

# Representation of Indigenous Stories in Cultural Heritage Digital Libraries: A Metadata Approach

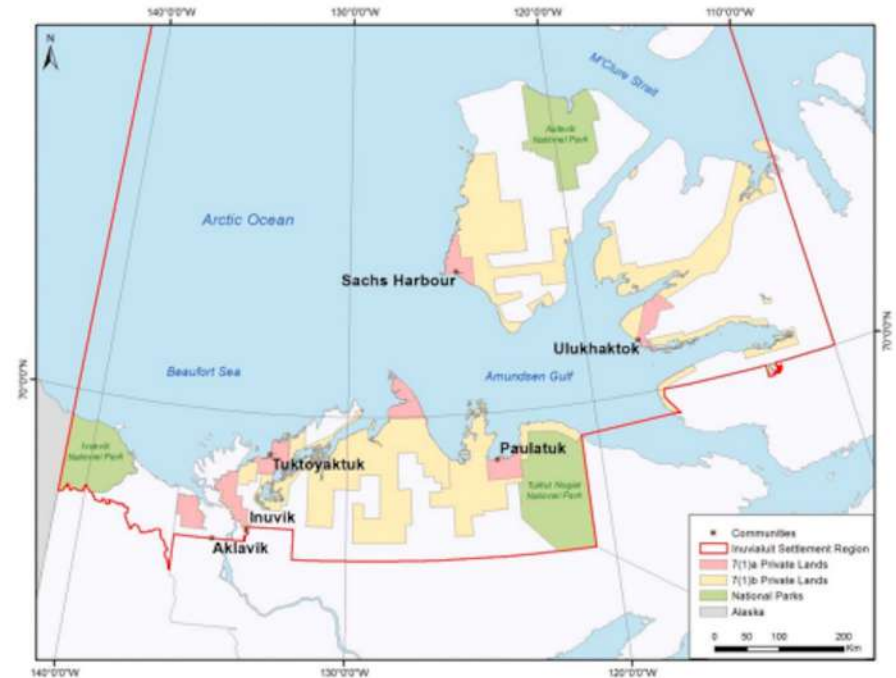
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University of Alberta

# Acknowledgement

As researchers at the University of Alberta, we acknowledge that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respect the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community. We would particularly like to acknowledge our collaborative partners from the Paulatuk, Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour, Tuktoyaktuk, Inuvik, and Aklavik communities of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) in the Northwest Territories.



Map showing the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) communities. Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, "ISR Private Lands," 2016.

# Outline

- Inuvialuit Digital Library
- Inuvialuit Voices Project Objectives
- Community-based methodology
- Digital storytelling and Indigenous communities
- Inuvialuit digital storytelling workshop
- Inuvialuit elder stories
- Facets and metadata elements

