

## Not In the English Language

There are many Inuktitut words that do not have English language translations. Many of these words come from the cultural side of the Inuktitut language. An example is snow. There are many words associated with snow. There are many different uses of snow in the Arctic compared to the uses of snow that Southern Canadians are accustomed to. Snow has many uses in the Inuit world – snow to make a shelter, snow considered good or poor for effective tracking of animals, preferred snow for melting drinking water and many others. Because snow was important to the life of Inuit before the arrival of European culture, it was necessary to have many terms to describe the type of snow and to be able to communicate that information to the next generation. Here are some Inuktitut terminologies that may not exist in the English language. It would be helpful to ask a person with Inuktitut as a first language and someone who has received Inuktitut education for further interpretation of the words described below.

**-parlajuq** (par-la-juq): To scramble to get something, (such as in a candy toss) or hurrying to get something before it's all gone. The term may also be used to describe someone who is scrambling to get what they want (out of greediness or selfishness) even if there is plenty.

### Snow Words:

We live in the world of snow. There are many snow words in Inuktitut. Ask around for terms used in your community for various types of snow.

**Pukajaaq** is the type of snow that does not compact even when compressed – it is made up of crystalized tiny balls of ice and resembles cream of wheat cereal texture. This type of snow is normally found immediately above a vegetated ground with a harder snow on top. It is avoided by Iglu builders because it simply does not compact.

**Qaniuti** is a fluffy thin layer of snow freshly fallen on a harder and older snow and may cause a lot of friction on the bottom runners of a qamutiik, making the going harder. More friction on the qamutiik runners causes snowmobiles to use more gas. This powdery fresh snow makes tracking of animals very effective as the tracks are usually easy to see.

### Nature-environmental words:

For words that describe the sky, land, and conditions, your best bet would be to talk with knowledgeable people to find out some very interesting terminology related to the human relationship with nature.

**-anijaaqtuq** (a-ni-jaaq-tuq) : Going outside of your dwelling as soon as you wake up, to observe the weather. Pay attention to the wind direction and speed. Look at the sky and carefully study the clouds. Determine if it is cloudy, the shape and shade of the clouds, and how the ravens or dogs are behaving. If you look at the ground, it will be obvious what the weather was like during the night – in summer, the ground might be wet if it had been raining, or there might be some fresh snow on the ground (in all seasons). The wind might be calm, but there may be some notable snow drifting, indicating that it was windy during the night. Compare these observations to what you already know, especially from the day before or from the last few days. You will eventually develop enough understanding of weather or weather patterns to be able to share your observations with

other in your home (dwelling). Boys were expected to go outside to observe the weather as soon as they woke up and before they ate any food.

**-palluqsingajuq** ( pal-luq-si-nga-juq) : The way the eyes are shaped. The outer part of the eye lid is slanted downward. (Dopey from Snow White is palluqsingajuq).

**-irjingajuq** ( ir-ji-nga-juq) : Opposite of palluqsingajuq. The outer part of the eye lid is slanted upward.

**-tirliktuq** ( tir-lik-tuq): When a marine mammal is wounded but is still alive. The wounded animal may stay surfaced longer and quicker and be visible more frequently than it normally does when it is not wounded. It's an old Inuit tradition that whoever wounds an animal first, is the person who claims the animal as his catch, even if he/she does not necessarily kill it. It may be killed by someone else. There's also a belief that a wounded animal must be killed as soon as possible to minimize its suffering. The same term is used in Cape Dorset and possibly by other South Baffin communities for an animal or someone that is totally unaware of the presence of others and therefore in a relaxed state.

**-qulangiqsijuq** ( qu-la-ngiq-si-juq): When a group of people hunt for young seals by waiting in spring at haul outs or breathing holes on sea ice. In a group, they work together to ensure that the seal is caught. The more people taking part in a group, the better the chance of getting what is hunted. This was one of the only ways Inuit were able to put food on the table, so it was important the seal was caught.

**-naqqiktuq** (naq-qik-tuq): This means to become alive again after being dead or to make a come-back after nearly dying. Examples: "back on his feet" from a chronic disease, or frozen husky puppies that freeze from the extreme cold but are revived after thawing them out, or a wounded animal in a semi-unconscious state that gives hope to the pursuing hunters but all of sudden, comes to its senses and escapes.

**-ungirilaak** (u-ngir-laak): A sack/pouch made out of an animal skin (such as a seal or a walrus) to store meat. Meat stored in a skin will be fresh much longer than meat stored any other way besides freezing it. Meat exposed to elements (air, wind, sun, etc.) may become old-looking in a day, whereas meat stored in an animal skin will last a week or so without going bad. Even if the meat stored inside a sack made from a seal skin starts to decompose, it will still be edible as the bacteria in it will be harmless to humans for a longer period of time than if the meat was fully exposed to the elements. Harmless bacteria is found in a fermented meat, whereas, harmful bacteria is found in a rotten meat – there is difference.

**-quqqaq-** quqqaqsimajuq (Quq-qaq-tuq or quq-qaq-si-ma-juq): (As in... There's pain in my lung(s) when I inhale, but not when I exhale. How do I get rid of the pain)? Inuit believe that there may be some "nuvak" (mucus) in the lungs or one of the lungs or when a person is suffering from pneumonia. There's a special way to get rid of the pain. You hold your palm a certain way and pound it back and forth where the pain is.

