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Critical Inuit Studies

An Anthology of Contemporary
Arctic Ethnography

Edited by
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and
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2006

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS
LINCOLN AND LONDON

bers, including fieldworkers Eva Adams, Leappi Akoomalik, Kristianne Allan, Emeelayou Arnaguk, Simona Arnatsiaq, Ronald Dyck, Christopher Fletcher, Laurence Kirmayer, Henri Migala, Bruce Minore, John O'Neil, and David Wallace; Inuit steering committee members Eva Adams, Louise Akearok, Simona Arnatsiaq, Rosemary Cooper, Qajiaq Ellsworth, Rosi Ellsworth, Geela Giroux, Okee Kunuk, Sheila Levy, Annie Nataq, and Udlu Pishuktie; and the benevolent participation of Inuit in the communities of Qikiqarjuaq and Igloodik. The Unikkaartuit report was dedicated to the memory of steering committee members Eva Adams and Geela Giroux. M. Kral is grateful for support that went toward the writing of this chapter from the Canadian Bicentennial Professorship endowment of the Yale Center for International and Area Studies, the Yale Department of Anthropology, a SSHRC doctoral fellowship, and the Canadian Polar Commission.

Note

The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the authors and not of the government of Nunavut or any of its departments. An electronic copy of the Unikkaartuit Health Canada report is available as a free download from the National Inuit Youth Council (www.niyc.ca).

FOUR

Time, Space, and Memory

Murielle Nagy

*When the raven became aware of himself,
light came into the world,
and grass tussocks turned into men.*

Creation. Anonymous Eastern Inuit

Anthropologists working in the Arctic do not always have the time and opportunity before undertaking fieldwork to learn the language(s) of the people with whom they will work. Hence they need to hire local research assistants who will act as interpreters during the interviews. Since oral narratives are often the major sources of information with which anthropologists will work, the recorded interviews need to be transcribed and translated. However, translations are not perfect duplicates of the original narratives; they are only equivalents (e.g., Hannoun 2002; Tihanyi 2002). Although translators do their best to transfer into another language what the narrators have said, there are times when the original meaning of words and expressions is distorted, if not lost, during the translation process. Furthermore, once anthropologists interpret translated narratives, there is another level of translation going on, and if the translations do not represent the intention of the narrator, elements of the narratives may be misinterpreted.

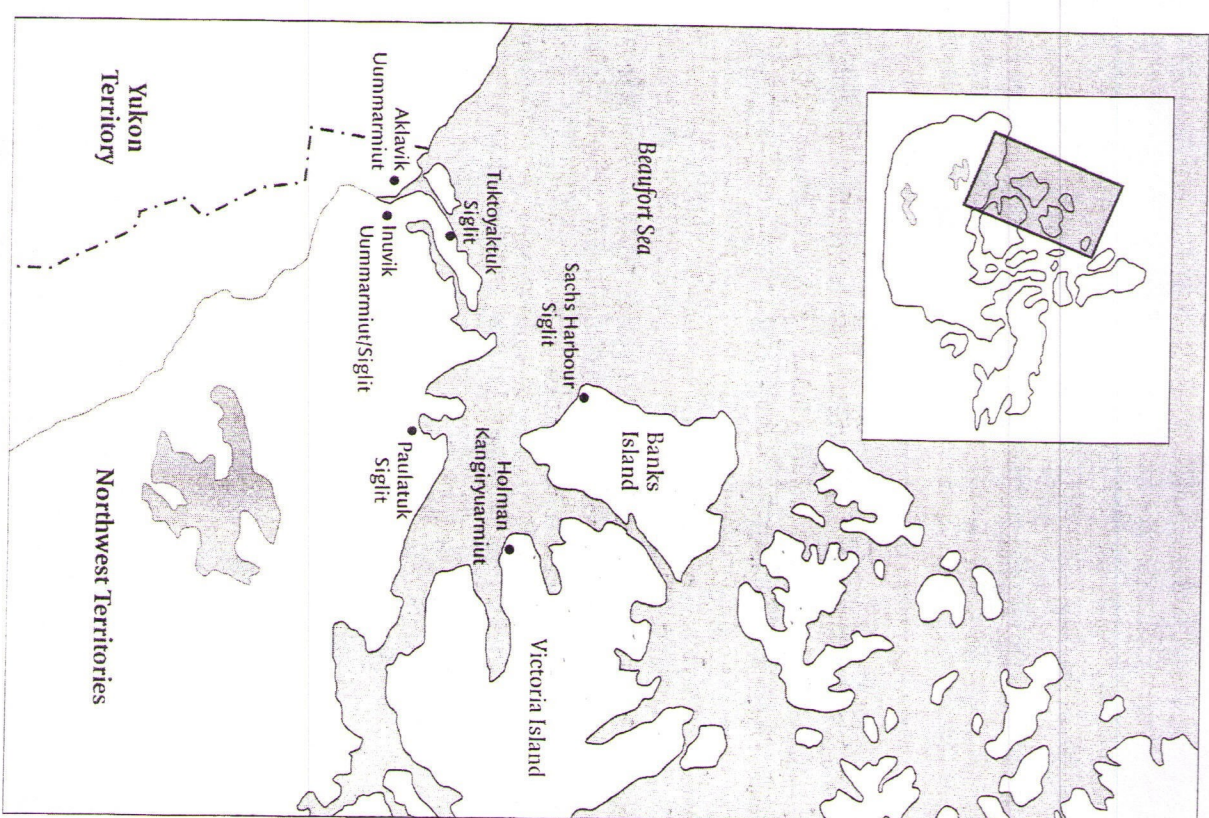
Yet when the researcher realizes that translations of specific words from the original are somewhat peculiar and the words are given in a variety of different ways by the translators, the translations themselves can become a source of information. Indeed one then wonders why the translator chose to translate the words in that way. Was it to get the closest equivalent in the language of the translation and thus make the translation more fluid? But