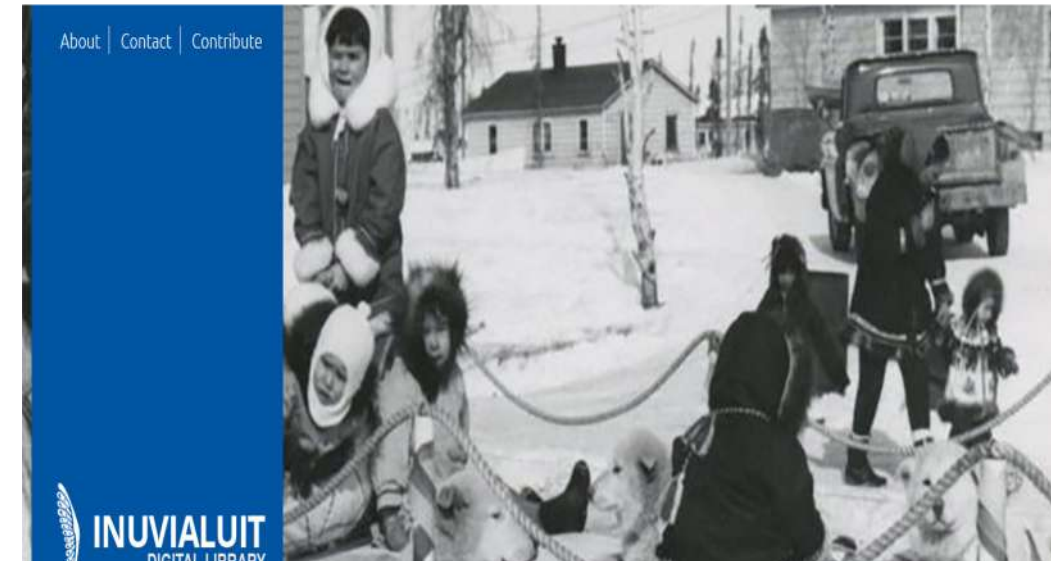
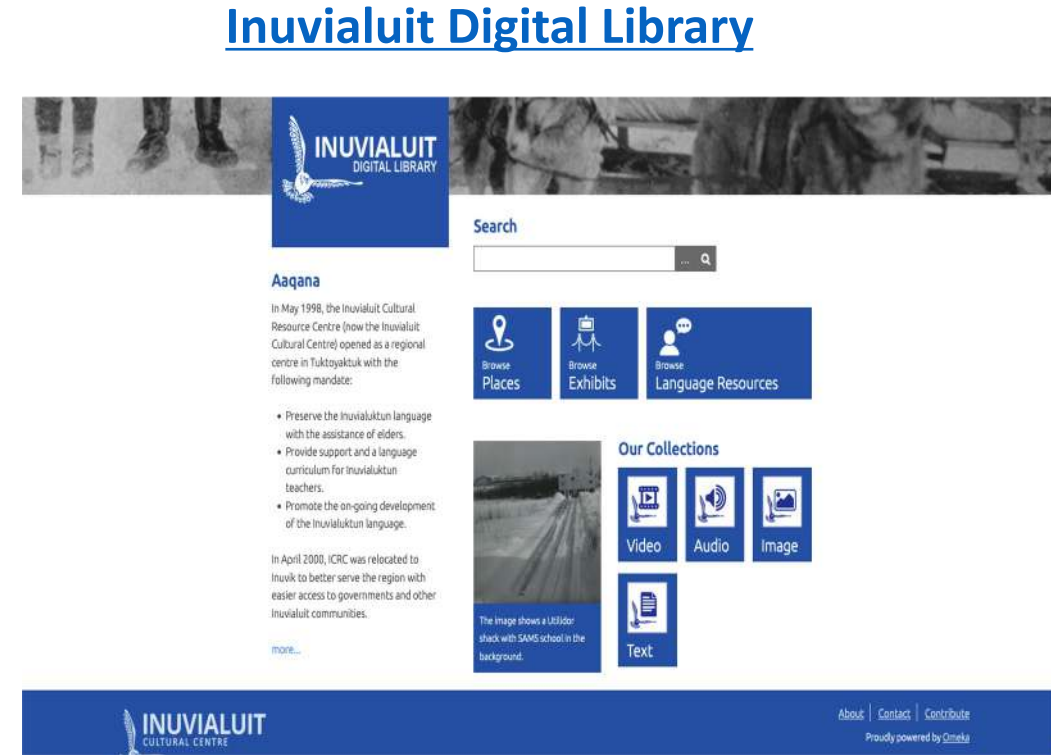
# Inuvialuit Digital Library

Developed in partnership between the Inuvialuit Cultural Centre and the University of Alberta.

Several thousand resources including language learning booklets, oral histories and genealogies, and photographs.