**-aqaqtuq** (a-qaq-tuq): Are songs/words of affection that parents or others use to make a child react, or to remind them that they are loved. Some folks even come up with tunes to say their "piece" to their loved ones. This writer has one for each of his children as well as one for each grandchild. It's really encouraging children to be the best they can be. Every child likes to be shown love and affection. Even as adults, we like to hear nice things about ourselves.

**-qaqajuq** (qa-qa-juq): Reaction from aqaq-. This is the reaction to songs/words of affection. Children may react to, dance to, or smile proudly as a reaction to the nice song/words. A grown person may qaq- if someone from the opposite sex makes certain gestures or says nice things to them. A reaction may be from embarrassment or agreement.

A person is also considered to be qaqajuq if they are really not trying and put a little or no effort to try. It may be as simple as someone trying to drum dance for the first time, without putting much effort into it. He or she is obviously making less of an effort in doing something right. For example, when a person throws a harpoon and lands it much closer than or much less accurately than the viewers' expectations. The harpoon thrower is toying with the observers' psyches by pretending to be more incompetent than he actually is capable.

**-ungalujuq** (u-nga-lu-juq): Means to make a snow wall (an iglu or a snow shelter) from the wind. They say uquutaliuqtuq or uquutaqtuq in the Clyde River dialect. Thus, uquutaqsimalluniguuq supuujuuqtuq, utaqqijuq his hunting partner, or aulisaqtuq.

**-kalluuk** (kal-luuk): Is a word that refers to a lightning brother and sister in the Inuit world. Kalluk (kal-luk) is used when referring to a singular lightning. Kalluk (spelling variations) is a popular name in the arctic. The act of lightning is "kalliq", thus kalliqtuq when there is a lightning activity. Kalluuk may well have been used as result of a legend to state the origin of kalliq in a mythical way.

Place Names:

**-Kangiqtugaapik** (Ka-ngiq-tu-gaa-pik): Clyde River- it means a miniature likeness of a fiord.

**-Mittimatalik** (Mit-ti-ma-ta-lik): Pond Inlet – a place where a person named Mittima is buried.

**-Ikpiarjuk** (ik-piar-juq): Arctic Bay –I would tend to think the name refers to the shape of the bay that resembles the shape of a pocket.

Igloolik's traditional name is "Ikpiarjuk" and it comes from the shape of the bay that resembles a pocket, I've been told.

**Sanirajak** (Sa-ni-ra-ja)- Hall Beach

**-Ausuittuq** (Au-suit-tuq): Grise Fiord – the place that never melts – I am not sure what the traditional name is but I do know that the name was given by people living there in 1960's or 1970's.

**-Qausuittuq** (Qau-suit-tuq): Resolute Bay – the place where dawn never comes – again, the name was given only a few decades ago.

**-Qikiqtarjuaq** (Qi-kiq-tar-juaq): Broughton Island – A big island.

**-Kimmirut** (Kim-mi-rut): – likeness of a human heel.

**-tukiqtuq** (tu-kiq-tuq): To soften skins by using the feet similar to traditional wine making. A rope is run through the holes that had been used to stretch and dry the skin and tightened somewhat, so that the skin is not flat on the ground when you start stomping on it.

**-angulajuq** (a-ngu-la-juq): Is the chewing of a piece of skin to soften it in when making kamiik or mitts.

**-kiiliqtuq** (kii-liq-tuq): Chewing seal skin line to soften it.

**-majjaktuq** (maj-jak-tuq): Refers to the scraping and cleaning of a (seal) skin. To scrape away the excess amount of membrane immediately underneath the seal fat, prior to stretching and drying.

**-nirukkaq** (ni-ruk-kaq): Refers to the stomach contents, e.g. in a caribou, muskox or clam.

**-piluq** (pi-luq): Is the singular form of Caribou hair. To identify caribou hair, Inuit will use one word without mentioning “caribou”. Unlike human hair, caribou hair is hollow. Great floatation devises! Kivalliq calls piluq, “hiuq.”

**-killaq** (kil-laq): Worn out ice that deteriorates from the bottom by strong ocean currents and/or from the top by the warmth of the water on the ice. Hunters have to watch out for deteriorated areas, otherwise their machine may fall through the ice, or they themselves may. Ice may deteriorate from the top as well if something was placed on the ice such as a rock or garbage that melted right through from the heat of the sun. A person may lay a rock on top of the ice so it melts right through after a while, and use the hole for fishing. The same word is used by some dialects for a hole. It could be a hole in the ice, pants, parka, etc...

**-maktaa** (mak-taaq): Is Narwhal/beluga skin. Mamaqtuq! Some dialects use the term slightly differently, thus “mattaaq”.

**-maktak** (Mak-taq): Is the skin from a Bowhead Whale.

**-aqtuqsijuq/uqumangiqtuq** (aq-tuq-si-juq/ u-qu-ma-ngiq-tuq) :When the body is asleep but the mind is still active (opposite of sleepwalking) when the mind is asleep but the body is active.

There are many words that are not in English but hopefully I’ve given you an idea what I’m referring to. Inuktitut words will vary from community to community, and very often, person to person.

For further clarification, please ask a local person.

Tavvauvutit,

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**QSO**

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