more important, were words changed because the translator could not find similar concepts in the language of the translation? The answers to such questions can help us to understand better the language and the culture of the narrator. This chapter deals with the theoretical and methodological implications of undertaking anthropological research through translation. More specifically I discuss how Inuvialuit talk about events in the past and how translators choose to translate their words. I became interested in the representations of time, space, and memory in narratives while editing English translations of archival tapes and interviews done with Inuvialuit elders during oral history projects (see Nagy 1994, 1999).¹

Context of Research

The Inuvialuit make up the Inuit population living in the Northwest Territories of Canada. The traditional territory of the indigenous Inuvialuit extended approximately from Barter Island in the west to Cape Lyon in the east. Before contacts with whalers, traders, and missionaries at the end of the nineteenth century, their population is estimated to have been two thousand (Franklin 1971 [1828]: 86–228; Pettit 1876: x). The Inuvialuit were thus one of the largest Inuit populations in the Arctic before drastic decimation due to epidemics in the first two decades of the twentieth century (McGhee 1974: xi; D. G. Smith 1984: 349). By that time trapping had become the major economic activity and it was to flourish until the 1970s. In the land-claim agreement of 1984, the Inuitinait of Holman (on Victoria Island) became part of the Inuvialuit. Today, the Inuvialuit number about five thousand (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2002).

The Inuvialuit belong to three distinct linguistic groups. They are the Uummarmiut, who live in the Mackenzie Delta in the communities of Akla-vik and Inuvik; the Siglit, who live in the coastal communities of Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, and Sachs Harbour on Banks Island; and the Kangiryarmiut, who live in the community of Holman on Victoria Island (see map 4.1). The dialects of each linguistic group (which are named by adding the suffix -tut to the ethnonym) are mainly spoken by elders over sixty years old.² Uummarmiut means “people of the evergreens and willows.” They are the descendants of people from Alaska who moved to the Mackenzie Delta at the end of the nineteenth century, again in the 1920s as muskrat trapping developed in the Mackenzie Delta, and finally in the mid-1930s and 1940s as stores closed down near the Alaska/Yukon border (see Nagy 1994). Linguistic evidence indicates that the majority of these people came from the



4.1. The three linguistic groups of the Inuvialuit (after Lowe 1985a).

Anaktuvuk Pass area (Lowe 1984a: xv). *Kangijuaumiut* means "people of the large bay," which is Prince Albert Sound on Victoria Island. Culturally they are closer to the Inuinait of Kugluktuk (Coppermine) and Ikaluktuaiak (Cambridge Bay) (e.g., Collignon 1996; Condon 1996). Hence the dialect they speak has strong ties with the Inuinagut spoken in Kugluktuk and in other Central Arctic communities (Dorais 1990: 194). During our interviews in Holman, people referred to their language as Inuinagut, and this is the term used in this chapter.

Until the 1980s when the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE) initiated a study of the Inuvialuit dialects, the Sigit people and their language were thought by most scholars to have been extinguished at the beginning of the twentieth century following a series of epidemics (e.g., Jenness 1928: 3; McGhee 1974: 5; Morrison 1988: 4; D. G. Smith 1984: 356). Our interviews certainly demonstrate that the Sigit people are very much alive and that elders are still speaking their language. There is, however, a debate as to the origin and the meaning of the word *Sigit* or its plural form *Sigitit*. The term appears in Émile Petitot's *Les Grands Esquimaux* (Petitot 1887) and in his French/Eskimo dictionary of what he called the "Tchiglit" dialect (Petitot 1876). D. G. Smith (1984: 357) writes that the term refers to paired labrets worn by males, but he does not mention his source. Some Inuvialuit elders suggested to linguist Ronald Lowe (1984b: viii) that it might come from an Indian word to designate them, but Athabaskan linguists consulted by Lowe were unable to find a possible source for the word. However, most speakers of Sigitut agree that the term *Sigit* is used by other people to refer to them (Nagy 1994: 2). The word Inuvialuit is used by speakers of the Sigit dialect to refer to themselves wherever they live. The suffix *-vialuk* (plural form *-vialuit*, as in Inuvialuit) is indeed unique to the Sigit dialect. However, for the last thirty years, through the political process of land claims, the term has been used to refer to all Western Arctic Inuit residing in the Inuvialuit territory. As a final note, the term Inuvialuktun refers to all three of the Inuvialuit dialects, as to say "the language of the Inuvialuit."