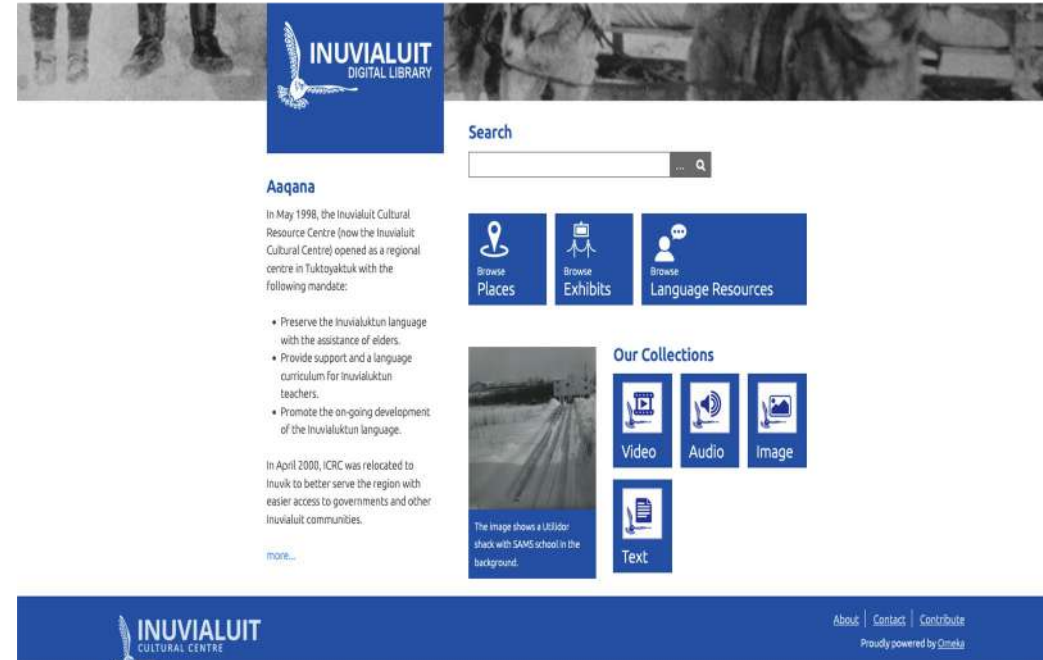
Based on community defined organization and description.

Desires expressed for ways of adding new stories as well as using story to enhance existing resources.

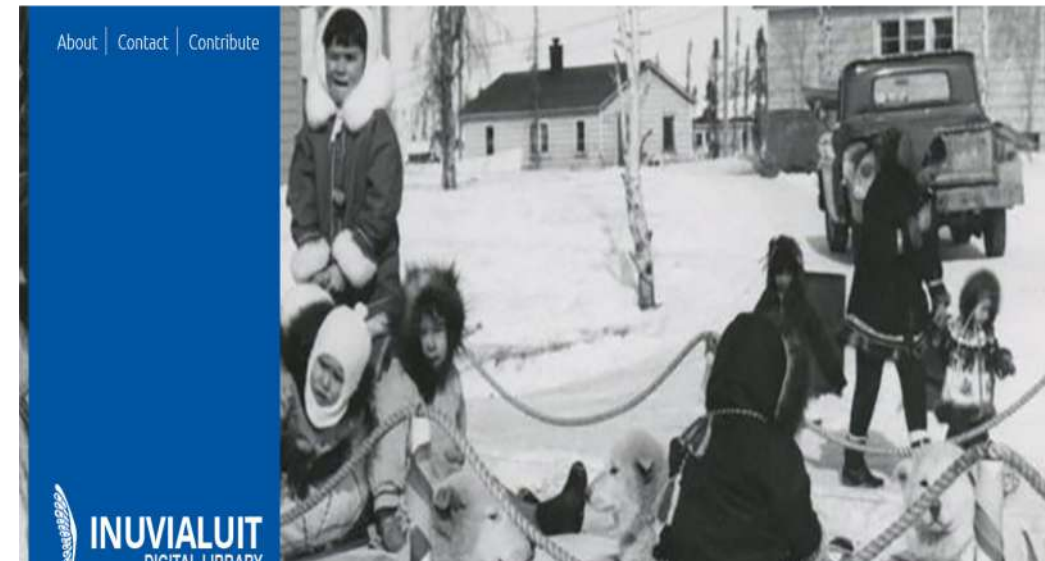


# Inuvialuit Voices Project Objectives

Overarching objective: to investigate, develop, and evaluate a real-time, audio-recording digital storytelling and commenting user interface for the Inuvialuit Digital Library in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) in order to facilitate live capturing of Inuit community input and stories while interacting with the Digital Library.



