to use Inuvialuktun as a secret language	1 2 3 4 5
18	For me, studying Inuvialuktun is a way to show that I am proud of my heritage	1 2 3 4 5
19	I would rather learn Inuvialuktun than a foreign language	1 2 3 4 5
20	I fear that elders might criticize my Inuvialuktun when they hear it	1 2 3 4 5
21	I have always wanted to know what the elders are talking about in Inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
22	Feasts and gatherings are good opportunities to practice Inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
23	I would feel pride if my peers overheard me speaking in Inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
24	Some of my peers hold Inuvialuktun in low esteem	1 2 3 4 5
25	I get a feeling of happiness from studying Inuvialuktun	1 2 3 4 5
26	It feels awkward to speak Inuvialuktun in a place where the majority speak English	1 2 3 4 5
27	I am too shy to speak Inuvialuktun when fluent Inuvialuktun speakers are around	1 2 3 4 5
28	Inuvialuktun connects me to the land	1 2 3 4 5
29	I often use Inuvialuktun outside of class with peers who also attend class	1 2 3 4 5
30	Some of my peers ridicule me for attending Inuvialuktun classes	1 2 3 4 5
31	Sometimes I blame myself for not making use of public practicing opportunities	1 2 3 4 5

I) In the following list, select the *three* best reasons for studying Inuvialuktun in your opinion:

____ it improves the value of my education
____ it prepares me for the future language situation in the ISR
____ it is a welcome intellectual challenge
____ it enables me to learn other languages more easily
____ it strengthens my Inuvialuit identity
____ it allows me to participate in fun activities (travel, camps, etc.)

J) For me, *three* of the best Inuvialuktun language learning resources would be:

____ More books and magazines
____ Computer games
____ On-the-land trips and activities
____ On-line interactive tutorial
____ Self-made YouTube videos
____ Audio books
____ Radio programming with a young person an hour before bingo

Thank you for your participation and don't forget your iTunes Card!

Appendix X - NWT Research License

2011
Northwest Territories Scientific Research Licence

Issued by:	Aurora Research Institute – Aurora College Inuvik, Northwest Territories
Issued to:	Mr. Alexander C. Oehler University of Northern British Columbia P.O.Box 2576 / 52 Bootlake Rd. Inuvik, NT X0E 0T0 Canada Phone: (867) 777-3706 Fax: (250) 960-5545 Email: oehler@unbc.ca
Affiliation:	University of Northern British Columbia
Funding:	University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) Postgraduate Research Awards Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) via UNBC
Team Members:	
Title:	**Inuvialuit language and identity: perspectives on the symbolic meaning of Inuvialuktun in the Canadian Western Arctic**
Objectives:	To better understand the role of Inuvialuktun (and its revitalization efforts) in the construction of Inuvialuit cultural identity.
Dates of data collection:	August 4, 2011 to December 20, 2011
Location:	Inuvik

Licence No.14956 expires on December 31, 2011
Issued in the Town of Inuvik on August 03, 2011

* original signed *

Pippa Seccombe-Hett,
Director, Aurora Research Institute

Table 1 - List of Co-researchers

Research Partner Demographic – Interview/Questionnaire Breakdown

	INTERVIEWS	QUESTIONNAIRES
6-15 (Z)	4	0
16-19 (A)	4	1
20-39 (B)	23	7
40-59 (C)	9	2
Current learners (CL)	12	2
Potential learners (PL)	26	7
Language specialists (LS)	2	1
Female (F)	25	9
Male (M)	15	1
Aurora College (AC)	24	3
Learning center (LC)	2	7
Samuel Hearne (SH)	4	0
Community (X)	9	0
Total	20 (+4)* (+2)* (+2)* (+12)*	5 (+5)

*There were 4 group interviews: a) 4-B(PL)M(X); b) 11-B+1-A(PL)F(AC); c) 2-Z(CL)M/F(SH); d) 2-A/B(PL)M(X). Total co-researchers: 45.

Abbreviations:

ILAI = Inuvialuit Language & Identity **Z** = 6-15 / **A** = 16-19 / **B** = 20-39 / **C** = 40-59 / **(CL)** = current learner / **(PL)** = potential learner **(LS)** = language specialist / **NAME** / **F/M** = sex / **(AC)** = Aurora College Campus / **(LC)** = Learning Centre / **(SH)** = Samuel Hearne Secondary School / **(X)** = other

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