Initial Observations on the English Translations

Since the narratives I edited and analyzed came from projects aimed at collecting oral histories about the Yukon north slope and Banks Island, most of the interviews were about life experiences in these regions. The people interviewed spoke about where they used to live and what kind of activities took place there. There were some obvious differences in the ways men and

women recalled specific events and details. The men interviewed focused mainly on subsistence activities and did not incorporate their stories into a chronological framework. Hence they could easily recall the number of animals they hunted and trapped, but they rarely mentioned during which years an event took place. In contrast, women were well aware of when events happened and often set their stories about specific places in relation to which of their children was born there. For example, Persis Gruben mentioned that "the first time we went to De Salis Bay, that year Sarah was born" (Aulavik-71A: 8 in Nagy 1999a). This way of using what has been called "family memory" has been noted by researchers interviewing women, particularly housewives (Baillargeon 1993: 62). In the case of the Inuvialuit women we interviewed, the birth of their children was used not only to give a temporal dimension to their stories but also to remember specific camps where people had lived.

One issue that particularly interested me in the English translations I worked with was the pervasive use of the present tense. Although these dialects all have a "present declarative" form that can be used in some contexts to refer to an event that is past (Lowe 1985a: 144), the English translators often chose to use the present tense in English. Why? It is possible that this is a reflection of the colloquial English spoken by the translators. However, it seems more likely that once the speaker makes it clear that he or she is going to talk about past events—by saying, for example, "when I was young" or "at that time"—then there is no need to emphasize that the story is happening in the past; hence the use of narrative present (see Lowe 1985c: 112). As remarked by Charles (2000: 38) about the Yup'ik language, "the narrative takes the listener . . . to the past and the past becomes present."

The use of the narrative present also indicates that telling a story means to reenact particular experiences and to perform it (e.g., Hymes 1981). Traditional narratives in Inuinagut like those collected by Métrayer (1973) also show this lack of use of past tense, at least in their French translations.

However, there is another facet of Inuit worldview that helps to explain the pervasive use of the present tense. When narrators of both genders talked about the past, they did not seem to go back into time but rather into the places where events happened, and as previously mentioned, once they mentioned a specific place, Inuvialuit women would then add information about chronology through information related to the birth or the age of their children. The use of numerous locative suffixes (which were largely lost in the English translations) demonstrates how important space is in Inuvialuktun. Thus a "when" question was sometimes answered by

location rather than a time period. This linguistic merging of space and time was also mentioned by Mark Nuttall in his work with Greenlanders: "What is noticeable about the stories people told me about these areas . . . is how space and time become synchronized" (Nuttall 2001: 63).

This ethnographic observation is borne out linguistically. Although Uumarmiutun has a past declarative form, Siglitun and Inuinnaqtun do not have a past declarative form but do have suffixes and localizers (e.g., *taimari*, "at that time") to indicate past events. The prefix *ta-* is also used in other localizers and indicates a distance not only in space but also in time, as linguist Ronald Lowe explains: "In the particular case of the prefix *ta-*, the Eskimo language groups under the same sign, under the same representation in tongue, two sets of particular impressions: those related to space and those related to time. The two categories of space and time appear here indeterminate in tongue: they both belong to the general impression of distance" (Lowe 1985b: 220).

Lowe's observation certainly relates to my experience of asking a "when" question and getting a "where" answer. It should also be noted that in the three Inuvialuit dialects, the suffix *-vik* means both "a place or a time for X-ing" (Lowe 1983: 170, 1984a: 192, 2001: 360). Since here space and time are fused, only the context can tell which one is invoked.

Among the Inuvialuit, as in Inuit culture in general, narratives about places are numerous and history is intimately linked to toponymy. Place names themselves are part of what Nuttall (1992) has called memoryscape and are used as mnemonic devices (e.g., "the place where X happened"). As Béatrice Collignon (1996) demonstrated, toponyms are essential not for traveling or survival but to the integration of humans in their milieu, which then becomes humanized and allows cultures to flourish. Place names are used mainly as anchor points of history (Collignon 1996: 116). The traveler who knows the toponyms of an area will use them not to get oriented but to be connected to the land in a familiar way (117). This intimate link to the land and its temporal connotations was expressed beautifully by Mark Emerak: "I should send (that story) somewhere to the land where I first got my memory" (Aulavik-76B:1 in Nagy 1999b).

During our interviews with Inuvialuit who had lived on Banks Island, we were able to collect only a few toponyms, yet people interviewed had a definite knowledge of particular areas since they were able to show us on a map where they hunted and trapped. The majority of toponyms were those of camps, hence social places where families had lived. Although one might think that the people we interviewed simply did not have a good knowledge

or memory of toponyms, this does not seem to be the proper explanation. A case in point is that of Edith Haogak, who was born in the 1930s and raised in the Kangiryuak (Prince Albert Sound) region on the western part of Victoria Island but who also traveled to Banks Island with her parents to hunt. In the late 1950s she moved to Sachs Harbour on Banks Island. Hence she had been living on Banks Island for almost forty years when we interviewed her. Having been a widow early in her adult life, she had to support her family by hunting and trapping on the island. Although she was one of the few people who knew most of the Inuinnaqtun toponyms for the east coast of Banks Island (the west and south coasts having mainly Siglitun and English names), these amounted to less than ten. Yet she had an extensive knowledge of more than 120 toponyms from the west coast of Victoria Island where she was raised. Hence Collignon's idea that toponyms are mainly landmarks of history rather than travel and survival aids seem to be well supported here. Indeed, as Cruikshank (1990: 354) remarked, toponyms do much more than identify places; they allow people to point in space to talk about time—they provide an entry to the past.

First Childhood Memories

An exception to the use of the narrative present is when narrators talk about their first childhood memories. Here past forms were used in the English translations of these narratives. While editing the English translations of interviews done during the Aulavik Oral History Project, I started to collect excerpts related to first childhood memories as I was intrigued by the manner in which these were expressed. Indeed Inuvialuit elders often started to tell about their lives by using words that can be translated in English by "when I became aware," "I came to my senses when," or "when I first started remembering" (see table 4.1, examples 1, 2, and 7), as if before that time, the child—who the narrator then was—could not remember anything since his or her consciousness had not been totally awakened. Furthermore, the use of "could" and "started" in the English translations ("when I first could remember," "when I first started remembering"; see table 4.1, examples 5, 6, and 7) made me think that in Inuvialuit dialects, the act of remembering first childhood memories might be expressed as starting in the past and not from present to the past, as in English (e.g., "I remember when X happened").

My earlier observations on first childhood memories being from English translations, I feared that my interpretation could be incorrect since the meanings of Inuvialuktun words might have been lost or distorted.

the process of translation (e.g., Galley 1990; Swann 1992). Inuvialuit dialects being extremely different from English it is inevitable that some dia-

tortion did occur. Indeed one word in Inuvialuktun can easily be translated as a full sentence in English since Inuvialuit dialects use wordbases and suffixes, and thus words “agglutinate” in one single word (e.g., table 4.1). Furthermore, I was intrigued by the fact that all translators had used past forms to translate words linked to first childhood memories. I wondered if past forms had been used in the original interviews. I was especially curious since in the majority of the translations not related to first memories, the narrative present was used. Hence I decided to analyze the original Inuvialuktun transcriptions and to isolate words that were linked to talking about first memories. In the next sections of this chapter, I discuss the results of my research.

Understanding Translations of First Childhood Memories

Since the focus of the Aulavik Oral History Project was on Banks Island, most of the interviews were done in Siglitun and Inuinnaqtun, which are the Inuvialuit dialects of the two main populations who have occupied the island. I first compiled 245 examples of English translations related to early memories found in the interviews of thirty-seven Inuvialuit. I then selected the 219 examples for which Inuvialuktun transcriptions were available and, using the dictionaries and grammars written by linguist Ronald Lowe for the three dialects, I did morphological analyses, which I compared with the English translations done by the Inuvialuit translators. Not being a linguist, I followed Lowe’s terminology, which is influenced by Gustave Guillaume’s methodology. Although seven translators were involved in the translations, most interviews were translated by three translators: one Uummarmiutun speaker who did English translations from Uummarmiutun, Siglitun, and Inuinnaqtun; one Siglitun speaker who did mainly English translations from Siglitun, and one Inuinnaqtun speaker who did mainly English translations from Inuinnaqtun. Incidentally, 60 percent (N = 132) of the data selected is in Inuinnaqtun, 38 percent (N = 83) in Siglitun, and only 2 percent (N = 4) in Uummarmiutun (see table 4.2).

As mentioned earlier, only one of the three dialects, Uummarmiutun

(which is very close to the Iñupiaq language of Alaska), has a past declarative

8. The above is a complete account of the work done in the year 1900.

Understanding Translations of First Childhood Memories

results of my research:

(N = 4) in Ummarniutun (see table 4.2).

localizers that can be used to indicate past events. Furthermore, as noted

Table 4.2. Frequency of use by narrators and by translators of memory-related terms in Inuvialuit dialects.

Inuvialuit terms	Translation from dictionaries	Translations mainly used by translators*	Uummarmiutun (N = 4)	Siglitun (N = 83)	Inuinnaqtun (N = 132)
ihuma-	think	could remember	0	0	6
ilihima- / ilisima-	know	know, could remember, remember	1	12 (14%)	13 (10%)
ilitchari-	become aware, learn	remember, came to senses, became aware, started remembering	2	45 (54%)	13 (10%)
kangiqsi-	understand	can't understand	0	3	1
nalu-	unconscious, don't know	forgot, don't remember, don't know	0	2	7
nautchi-	watch what is going on	aware	1	2	0
puiguq-	forget	can't forget, could not forget, remember, had good memory	0	16 (19%)	18 (13%)
qauyi-	become aware, learn**	first started remembering, first could remember, became aware	0	0	41 (31%)
qauyima-	be aware, know**	first started remembering	0	0	14 (11%)
tupak-	wake up	like waking up, woke up first time	0	1	13 (10%)
other terms	see table 4.3	see table 4.3	0	2	6

*Use of past tense indicated as in translations.

**Lowe (pers. comm., 2002) suggested different translations for qauyi- and qauyima- since the suffix -ma- means "having been X-ed."

by Lowe (1985a: 122), "a certain number of wordbases can refer to past or present depending on the situational or linguistic context." He also wrote that the distinction between past and present was of secondary importance in Siglitun (129). Although this seemed to be the case for most of our interviews, that statement puzzled me since the past was used in the English translations and Inuvialuktun transcriptions on first childhood memories. Indeed, 40 percent (N = 33) of the Siglitun data analyzed had event markers in the simple declarative form with suffixes (e.g., -ma-, "having been X-ed"; -maaq-, "starting to X"; -laaq-, "first"; -maq-, "to X for the first time") and/or localizers (e.g., taimani, "at that time") that can suggest the past, and 17 percent (N = 14) were in the conjunctive form (i.e., "while" clause). For Inuinnaqtun, 30 percent (N = 39) of the data was in the simple declarative form with suffixes and/or localizers that can suggest the past; 27 percent (N = 36) in the causative form (i.e., "when" clause); and 16 percent (N = 21) in the conjunctive form (i.e., "while" clause).

This extensive use of the past when talking about first childhood memories has also been noted by Swift (2000: 101) for the Inuit of Nunavik (arctic Quebec), who then invariably used the suffix -laugsima- ("long ago past"). Use of the past for similar translations to those encountered in the present study were found in the life stories of Inuit elders from the central and eastern Canadian Arctic (e.g., Briggs 2000; Mannik 1998; Oosten et al. 1999).

Working among the Nunamut, Gubser (1965: 211) observed that "when a mature person speaks of his early youth, he refers to the time when he began to remember everything." This comment and Lowe's (1985a: 232) statement that "the past is a space of time from which bygone facts can only be recalled" influenced me to think that the use of the past by Inuvialuit narrators and translators was to set temporally the first childhood memories to be recalled and hence narrated. Contrary to what I first thought by interpreting only the English translations, the act of remembering was not the only subject discussed by the narrators; they also were qualifying and contextualizing their first memories. In fact, as we will see later, the narrators were indicating cognitive and chronological markers about themselves.

As reflected by their use of the wordbases ilitchuri- in Siglitun, and qauyi- and qauyima- in Inuinnaqtun, the narrators emphasized the time when their memories started. These wordbases are translated in dictionaries by "become aware, become conscious, come to senses" but also as "learn, know" (see Fortescue et al. 1994: 291). For Inuinnaqtun, Lowe (pers. comm., 2002) suggested a distinction between qauyi- ("become aware, learn") and qauyima- ("be aware, know") since the latter has the suffix -ma-, which indi-

Table 4.3. Translations of memory-related terms in Inuvialuit dialects.

English translations	Uummarmiutun	Siglitun	Inuinnaqtun
become aware; become conscious; learn	qauji- ¹ , ilitchuri- ⁴		qauji- ¹
come to senses		ilitchuriyuaq ⁴	
be aware; be conscious; know	qaujima- ²	ilitchuriyuaq ⁴	qauyima- ²
my memory			qaujima- ²
is unconscious, is numb (is not aware)	qaujima- ²		qauyima- ²
become unconscious		nalukituq	qauyima- ²
be aware; watch X do something;			nalukitu- ⁹
took notice of X	nautchiu-	nautchiyuaq	
recognized him	ilihariga- ³	ilihariga- ³	ilihariga- ³
recognizes	ilihaga- ³	qauyiyaa- ¹	
knows	ilihama- ⁵	ilimayuaq ⁵	ilimayuaq ⁶
doesn't know him/her/it		qauyima- ¹	
remembers	naluga- ⁹	nalyaq ⁹	ilimannigut
tries to remember; recall	iqaqut ⁶	iqaqut ⁶	iqariya- ⁶
	iqarniaqut ⁶		iqakhiyuaq ⁶

¹Fortescue et al. (1994: 291): PE qd(C)unq(ñ)- "become conscious"; Nauken Siberian Yup'ik qaa- "remember come to senses, become aware"; ECI qauji- "notice, become aware of"; GRI qauqut(ñ)- "come to one's senses." For ilimayuaq, qauji- "to become aware, of a growing child" in Maclean (1980: 48). For Inuinnaqtun, Lowe (pers. comm., 2002) suggested qauji- "become aware, learn."

²Fortescue et al. (1994: 291): WCI qaujima- "know"; ECI qaujima- "know." For Inuinnaqtun, Lowe (pers. comm., 2002) suggested qaujima- "be aware, know."

³Fortescue et al. (1994: 105): PE ilit- "learn"; Sirenik (Chukotka) is(ñ) "learn"; also siqaxR "recall, bring to awareness."

⁴Fortescue et al. (1994: 106): PE ilitchuri- "become aware of"; WCI ilitchuri "know, become aware, learn"; GRI ilitchuri- "become aware or conscious, remember something from earliest childhood."

⁵Fortescue et al. (1994: 105): PE ilitima- "know"; Nauken Siberian Yup'ik "understand."

⁶Fortescue et al. (1994: 112): PE iligat- "remember"; WCI iligat- "remember"; ECI iligat(ñ)- "remember, be full of attention for."

cates a result and means "having been X-ed" (see also Briggs 1998: 236). In the Inuvialuit narratives, *ilitchuri*, *qauji*, and *qaujima* were mostly translated by the verb "remember" in English (see table 4.1). However, the use of the word "remember" is somewhat misleading since the Inuvialuit narrators are not talking about remembering now about the past but telling when they began to become aware or conscious. In other words, they are remembering about beginning to remember, about being "able to remember" (see Mannik 1998: 209, 216). Once they made such statements, the narrators (and the translators) used the present form (as in "I remember when"), since they were now in the process of remembering about specific events. Similar patterns associated with the use of the past to talk about first childhood memories, and then the use of the present for introducing later memories, can be found in other Inuit narratives. Thus after being asked if

Table 4.3. Continued.

English translations	Uummarmiutun	Siglitun	Inuinnaqtun
remember		ilitchuri- ⁴	ilitchuri- ⁴
		ilitchima- ⁵	qaujima- ²
			ilitchuri- ^{4/7}
			ilitchuri- ^{4/8}
recalls	iqaraa- ⁶	iqagaa- ⁶	
recalled someone		iqagayuaq ⁶	
distracted, lost, confused			ulapit-
understands	kangiqhiyuaq	kangiqhiyuaq	kangiqhiyuaq
		ungagigaa	ungagigaa
		ungayaa	kangihimaituq
doesn't understand			ungayuaq
is difficult, impossible, to understand	kangiqhiyuaq	ungagigaa	nalyaqut ⁹
wake up	itigut	tupaktuq	tupaktuq
forget	puigut	puigut	puigut
never forgets		puiguyutit	

⁷The base *ilitchuri* was used by three Inuinnaqtun speakers living in Sachs Harbour where Siglitun is the main Inuvialuit dialect.

⁸Two Inuinnaqtun speakers, who live in Sachs Harbour, used the base *ilitchuri* which seems equivalent to *ilitchuri*.

⁹Fortescue et al. (1994: 212): PE mak- "not know"; Sirenik (Chukotka) nak- "lose consciousness."

Note: Italics are used for English translations and terms that were not in Lowe's publications.

⁸ is a voiceless lateral fricative sound, j is a retroflex fricative sound, halfway between the English r and the French j.

PE = Proto-Eskimo; PI = Proto-Inuit; WCI = Western Canadian Inuit; ECI = Eastern Canadian Inuit; GRI = Greenlandic Inuit.

Sources: Lowe (1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1985a, 1985b, 1985c, 2001) and Nagy, ed. (1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d).

he recalled when he "started remembering," Hervé Paniag explained that he recalled being on his mother's back, but "after that, I would have to reverse the events to talk about them" (Oosten and Laugrand 1999: 45). He seems to be indicating that for these later memories, he would need to remember events from his past rather than describing the moment when he actually started remembering.³

In the Siglitun data, *ilitchuri* was used in 54 percent (N = 5), and in Inuinnaqtun, *qauji* was used in 31 percent (N = 41), *qaujima* in 11 percent (N = 14), and *ilitchuri* in 10 percent (N = 13) (see table 4.2). Hence in Inuinnaqtun 52 percent (N = 68) of the data referred to "becoming or being aware" (see table 4.2). One should note that the word *ilitchuri*, which does not seem to be an Inuinnaqtun word, was used by Inuinnaqtun speakers who had

learned Siglitun later in life. As for the word *itqaq*, which is the closest equivalent to the verb "remember" in English, it was used in less than 1 percent in either Siglitun or Inuinaqtun. Although this should be verified, *itqaq* was probably used more often when the narrators referred to their later memories. However, when introducing their first childhood memories, most narrators used the wordbases *ititthuri*, *qauji*, and *qaujima*. This observation must be common to other Inuit cultures, since the Inupiaq word *qauji* (spelled *qauri* in Maclean 1980: 48) is translated by "to become aware, of a growing child" (48), and the Greenlandic form of *ititthuri* by "became aware or conscious, remember something from earliest childhood" (Fortescue et al. 1994) (see also table 4.3).

To follow up on this last example, after presenting an earlier version of this paper I was told by a Greenlandic colleague that "coming to one's senses" corresponds to a stage in child development equivalent to a two-year-old (Marie Katherine Poppel, pers. comm., 2001). In his interview, Lucassie Nutaraluk was asked when he "became aware," and he answered "at two or three years old," as he was still breast fed at the time (Oosten et al. 1999: 105). This would explain translations such as "I came to my senses sucking a bottle," "I became aware when there was a sunshine," or "I became aware on the back of my mother" (see table 4.1, examples 3 and 4), where the narrators explained what they were feeling or doing at that precise moment. People also used the word *tupak* ("wake up"), as in "when I woke up," which was likewise noted by Condon (1996: 63) during his own interviews in Holman. Incidentally, some Yup'ik described conversion to Christianity as "waking up" (see Fienup-Riordan 2000: 94), which is similar to one Inuvialuk narrator who spoke of "becoming conscious" when converting (see N92-253-196A:1 in Nagy 1999b).

As Charles (2000: 44) remarked about the Yup'ik, "the early years of memory are sometimes referred to as drifting between remembering bits and pieces of first realities, like going into a deep sleep." Indeed Yup'ik parents assumed that very young children lacked awareness or a lasting memory of their experiences (Fienup-Riordan 1994: 143). In the Central Yup'ik language of southwestern Alaska, the word *ellangelleg* means "awareness of existence, consciousness of a world process going on about one" and refers to a child's first conscious memories, between the ages of three and five (Orr et al., 1997: 614, footnote 4).⁴ *Ellangellemi* means "when I became aware" and is "an expression Yup'ik people often use to refer to a significant moment of life, the point in one's childhood when permanent memories take shape and surroundings begin to make lasting impressions" (Orr et al.

1997: back cover). In the Eastern Arctic, the wordbase *sugqui* is translated by "to become aware" (e.g., Oosten and Laugrand 2001: 96), while *qaujima* is translated by "to be aware, to know, to understand" (e.g., Briggs 1998: 236; see also footnote 2 in table 4.3).⁵ Hence the awakening of consciousness is seen as a prerequisite to building a memory.

It thus seems that in Inuit languages when one talks about first childhood memories, these are introduced through terms that are linked to two stages of cognitive development among children. In the Inuvialuit narratives, this first stage was often introduced by terms translated by "when I came to my senses" or "when I became aware" (see table 4.1, examples 1 to 4) with a vivid description of feelings or actions during that precise moment (e.g.: "on my mother's back," "sucking a bottle," "when there was a sunshine," "alone in an igloo," "crying"). Narrators often insisted ~~that there were still~~ periods of unconsciousness ("I would forget").

Terms that were translated by "when I could not forget anymore," "when my memory was good," or even "when kids start remembering" (see table 4.1, example 9) correspond to a later stage, starting around five years old, when a child "gets a memory" (Marie Katherine Poppel, pers. comm., 2001). While referring to that stage, narrators insisted that at that time, they knew (i.e., they had gained permanent knowledge). Writing about the Nunamit, Gubser (1965: 211) contrasted the child of two or three years old, who is always forgetting, with the child of four or five, who stops forgetting and begins to remember things when the child's *ishuma* (mind) has thus been formed. Gubser added that the Nunamit think of the *ishuma* as the seat of memory. Hence without a fully formed *ishuma*, one cannot store memories. Furthermore, in Nunavik (arctic Quebec), the term *isumaniq* means that a child has reached a state of consciousness at four or five years old (Schneider 1985: 102; Therrien 1987: 85-86). At the same age, Yup'ik children gained awareness and thus reached a stage of maturity in which memory was continuous rather than fragmented as in younger children (Fienup-Riordan 1994: 143, 145; 2000: 96). According to Eliza Orr, that later stage of development, a consciousness of one's self existing in an intelligible world of meanings and relationships, is called *usungileq* ("sense, understanding") in Yup'ik and corresponds to five years old or older (Orr et al. 1997: 614, footnote 4).⁷

The terms that were used by Inuvialuit elders when talking about their first childhood memories and those that can be found in other Inuit languages demonstrate a lexical sophistication that one finds in English only when reading literature specialized in cognitive development (e.g., Perner

and Ruffman 1995; Tulving 1995). Hence it is possible that the Inuvialuit translators had difficulty finding equivalent English words for those used by the narrators, and they chose the word "remember" to convey the meaning of Inuvialuktun words that were very specific about two stages of awareness in children's development. The use of various past forms in the translations and in the original transcriptions was to set the event temporally and to give more precision regarding which stage of cognitive development the narrator had reached as a child. It would be interesting to verify if the same terms are used in non-audiobiographical narratives of Inuit since in Yup'ik narrations, "a character's state of awareness is sometimes mentioned" (Or et al. 1997: 614, footnote 4).

Conclusions

The theoretical and methodological implication of undertaking anthropological research through translations is a topic that warrants more attention from social scientists. My experience demonstrates that analyzing the inconsistencies and difficulties in translation helps us better understand Inuit language and culture. For example, the pervasive use of the present tense when describing past events may be explained by the Inuit synchronization of time and space. In contrast, the use of the past tense to describe first childhood memories led to the observation that a series of distinct wordbases in the Inuvialuit dialects were being translated by the single English word "remember."

Inuvialuit elders often started to tell about their lives by using wordbases like *itlthuri- andqauji-*, which can be translated by "when I became aware." Morphological analyses of excerpts from the Inuvialuktun interviews have shown that first childhood memories narrated in Inuvialuit dialects—and very likely in other Inuit languages—express when the consciousness of a child is awoken. However, in most cases wordbases like *itlthuri-* and *qauji-* were translated with the verb "remember," possibly to fit an English ear. The use of various past forms in the translations and the original transcriptions gave the temporal context and more precision regarding two stages of cognitive development. The first stage corresponds to about two to three years old, when a child "becomes aware" for the very first time; and the second to about four to five years old, when a child is fully aware and thus can store continuous memories. To verify these interpretations, I hope to consult the Inuvialuit translators to discuss the ways they translated Inuvialuktun words related to first childhood memories. Finally, the lesson from this research

is that one should be careful when using translations, as they are often approximations of what was said by narrators.

Acknowledgments

Most sincere thanks to all the Inuvialuit elders who participated in the Yukon North Slope Inuvialuit Oral History Project and the Aulavik Oral History Project as well as to Inuvialuit research assistants Renie Arey, Elizabeth Banksland, Shirley Elias, Jean Harry, and Agnes White. Translations and transcriptions were done by Barbra Allen, Beverly Amos, Helen Kitekulak, Agnes Kuplana, and Agnes White. The projects were administered by the Inuvialuit Social Development Program in Inuvik. Funding and logistical support was provided by Parks Canada, the Yukon Heritage Branch, the Language Enhancement Program (GNWT), the Polar Continental Shelf Programme, and the Inuvik Research Center. Earlier versions of this paper were presented in November 2001 at the symposium on Memory and History in the North at the Lac Delage (Quebec), at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Washington, and in August 2002 at the Inuit Studies Conference in Anchorage. During the winter of 2002, I received financial support from the SSHRC project "Memory and History in Nunavut" to work on this paper. An extended version of this chapter was published in Nagy (2002). I also want to thank Jean Briggs, Louis-Jacques Dorais, Vivian Johnson, Lawrence Kaplan, Mick Mallon, Patricia Nagy, Mariekatherine Poppel, William Schneider, Michèle Therrien, and Deborah Kigjugalik Webster for their comments on issues related to first childhood memory. I am especially thankful to Ronald Lowe, Pamela Stern, and Lisa Stevenson for their suggestions on the structure of the text, their comments on its content, and their editorial help. Ronald Lowe also provided corrections for the spelling of the Inuvialuktun words and for the morphological analyses that can be found in my tables. Any misinterpretations are of course mine.

Notes

The original reference to Creation is in Houston (1972: 80), reprinted in Petrone (1988: 51). Thanks to Deborah Kigjugalik Webster for drawing my attention to it.

1. During these projects, we did a total of 140 interviews with 55 people and got about 100 archival tapes translated into English. Most interviews were done in the native language of the speakers.

2. Estimates made in 1981, based on the assumption that most Inuvialuit over forty spoke their dialect fluently, put their number at 215 for Siglitun; 175 for Ummarmittun; and 125 for

Kangiryuarnittut (i.e., Inuinnaqtun) (Lowe 1984a: viii). The loss of native language among the Inuvialuit was accelerated by the presence of residential schools in the 1930s where only English was used, and by 1950, after one generation, most Inuvialuit parents were exclusively teaching English to their children (Dorais 1989: 201). Thus as of 1981 only 16.8 percent of the Siglit spoke Siglitut, while 25.4 percent of the Uummarmiut spoke Uummarmiutut (Dorais 1990: 193). One should note, however, that some Inuvialuit under fifty have a passive knowledge of their language because of the presence of Inuvialuit elders who are still fluent in one of the three Inuvialuit dialects.

3. This said, the English translation from which I based my interpretation remains to be compared with its original Inuktitut transcription.

4. In Jacobson's (1984) Yup'ik dictionary, *ellange-* and *ellange-* are both translated as "to obtain awareness, to have one's first experience which leaves a lasting memory." Charles (2000: 12) notes that in Yup'ik, *ellangellennek* means "from my first awareness, memory."

5. Thanks to Michèle Therrien and Louis-Jacques Dorais for their French translations of the original Inuktitut text of the English excerpts I had found in Oosten and Laugrand (2001: 96). Their translations and Michèle Therrien's note (pers. comm., 2002), helped me isolate the wordbase *suqut* from the other terms linked to memory in that text.

6. I am using Gubser's original orthography. That word is pronounced *isuma* in most Inuit languages.

7. In Jacobson (1984: 404), *uswi-* is translated by "intelligence, awareness."

FIVE

Anthropology in an Era of Inuit Empowerment

Edmund (Ned) Searles

"We are Inuit," proclaimed the cover of the 1999-2000 annual report of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). Formerly Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC), ITK is an Ottawa-based organization representing the twenty-eight thousand Inuit of Canada. Okalik Egeesiak, ITC's president at the time, explained the title's meaning as "a source of our strength as individuals and as a people, and they continue to provide a sharp focus and vision for the work of ITC" (ITC 2000: 11). Egeesiak's vision signals the transformation of an abstract concept, Inuit identity, into a practical goal, thought to be achievable through the right policies, planning, and personnel. The title of ITC's annual report belongs to a growing concert of indigenous voices committed to linking cultural survival with political and economic empowerment.

But these words also underline a methodological and theoretical quandary for those who study indigenous peoples—how do we study and write about indigenous identity and culture in an era of indigenous political empowerment and heightened self-consciousness? (See Graburn, this volume.) What happens when the collective "we" becomes linked to a specific set of traits or emblems? (Briggs 1997; see Stevenson, this volume). Are anthropologists adequately attuned to the ways in which claims made about Inuit culture and identity by Inuit themselves can be divisive and disabling? (Strong and Van Winkle 1996; Sturm 2002).

Egeesiak, like many of her peers, believes that Inuit culture can and should be promoted and preserved. Supporting such views are those anthropologists and psychologists who identify the loss of culture with both acute and chronic episodes of psychological stress and other disorders, a condition that can be treated, it seems, by preventing the further erosion