The screenshot shows the top portion of the Inuvialuit Digital Library website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Inuvialuit Cultural Centre logo on the left and navigation links for 'About', 'Contact', and 'Contribute' on the right. Below the navigation bar is a search bar with a magnifying glass icon. The main content area features a section titled 'Aaqana' with a brief history of the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre and a list of three mandates: preserving the Inuvialuktun language, providing support and curriculum for teachers, and promoting the development of the language. Below this is a section titled 'Our Collections' with icons for 'Video', 'Audio', 'Image', and 'Text'. The footer of the page includes the Inuvialuit Cultural Centre logo and the text 'Proudly powered by Omeka'.



# Specific objectives

- Establishing a novel community-driven participatory design methodology for developing an audio-recording digital storytelling user interface,
- Designing, prototyping, and developing an interface with Inuvialuktun features such as storytelling functionalities that can be captured in real time,
- Enhancing the currently-available digital materials of cultural heritage within the Library through real-time stories by Inuvialuit community members,
- Conducting a community-driven usability evaluation of the real-time digital storytelling user interface and its audio-recording functionalities.



# Collaborative Team & Geographic Context







# Community-Based Methodology



Participatory Research

Participatory Design

Ethnography

# Ethnography

- “A naturalistic method in that it relies upon material drawn from the firsthand experience of a fieldworker in some setting and seeks to present a portrait of life as seen and understood by those who live and work within the domain concerned.” (Crabtree et al., 2000)





# Digital Storytelling and Indigenous Communities

For Indigenous peoples in particular, story is a critical method of sharing and preserving knowledge, culture, and history

Many Indigenous peoples are turning to information and communication technologies to support this sharing and preservation



# Understanding Storytelling in Context



## Participating Elders

**Aklavik:** Nellie Arey, Renie Arey

**Tuktoyaktuk:** Agnes White, Fred Wolki,  
Sandy Wolki

**Inuvik:** Sammy Lennie

**Paulatuk:** George Krengnektak, Elizabeth  
Kuptana, Annie Thrasher

**Sachs Harbour:** Margaret Carpenter

**Ulukhaktok:** Mary Kudlak, Connie Alanik



# Inuvialuit Elders Storytelling Gathering November 12-15, 2019



# Inuvialuit Elders Storytelling Gathering November 12-15, 2019



# Inuvialuit stories

- Workshop Moderator: Beverly Siliuyaq Amos
- Language of the stories:
  - Inuvialuktun
    - Kangiryuarmitun (Ulukhaktok),
    - Sallirmiutun (Tuktoyaktuk, Sachs Harbour, and Paulatuk),
    - Uumarmiutun (Inuvik and Aklavik)
  - English
- Format:
  - Stories of their own choosing,
  - Moderator presented topics of interest for discussion (e.g., genealogy and the pronunciation of names, preservation of language).

What are the stories about?

Joys and challenges of life on the land, local legends and tales, stories of community heroes, drum dancing and traditional games, language learning and loss.



# Identification of key elements of stories

- Being present and listening to all the stories told by the elders
- Conversations about Inuvialuit names and the anglicized names given to people by the government
- Watch and listen to the recordings of the stories
- Listen to Agnes White as she was translating stories from Inuvialuktun into English

# Stories in Inuvialuktun

Agnes white, an Inuvialuit elder fluent in all three dialects, was an instrumental research partner as she would translate and summarize some of the stories that were told in Inuvialuktun.

Elders would switch between Inuvialuktun and English during the storytelling.



# Nellie Arey stories (Tuesday November 12, 2019)

- Time: Spring time, Fall Time, Summer Time, Winter time
- Fish, bear, squirrels, caribou, birds, wolverine
- Relatives: dad, brother, sister, auntie, families
- Education, hunting, climbing, skinning, tanning
- Traps, meat, axe, water, snow, animal parts, shoes, food
- Emotions: scared, crying
- Alaska, Aklavik, Herschel Island
- Proper names: Annie, Fred



# Facets and topics

- ***Property***: Types of weather, winter, summer, Fall, types of cold and types of snow
- ***Action and operations***: hunting, gathering, cooking, warming, building
- ***Agent***: elders, relatives, cousins, brothers, sisters, RCMP, government agencies, Priests
- ***Animals***: Caribou, Bear, Beluga whale, ducks
- ***Objects***: Ulu, harpoon, schooner
- ***Places (Space)***: towns, villages, hamlets, oceans, lakes, Islands, Inuvialuit communities (Paulatuk, Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour, Tuktoyaktuk, Inuvik, and Aklavik), residential schools – examples Herschel Island, Banks Island, churches, schools, igloos
- ***Time***: decades, years



# Diversity in Description and Metadata

- Language(s) and dialect(s)
- Names of people and places
- Traditional and westernized forms of names
- Include local subjects
- Include variant forms and spellings
- Note contributor roles (individuals and organizations)
- Enable community contributions (keywords, tags or stories)

## HOLMAN IN WINTER



### Collection

Dr. N.E. Hunt Photo Collection

### Title

Holman in winter

### People

[Hunt, David E., 1925-](#)

### Date

1968-1969

### Description

Photograph of Holman in winter

### Subject

[Digital images](#)

[Winter](#)

[City & town life](#)

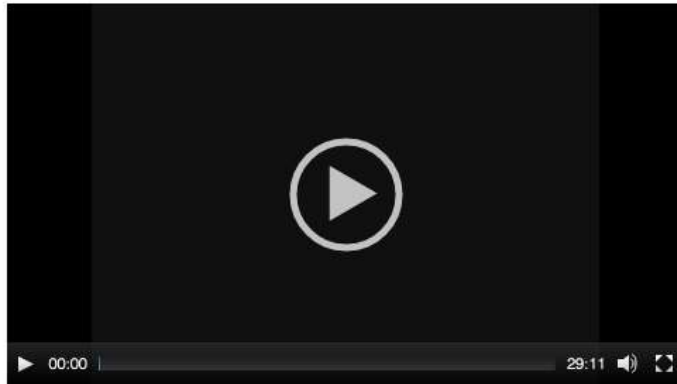
### Places

[Nunaptingni \(Northwest Territories\)](#)

[Ulukhaqtuuq / Uluksaqtuuq \(Ulukhaktok\)](#)

[Kaanata / Kanata \(Canada\)](#)

## DRUM DANCING



### Collection

[Inuvialuit Cultural Centre Videos](#)

### Citation

Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC), "Drum Dancing," *Inuvialuit Cultural Centre Digital Library*, accessed June 18, 2022, <https://inuvialuitdigitallibrary.ca/items/show/2410>.

### Social Bookmarking

### Title

Drum Dancing

### People

[Inuvialuit Regional Corporation \(IRC\)](#)

[Inuvialuit Regional Corporation \(IRC\) \(executive producer\)](#)

[Carpenter, Les L. \(narrator\)](#)

[Albert, Ruth M. \(narrator\)](#)

[McLeod, Esther \(narrator\)](#)

[Kisoun, Yvonne \(English voice over\)](#)

[Fry, Frank \(English voice over\)](#)

[Refshauge, Chris \(supervising producer\)](#)

[Gordon, Debbie \(producer\)](#)

[Arey, Renie \(producer\)](#)

[Coates, Ken \(writer\)](#)

[Refshauge, Chris \(writer\)](#)

[Landy, Robert \(camera\)](#)

[Vaughan, Lantry \(camera\)](#)

[Lindenthaler, Max \(camera\)](#)

# Concluding remarks

- Facet analysis of Indigenous stories provides a sophisticated method for the development of metadata and description framework for Inuvialuit knowledge organization and representation.
- Community-based research methods such as ethnography and participatory design contribute to a deeper insight into the epistemological and ontological aspects of Indigenous knowledge and stories.
- Indigenous stories are multifaceted, containing cultural, geographical, linguistic, social, genealogical, emotional, and environmental elements and nuances.



# Acknowledgements

Photo credits:

Elizabeth Kolb (IRC)

Inuvialuit Voices Research Team

Inuvialuit Cultural Centre



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada