

The Semantics and Pragmatics of the North Slope Iñupiaq postbase *niq*

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*To my grandmothers Tove Carstensen and Inger Margrethe Rix*



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## **Glossing Abbreviations**

1	first person
2	second person
3	third Person
ABS	absolute case
DEM	demonstrative
DU	dualis
HEARSAY	hearsay evidential
LOC	locative case
IND	indicative mood
INT	interrogative mood
MOD	modalis case
NEG	negation
obj	object
PART	particle
PL	pluralis
POSS	possessive
PRES	present tense
PROX	proximate
PST	past tense
RN	root to noun derivative
SG	singularis
subj	subject
VIA	vialis case



## Chapter 1: Introduction

Iñupiaq is the dialect of Inuit spoken in Alaska. The continuum of dialects constituting the Inuit language stretches from the Bering Strait and Seward Peninsula in Alaska into the west, across northern Canada to Kalaallisut in Greenland to the east (MacLean, 1986a). It is not agreed upon to which degree the dialects of Inuit located in the two extremes of the continuum are mutually intelligible.

The mature age of its only 2.144 fluent speakers (Krauss, 2007) makes Alaskan Iñupiaq an endangered dialect, categorized by UNESCO as ‘severely endangered’ (UNESCO, 1995-2010).

By means of a detailed analysis of the meaning and use of the morpheme *niq*, based on interviews with native speakers, this thesis contributes to the description of Alaskan Iñupiaq. The data, upon which the analysis is based, consists of the knowledge shared with me by native speakers of the North Slope sub-dialect which is spoken at the arctic coast in northern Alaska. The analysis is an attempt to systematize thoughts and communication intentions behind the choice to use *niq* in an utterance when communicating about everyday situations. The recordings of the interviews are to be archived in the Alaska Native Language Archive at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Moreover, the analysis of the semantics and pragmatics of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* is intended to contribute to the field of general linguistics. The process of analyzing a linguistic expression contributes to the understanding of relevant linguistic phenomena. Regardless of whether existing labels in the linguistics literature prove suitable to account for the findings, or whether the understanding of certain linguistic phenomena needs to be revisited in order to account for an expression under investigation, the very attempt to apply notions from theoretical linguistics to new data may challenge and improve the understanding of the relevant categories.

In the chapter immediately following the introduction, Chapter 2, the reader gets an impression of the place where Iñupiaq is spoken, and a brief introduction to some of the historical factors resulting in the endangerment of Alaskan Iñupiaq language and culture. Iñupiaq’s linguistic affiliations are also described in Chapter 2.

Like other members of the Eskimo-Aleut language family, Iñupiaq is agglutinative and contains a large inventory of affixes called ‘postbases’ in the Inuit linguistics literature. Chapter 3 gives a basic overview of Iñupiaq morphosyntax, and reviews existing descriptions of the meaning of the

Iñupiaq postbase *niq*. MacLean's (1986b; forthcoming) works of North Slope Iñupiaq are considered in the present thesis, together with two doctoral theses (Nagai, 2006; Lanz, 2010) on Malimiut Iñupiaq, which is, like North Slope Iñupiaq, a sub-dialect of North Alaskan Iñupiaq. Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010) both label *niq* an evidential modal. The finding that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* does not display evidential or modal properties is therefore of special interest.

The method employed in the data collection is explicated in detail in Chapter 4, as it is the author's intention that the thesis may facilitate other researchers conducting semantic and pragmatic fieldwork.

Asking speakers of a language directly what a morpheme in isolation means is not the way forward, when a linguist intends to collect data upon which to establish facts about linguistic meaning. Even as fluent speakers of a language, we are not likely to render the full palette of meanings of a linguistic expression when faced with such questions. Especially explanations of expressions with abstract meaning, i.e. tense affixes and modals, are a complicated task to carry out on the spot. Hence a more sophisticated method of asking questions about meaning and talking about meaning is desired when the linguist wishes to gain an understanding of the meaning of the expression under investigation. The method for collecting data in the present study builds on Matthewson (2006) and Peterson (2010b) who show how meaning can be approached in conversation with native speakers by means of discussing the appropriateness of uttering a sentence with the expression under investigation in an imaginary scenario.

Chapter 5 presents and describes the data collected on the meaning of *niq*. Consultants' answers to my questions, as well as their reflections and elaborations on the meaning of sentences, constitute the dataset upon which the proposed analysis of *niq*'s semantics and pragmatics is based. In order to facilitate the insight in the data leading to the analysis, I have chosen to extract direct quotes from the interviews.

Because *niq* is described as an evidential modal in Malimiut Iñupiaq (Nagai, 2006; Lanz, 2010), a considerable amount of the data collected are hence statements concerning appropriate information sources for the propositional content when using *niq* in an utterance. In Chapter 6, I argue why *niq* in North Slope Iñupiaq can not be an evidential modal judging from the collected data. The data collected on information sources and the use of *niq* shall however prove useful to the description of *niq*'s epistemic restrictions.

The analysis proposed for North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* is outlined and applied in Chapter 7, where I shall argue that *niq* is a marker of narrow information focus in the sense of Gundel and Fretheim's (2004) relational focus.

Chapter 8 summarizes the thesis and the main conclusions.



## Chapter 2: Iñupiaq Language and Culture

### 2.0 Introduction

Alaskan Iñupiaq is part of the dialect continuum constituting the Inuit language. It is not agreed whether the dialects in the extreme ends of the continuum are mutually intelligible. The linguistic affiliations of Alaska Iñupiaq are treated in §2.1.

Whereas dialects of Inuit are spoken by 24,500 people in Canada and 47,000 people in Greenland, only 2,144 people speak the Alaskan Iñupiaq dialect (Krauss, 2007). The fluent speakers are of mature age, and Iñupiaq is rarely passed on to children at home anymore; Alaskan Iñupiaq is an endangered dialect. This challenging situation Iñupiaq shares with the rest of the approximately 20 native languages of Alaska. The causes of this situation are manifold, and worth a study on their own. §2.2.1 gives a simplified explanation of some of the historical reasons for the present situation. Literature recommendations to the reader interested in a better understanding of these important issues are given throughout the chapter. §2.2.2 describes how Iñupiaq is taught as a second language on the North Slope today.

To give the reader a sense of the place and culture in which Alaska Iñupiaq is spoken, §2.3 briefly describes chosen aspects of Iñupiaq culture and life in Barrow.

### 2.1 Linguistic Affiliations

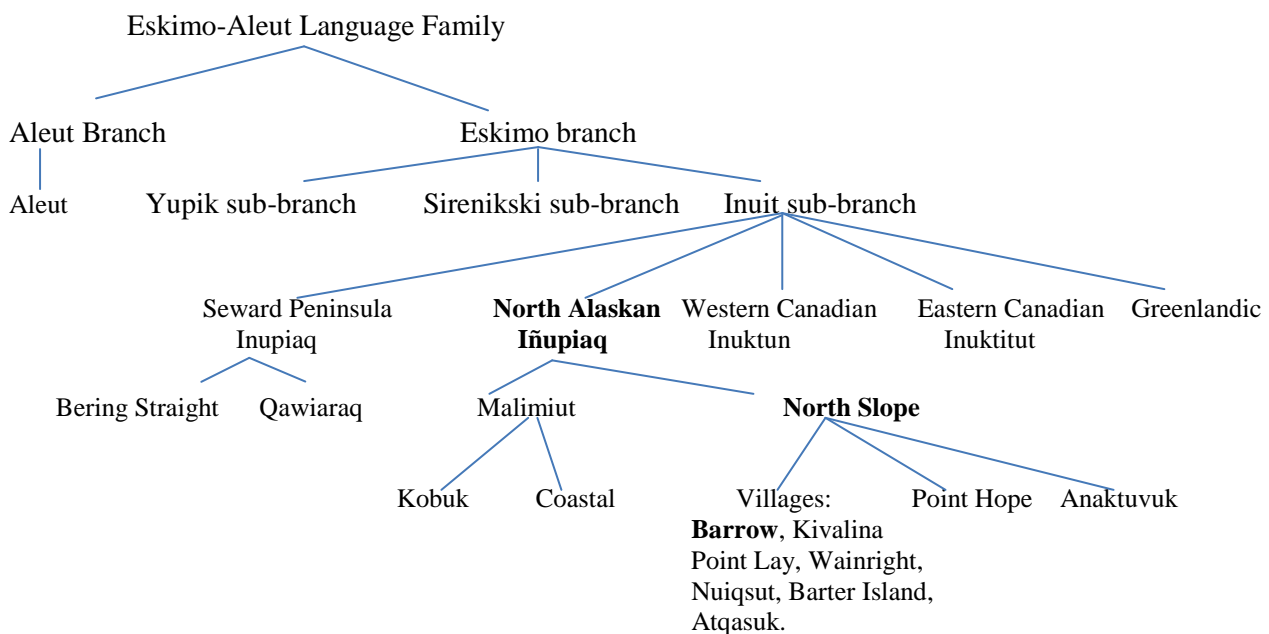
The Inuit in Alaska call themselves Iñupiat<sup>1</sup> (MacLean, 1986a), and Iñupiaq is the Alaskan name for the Inuit language. The Inuit dialects are divided into four groups: Inupiaq in Alaska, Inuktun in western Canada, Inuktitut in eastern Canada and Kalaallisut in Greenland (Dorais, 2010). In 2007, Inuit had 2,144 speakers in Alaska, 24,500 in Canada and 47,000 in Greenland (Krauss, 2007). Whereas Nagai (2006) emphasizes the unintelligibility of the east-west extremes of the Inuit language, Dorais writes that all Inuit speakers “..share a common means of communication and, with some adjustments, can understand each other” (2010:27). Lanz (2010) writes that speakers of the Malimiut Coastal dialect had difficulties understanding Kobuk and King Island which, like Coastal Malimiut, are also dialects of Alaska Inupiaq. During my stay in Barrow, a speaker of Kalaallisut told that me she could communicate in her own language when speaking to the Iñupiat in Barrow.

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<sup>1</sup> *Iñupiat* is plural of *Iñupiaq* which means ‘real person’.

Inuit is a member of the Eskimo-Aleut language family. The Aleutian branch of the family consists of the Unangax language, which is spoken in the Aleutian and Pribilof islands of Alaska by 150 people, and by five people in the Commander Islands of Russia (Dorais, 2010). Not only the Aleutian language, but also the traditional Aleutian culture is closely related to Eskimo traditional culture (ibid). The Eskimo branch is divided into the following sub-branches: Inuit, Yupik and Sireniksi. The only language constituting the Sireniksi sub-branch, Sireniksi, is now extinct. The Yupik languages Central Siberian Yupik, Naukanski, Alutiiq and Central Alaskan Yup'ik respectively have 1200, 60, 200 and 10,400 speakers (Dorais, 2010:25). Yupik grammar and phonology are more similar to the Inuit dialects than are the grammar and phonology of Unangax (Dorais, 2010).

Figure 1. Eskimo-Aleut Language Family (based on MacLean (1986a) and Nagai (2006))



The Inupiaq dialect is divided into two sub-branches; Seward Peninsula Inupiaq<sup>2</sup> and North Alaskan Iñupiaq (Nagai, 2006; Dorais, 2010). Seward Peninsula Inupiaq consists of the Bering Strait and Qawiaraq dialects (MacLean, 1986a; Dorais, 2010). The former further consists of the Diomedé, Wales and King Islands dialects, and the latter of the Teller and Fish River dialects (Dorais, 2010). North Alaska Iñupiaq consists of Malimiut and North Slope. Malimiut Iñupiaq is divided into Kobuk and Coastal Iñupiaq. Following MacLean (1986a), North Slope Iñupiaq consists of the sub-

<sup>2</sup> The sound represented in the orthography as ‘ñ’ is found in North Alaskan Iñupiaq, but lacks in the Seward Peninsula Inupiaq (Kaplan in Nagai, 2006).



dialect spoken in the villages of Barrow, Kivalina, Point Lay, Wainright, Nuiqsut, Barter Island and Atkasuk, and two sub-dialects spoken in Point Hope and Anaktuvuk respectively.

The analysis proposed for North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* is based on data obtained in Barrow, also known as Point Barrow.

## 2.2 The Situation of Iñupiaq Language

### 2.2.1 Native Languages in Alaska

Alaska is home to approximately 20 native languages. Map 2, developed at Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, shows which areas are home to the respective languages and their people.



Map 1. Native Languages in Alaska (Krauss, 1982)

Regrettably, history has been hard on the native languages, people and cultures of Alaska. As recent as in the 1960's, children were punished physically or mentally for speaking a language other than English at school (e.g. Alton, 1998). Many people report that they restrained from speaking their native language to their own children, because they were ashamed of their language, and in order to spare their children from going through the same humiliations (ibid.). Many children were sent to boarding schools administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Here they had little contact with their family, culture and language. Needless to say, such circumstances lead to a lot of stress for the children and their families.

Alton (1998) writes that throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many children were encouraged by their families to learn as much English as possible in order to succeed in the new world. English were becoming the language of administration and education. Some teachers even warned parents about

the “danger” that speaking the native language to children would confuse them and compromise their learning at school<sup>3</sup>.

The history of structural oppression of native languages and cultures has led to a rapid decrease in number of speakers of the native languages in Alaska. Those with the highest amount of speakers are Iñupiaq and Central Alaskan Yup'ik with respectively 2.144 and 10.400 speakers (Krauss, 2007:408). The Athabascan language Eyak is extinct, Koyukon has 150 speakers and Holikachuk has 5 (ibid.). Please note that these numbers are from 2007.

### 2.2.2 Iñupiaq on the North Slope

Throughout Alaska, the language of instruction is English. On the North Slope, Iñupiaq as a second language is obligatory in the elementary school, and offered as an electoral subject in middle and high school. Students are also taught skills such as skin sewing at school, and the Iñupiaq values<sup>4</sup> form the basis for the curriculum development (North Slope School Borough District, n.d.). The Ilisagvik Collage in Barrow offers certificates in Iñupiaq language and fine arts and an Iñupiaq Associate of Arts Degree.

Barrow has two high schools, one middle school and one elementary school. I was lucky to be invited to observe the teaching of Iñupiaq at all levels.

The method of teaching Iñupiaq at the schools on the North Slope is based on Dr. Stephen Greymorning's Accelerated Second Language Acquisition method (ASLA). Dr. Stephen Greymorning “[...]stresses not to use text, only pictures when teaching his method of instruction” (Cook, Cook, Hyggen, Searson, Corrigan, McLeod & Greymorning, 2007:1). In the classrooms on the North Slope, Iñupiaq is taught by means of language games, e.g. the card game ‘Go Fish’ and the computer programme Visual Inupiaq Vocabulary Acquisition (VIVA). VIVA is based on the

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<sup>3</sup> I am not in a position to describe the emotions connected to the traumas of history and the knowledge of how to overcome them. Instead I strongly recommend Napoleon's essay *Yuuyaraq: The Way of the Human Being* (1996) to anyone interested in understanding some of the emotions connected to growing up in an endangered culture. Napoleon is Yupik, but when the essay was recommended to me, I was told that much in the essay is directly transferable to the challenges faces by the Iñupiaq people through history. The reader interested in the challenges related to changing hegemonic structures, may benefit from the writings by Social Anthropologist Aviâja Egede Lyngø (e.g. Lyngø, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> In 1980, William Hensley gathered Iñupiaq elders and asked which values are important to pass on to the next generations (see Hensley, 2008). The outcome was a list of Iñupiaq values: Knowledge of Language, Sharing, Respect for Others, Cooperation, Respect for Elders, Love for Children, Hard Work, Knowledge of Family Tree, Avoidance of Conflict, Respect for Nature, Spirituality, Humor, Family Roles, Hunter Success, Domestic Skills, Humility, and Responsibility to Tribe. See I.e. Topkok (forthcoming) for a recent study of the Iñupiaq values.

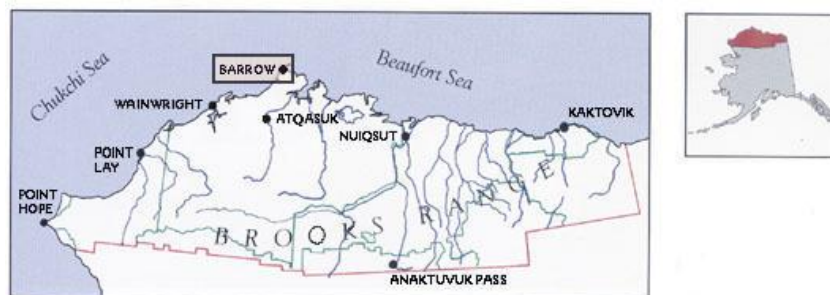
ASLA method, and the basic tasks when studying Iñupiaq by means of VIVA are pairing of pictures with spoken Iñupiaq phrases.

Literacy and explicit explanations of grammatical structures are left out until very advanced levels.

### 2.3 The Context of Iñupiaq

Ukpeagvik is the traditional name of Barrow. Ukpeagvik means ‘place where snowy owls are hunted’. For 4.000 years (Explanatorium, 2012), Barrow has been home to the Iñupiat.

With its 4.429 inhabitants (North Slope Borough, 2012), Barrow is the biggest town on the North Slope, and serves as the administrative centre of North Slope Borough. Southwest from the Brooks Range is the North West Arctic Borough, and here the Malimiut Iñupiaq dialect is spoken.



Map 2. The North Slope (North Slope Borough, 2012)

Many residents in Barrow supplement their diet with subsistence food such as whale or seal. In Barrow there is whale hunt in spring as well and in the fall. Other villages on the North Slope only hunt whales once a year. Everybody follows the whale hunt, and the radio brings news about how it is going. When the town gets a whale, everybody rejoice, and many people travel to the beach to help butchering the whale or merely to share the joy. The whale must be butchered quickly, because the warm whale body may melt through the ice in places where the shore is not solid ground. The process of butchering is highly effective, and the whale meat is shared with the whole community. The Iñupiat have hunted whales for thousands of years! In the earlier days, whales of approximately 60 tons each were dragged onshore manually; it was just a question of enough helping hands. Today, motor boats and show machines aid the whale hunt, but skin boats, which have the advantage of being less noisy than motor boats, are still in use.

Traditional Iñupiaq dancing is practised throughout Alaska. I was lucky to participate in one of Pavva Iñupiaq Dancers' practice session. The members of the group, which is based in Fairbanks, are of all ages. Most of the time, the men and boys played the drums while girls and women danced. By means of the dance moves, one is capable of telling a story, e.g. about a seal hunt or construction of a house. The moves are usually repeated symmetrically, and the result is an elegant and interesting dance. The deep sounds of the drums and the men's singing add a very powerful element to the experience.

## **2.4 Summary**

Alaskan Iñupiaq is the Inuit dialect spoken in Alaska by 2.144 (Krauss, 2007:408). The present description and the semantic and pragmatic analysis of the postbase *niq* is based on interviews with speakers of the North Slope Iñupiaq sub-dialect as spoken in Barrow.

A history of cultural and linguistic oppression has left Alaskan Iñupiaq highly endangered. Iñupiaq is no longer passed on to children at home. However, Iñupiaq is taught as a second language in the schools throughout northern Alaska. On the North Slope, the Iñupiaq language education is based on the ASLA method developed by Greymorning, where focus is on understanding spoken phrases rather than grammar patterns and literacy.

## Chapter 3: Iñupiaq Language Structure and Existing Descriptions of *niq*

### 3.0 Introduction

The sparse amount of linguistic descriptions and analyses of North Slope Iñupiaq includes Kaplan (1981) on Iñupiaq phonology and MacLean's (1986a; 1986b) school grammars, doctoral thesis (1995) and dictionary (forthcoming). As for Malimiut Iñupiaq, which constitutes the North Alaskan Iñupiaq dialect together with North Slope Iñupiaq, Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010) have devoted their doctoral theses to one sub-dialect each.

After introducing the basic morphosyntactic properties of Iñupiaq with emphasis on verbal constructions in §3.1, this chapter reviews existing descriptions of the semantics of the postbase *niq* and opens questions in need for further research.

Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010) both offer grammatical descriptions, and their brief descriptions of the meaning of Malimiut Iñupiaq *niq* are reviewed in §3.2. As we shall see, Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010) both describe *niq* as an evidential modal, and the subsection explores the theoretical implications concerned with the application of this label and points out questions to be pursued.

§3.3 renders the entries and examples of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* according to MacLean (1986b; forthcoming). §3.3 summarizes the questions raised throughout the chapter, which are to be pursued in the present study of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*. The summary also contains two tables to facilitate the overview of descriptions and translations of *niq* found in the existing literature.

### 3.1 Iñupiaq Language Structure

The Eskimo languages are agglutinative, and very rich on morphology. As for verbs, the only obligatory inflection is an ending which specifies mood, person and number, whereas nouns must have an ending specifying case and number. Any other affixes, including the postbases, are optional (Fortescue, 2003; Lanz, 2010; Nagai, 2006). Nagai (2006) models the structure of the Iñupiaq word as follows:

$$\frac{\text{base} + (\text{any number of postbases})}{\text{stem}} + \text{ending} + \text{any number of enclitics} \quad (\text{ibid.:35})$$

In all examples I have encountered, *niq* is the postbase closest to the inflectional suffix. The examples in (1) below, constructed in accordance with MacLean’s (1986a) grammar of North Slope Iñupiaq for first year students, illustrate the North Slope Iñupiaq verb phrase:

- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| (1) | <p>a. <i>niġiruuq</i><br/> niġi-ruq<br/> niġi tuq<br/> eat 3.SG.PRES.IND<br/> ‘he/she is eating’</p> | <p>b. <i>niġiniqsuuq</i><br/> niġi-niq-suuq<br/> niġi niq tuq<br/> eat <i>niq</i> 3.SG.PRES.IND<br/> ‘he/she is eating-<i>niq</i>’</p> |
|-----|--|--|

An Inupiaq verb always marks the person and number of one or two arguments (Nagai, 2006; Lanz, 2010). For the sake of simplicity, I have limited the illustration to intransitive constructions. (1a) consists of a base *niġi* ‘eat’ and the inflectional suffix *-ruq* indicating first person singular indicative present. *-ruq* is the allomorph of *-tuq*, which occurs when the stem ends with a vowel. (1a) illustrates the minimal verbal construction in Iñupiaq.

In (1b), the postbase *niq* is attached to the base *niġi* ‘eat’. Since *niq* is a verb elaborating postbase, the result is a verb stem *niġiniq-* ‘eat-*niq*’. The obligatory inflectional suffix is again *-tuq* ‘first person singular indicative present’. The /i/ in *niq* is a strong vowel, and the consonant cluster /q-t/ in /niq-tuq/ is followed by a vowel. When attachment of a suffix to the stem results in a strong /i/ being followed by a consonant cluster, which again is followed by a vowel, the alveolar consonant of the consonant cluster palatalizes, and the morpheme /tuq/ is hence realized as the allomorph [suq] (MacLean, 1986a:22).

While postbases like *niq* can only attach to verbs and always yield verb stems (MacLean, 1986b:78), some postbases can only attach to noun bases and always yield noun stems. Yet other postbases change the grammatical category of the base by converting verb bases into noun stems and vice versa. *-qaq-* ‘to have’ is the kind of postbase which attaches to noun bases to yield a verb stem. This is shown in (2), where the noun base *umiaq* ‘boat’ together with *qaq* ‘to have’ form a verb stem which requires the obligatory verbal inflection for person, number and mood. *qaq* is the kind of postbase which deletes the final consonant of the base (MacLean, 1986a), and hence the stem *umiaqaq-* and not *\*umiaqqaq-*.

- (2) *umiaqaqtuq*  
 umia-qaq-tuq  
 umiaq qaq tuq  
 boat have 3.SG.PRES.IND  
 ‘he/she has a boat’

*Niq* may attach to the stem *umiaqaq-* like it may attach to any other verb stem. Judging from the example sentences with *niq* in MacLean’s grammar (1986b:78), and the texts and example sentences in Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010), it does not seem possible to have anything between *niq* and the inflectional suffix in a verb. Moreover, consultants have judged constructions with morphemes between *niq* and the ending unacceptable.

Some verb elaborating postbases change the valency of the verb (Nagai, 2006:115). This is not a property of *niq*, and *niq* may occur in transitive as well as intransitive constructions. Also, *niq* is not limited to indicative mood and may occur in interrogative constructions as illustrated in (3):

- (3) qanuq inniqpa?  
 qanuq it-niq-pa  
 how be-niq-3.PRES.SG.INT  
 ‘how is he?’

(MacLean, 1986b:78)<sup>5</sup>

### 3.2 Previous Semantic Descriptions of *niq*

#### 3.2.1 Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010) and Evidentiality

Nagai (2006) is concerned with the agentive and patientive verb bases in Upper Kobuk Iñupiaq, which is the variety of the sub-dialect Malimiut Iñupiaq spoken in the Alaskan village Ambler. Lanz (2010) is a grammar of Iñupiaq morphosyntax based on Malimiut Coastal Iñupiaq as spoken in the Alaskan village Noatak.

Nagai (2006) is devoted to the phonology, morphology and syntax of Upper Kobuk Iñupiaq and is especially concerned with verb bases. Hence, Nagai (ibid.) only contains brief information on the meaning of the individual postbases. Nagai (ibid.) adopts Palmer’s (2001) framework for modal meaning, and in the section on modality, Nagai writes that “+*nîq-* is evidential. It indicates that the

<sup>5</sup> The Iñupiaq sentence and the English translation is from MacLean (1986b). The glosses are my own responsibility.

speaker got the information given in the sentence from indirect evidence<sup>6</sup> (2006:110). In the list of abbreviations, Nagai lists EVID, which stands for ‘evidential’ (2006:xviii), and glosses *niq* as EVID in all examples as well as in the texts in the appendix (2006).

Like Nagai (2006), Lanz (2010) follows Palmer’s (2001) division of modal meaning, but is not explicit on whether *niq* is an epistemic or evidential modal. It is, however, reasonable to assume that Lanz (2010) takes *niq*’s status as an evidential modal for granted, as she glosses *niq* as EVID and translates *niq* into ‘evidently’ in some of her example sentences, as shown in (4). At other occasions, Lanz (2010) glosses and translates *niq* as ‘apparently’ as in (5).

All Nagai’s (2006) and Lanz’s (2010) examples are rendered exactly as they appear in the respective originals:

(4)

Piquum uligruat paipiuranun qilarniqsuq.  
 piquk-um uliyzuaq-t paipiuzaq-nun qilak-niq-tuq  
 p.n.-ERG.SG blanket-ABS.PL baby-ALL.PL knit-EVID-3S.INDIC  
 ‘Evidently Piquk knits blankets for babies.’

(Lanz, 2010:62)

(5)

Aullaqsruḡniaqaqsiñiqsuk.  
 aullaqsuq-niaq-aqsi-niq-tuk  
 go.berry.picking-FUT-INCH-apparently-3D.INDIC  
 ‘Apparently they (dual) began to go berry picking.’

(Lanz, 2010:95)

In Nagai (2006), an Iñupiaq sentence containing *niq* is often accompanied by an English translation string containing the word *evidently*, as it is the case in (6) below:

(6)

Uilauraqaqtlaiñnikkanjich.  
 uil̩aq:uraaq-qu-tla:it+niq-kkanjich  
 eat.raw-slowly-tell\_to-can-NEG-EVID-PRT.3P3P  
 ‘Evidently they never told [us] to eat them raw.’

(Nagai, 2006:112)

<sup>6</sup> Besides the symbol -, also +, =, ~ and ÷ among others, appear on affixes in Nagai (2006). These symbols refer to the morpho-phonological process taking place when the respective affixes attach to a stem (e.g. by deleting material of a certain kind from the stem). I refer the interested reader to Nagai (2006:27-35).



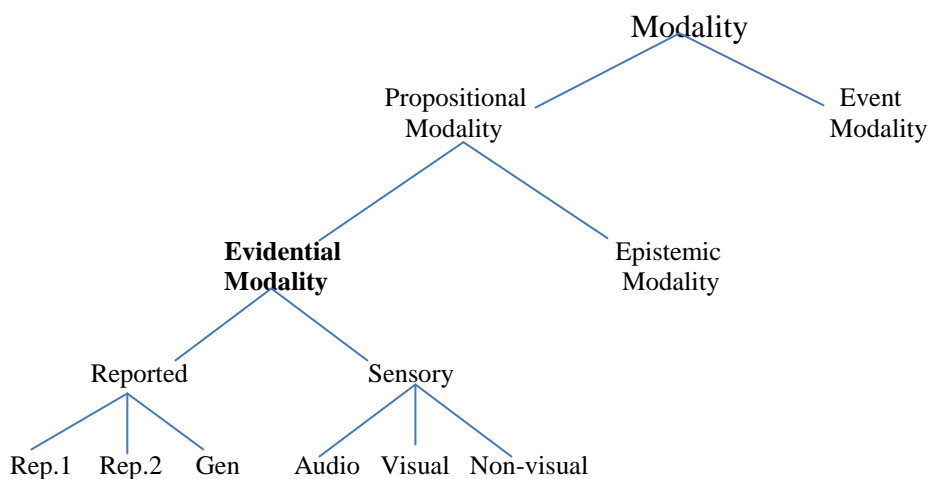
*Niq* may, however, be present in an Iñupiaq sentence without the word *evidently* occurring in the English translation in Nagai (2006):

(7)  
 Ukuak nukatpiak tikiñjaniktignigaak.  
 nukatpiaq-k tikit±anik^tiq+niq+kaak  
 PR.REL.D young.man-REL.D reach-PERF-quickly-EVID-IND.3D3S  
 Two young men reached her.  
 (Nagai, 2006:312)

Nagai (2006:109) adopts Palmer’s (2001) division of modal meaning into Event Modality and Propositional Modality. As an evidential modal, *niq* falls under Propositional Modality, which is “concerned with the speaker’s attitude to the truth-value or factual status of the proposition”<sup>7</sup> (Palmer in Nagai, 2006:109). The propositional modal expressions in Iñupiaq are then divided into epistemic and evidential modals, and *niq* is the only evidential modal in Nagai, (2006:110).

According to Palmer (2001:24), epistemic modals indicate speaker judgment about the proposition’s truth, whereas evidential modals indicate the speaker’s evidence for the proposition’s truth. Figure 2. is an illustration of the propositional modal branch of Palmer’s (2001:22) summary of ‘basic categories’ in he monograph on Mood and Modality.

Figure 2. Palmer’s (2001:22) categories of Modality



<sup>7</sup> Event modals, which are not relevant to the present study, “refer to events that are not actualized, events that have not taken place but are merely potential” (Palmer in Nagai, 2006:109).

Reported and sensory evidential modality are the main types of evidential modality according to Palmer's (2001) division of the modal semantic space. It is not clear to me in which of these evidential modal categories the 'indirect evidential' modal *niq* fits. However, Palmer (ibid.) does seem to recognize that some languages, such as Turkish, rather divide the semantic space of evidential modality into direct and indirect evidence. The Turkish marker of indirect experience, *mİş*, may be used when the speaker infers that the propositional content is the case based on visible evidence, or when the speaker has heard that the propositional content is the case (Palmer, 2001:47). Judging from Nagai (2006), *niq* covers the semantic space of indirect evidence, but it is still not clear how the meaning of *niq* relates to Palmer's (2001) 'basic categories' of modal meaning. It remains to be explored what counts as 'indirect evidence' in relation to a true and felicitous use of *niq* in Iñupiaq.

Turkish *mİş* encodes indirect experience, but it is not given that *niq* may, as it is the case for *mİş*, be used when the proposition represents hearsay information. Iñupiaq has a hearsay enclitic *-guuq*, which is categorized as such in Nagai (2006)<sup>8</sup>, and thus *niq* and *mİş* probably do not cover exactly the same semantic space, even though they are both labeled as indirect evidentials. The first step in determining the exact meaning of *niq* is therefore to find the set of information sources compatible with the use of *niq* in an utterance.

This study partly follows Aikhenvald (2003; 2004) when determining whether *niq* is an evidential. According to Aikhenvald (2003; 2004), proper evidentials are grammatically obligatory markers, whose core semantics are indication of the *existence* of information source as well as specification of the *type*<sup>9</sup> of this information source. What exactly is meant by core semantics is not clear to me. I shall however interpret the notion in a methodological perspective in the next chapter; this requirement of Aikhenvald's (2003; 2004) could be taken to mean that the speakers of the language must somehow associate the given information source with the given expression. The requirement that evidentials be obligatory is however at best irrelevant to the study of *niq*. Aikhenvald (2003; 2004) probably posed the requirement for evidentials that they are grammatically obligatory,

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<sup>8</sup> Keeping Palmer's division of modal meaning in mind, it seems strange that Nagai (2006) does not describe the hearsay expression *-guuq* as a modal. Recalling that Nagai's (2006) main focus is on phonology, morphology and syntax, the decision not to treat *-guuq* in the section on modality in Nagai (2006) must be due to *-guuq*'s grammatical status as an enclitic, whereas the rest of the modal expressions are postbases.

<sup>9</sup> An evidential may be semantically more or less vague crosslinguistically. In Abkhaz, there is a twoway distinction; 'non-firsthand' and 'everything else'. The meanings 'inference based on visual traces' and 'reported information' are both covered by the 'non-firsthand' evidential marker (Aikhenvald, 2003:4). In other languages, like the Jaqi languages, the meanings 'reported information' and 'information based on inference' are conveyed by different markers.

because Aikhenvald (2003; 2004) wishes to establish the notion of a grammatical category of evidentiality on a par with categories like gender. In this sense, any given evidential expression in Iñupiaq would fail Aikhenvald's (2003; 2004) requirements for being a proper evidential, as verbs in Inuit are only obligatorily inflected for person, number, tense and mood (Fortescue, 2003; Lanz, 2010; Nagai, 2006). It is therefore very interesting that Aikhenvald's (2003) book on evidentiality across languages contains a chapter on evidentiality in West Greenlandic! According to Aikhenvald (2003; 2004), lexical expressions disqualify as evidentials *because of* their optionality, but the evidential expressions in Eskimo-languages are seen as evidentials *in spite of* their optionality. It appears to me that questions concerning optionality are outside the scope of the investigation and discussion of *niq*'s evidential properties. The main question concerning *niq* and evidentiality is rather whether, and in that case how, *niq* restricts the information source of the embedded proposition. I therefore partly follow Aikhenvald's (2003; 2004) requirement for evidentials that they encode the existence and the kind of a certain information source.

Malimiut Iñupiaq *niq* is categorized as a modal in Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010), but the modal relation is not specified. An investigation of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* must therefore pursue the question whether a semantic account of *niq* should include the specification of a modal relation, i.e. of necessity or possibility, between the embedded proposition and a modal source. The modal source is likely to be an experience if we have to do with an evidential modal; the speaker has experienced something which makes him believe that *p* in *niq(p)* is the case. But not all evidentials are modals (see Peterson, 2010a), and hence it is not given that North Slope Iñupiaq indeed lends itself to a modal semantics even if it should turn out to be an evidential.

As we shall see later, it was not possible to isolate a set of information sources compatible with an utterance of the shape *niq(p)* based on the data collected for the present study of *niq*. As will be clear in Chapter 5 and 6, North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* does not encode evidential meaning. A discussion on the relation between evidentiality and modality is hence irrelevant to the present study of *niq*.

### 3.2.2 MacLean (1986b; forthcoming)

Dr. MacLean is from Barrow and holds a Ph.D. in Education. This section reviews MacLean's (1986b; forthcoming) works, which are based on her own dialect, North Slope Iñupiaq.

MacLean's (1986b) grammar book for second year students of Iñupiaq gives the following descriptions of *niq*:

a) Postbase +nIq-vv is used to confirm or establish that someone is \_\_ \_\_ing, or has \_\_ \_\_ed.  
(MacLean, 1986b:78)

b) +nIq-vv: confirms or establishes the fact that someone is \_\_-ing or has \_\_ed  
(MacLean, 1986b:92)

(a) is from the section explaining *niq*, and (b) is the entry for *niq* at the end of the chapter. The two descriptions are similar, apart from one detail; (a) indicates that *niq* is used to establish or confirm the propositional content, whereas (b) indicates that *niq* is used to confirm or establish the *fact* of the propositional content.

To illustrate the meaning of *niq*, MacLean (1986b:78) gives the following sentences together with their translations<sup>10</sup>:

(8)

a. nakuuniqsuq!  
nakuu-niq-tuq  
*be.good-niq-3.SG.PRES.IND*  
'it is good!'

b. qanuq inniqpa?  
qanuq it-niq-pa  
*how be-niq-3.SG.INT*  
'how is he?'

c. nakuuniqsuaq.  
nakuu-niq-tuaq  
*be.good-niq-3.SG.PST.IND*  
'he is well'

d. nakuaginiqpiuŋ?  
naku-aq-gi-niq-piuŋ  
*love-RN<sup>11</sup>-feel.towards-niq-2.SGsubj.3SGobj.INT*  
'then, do you like it?'

e. ii, nakuaginigiga  
ii naku-aq-gi-niq-ġiga  
*yes love-RN-feel.towards-niq-1SGsubj.3SGobj.IND*  
'yes, I do like it'

f. uqallautiniqpagik unnuaq?  
uqallaut-niq-pagik unnuaq  
*tell-niq-3SGsubj.3SGobj.INT last.night*  
'did she in fact tell them last night?'

g. ii, uqallautiniqsagik unnuaq.  
ii uqallaut-niq-pagik unnuaq  
*yes tell-niq-3SGsubj.3SGobj.IND last.night*  
'yes, she did in fact tell them last night'

<sup>10</sup> The glossing is my own responsibility

<sup>11</sup> The form *aq* in example (8f) seems to be the postbase *aq2* described in MacLean (forthcoming:681) as "that related to the N[oun] or R[oot]". Being a root, *naku-* requires a postbase in order to become a word, and the postbase *aq* hence seems to play exactly this role in the verbal construction in (8e), namely deriving the root into a noun (which is then derived into a verb). I therefore gloss *aq* as a root to noun derivative in example (8e), to reflect its function in this sentence.

The fact that *niq* may co-occur with the interrogative mood, as in (8b), (8d) and (8f) may seem counterintuitive to the descriptions in MacLean's (1986b) grammar book; how can a proposition be confirmed/established and questioned at the same time? Looking at (8e) and (8g), which are probably appropriate responses to (8d) and (8f) respectively, it seems that the communicative intention behind (8d) and (8f) could be to request a response establishing or confirming the propositional content. In that case, the establishment/confirmation concept encoded by *niq* in the interrogative sentences pertains to the desired response, and thereby participates in an interrogative flip like illocutionary adverbs (see Faller (2002)). I shall return to this later.

Generally for the examples in (8), neither *evidently* nor *apparently* occurs in the English translation strings. The sentences (8a-c) and their translations do not give any consistent hints on the meaning contribution made by *niq*, as (8a) and (8c) are translated into simple declaratives, and (b) into a simple interrogative construction. In (8d) *niq* must be responsible for the meaning translated into English as 'then'. The use of 'then' seems to contribute with a function of relating the given utterance to a previous shared experience between speaker and hearer, i.e. the translation string may be paraphrased into something like 'in view of what you have seen, do you like it?' or 'now that you have tasted it, do you like it?'. This hypothesis about *niq*'s meaning contribution in (8d) is supported by MacLean (1995), according to whom *niq* may function to relate an event from the past to the present. MacLean writes that "[...] *niq* is used to relate the relevancy of a situation to the present moment or the next set of situations in the story time." (ibid.:§7.1.0). If I understand MacLean (1995) correctly, *niq* is used in stories to indicate that the embedded clause should be understood in relation to a previous event in the story.

In (8e), *niq* seems to contribute with a meaning which results in the choice to translate the sentence into 'yes, I do like it' instead of merely 'yes, I like it'. As we shall see, consultants often translated sentences with *niq* into sentences containing strategies of emphasizing, e.g. by means of 'do', stress or cleft constructions.

The North Slope Iñupiaq Dictionary (MacLean, forthcoming) recognizes two lexical items of the form *+nIq-*, and illustrates their meanings by showing the stems derived when the respective postbases are attached to a stem:

**+nIq-1 : vv to report or state that the subject is, has been V-ing**

<b>naat-1</b> (i) to now be complete; (t) to finish, complete <i>it</i>	<b>naanḡaniq-</b> to report she/he finished ( <i>it</i> )
<b>niuggaaq-</b> to break ( <i>her/his/its</i> ) leg	<b>niuggaaḡniq-</b> (i) to report she/he/it broke a leg » <b>niuggaaḡniqsuaq kataktaqami</b> I found out he broke a leg when he fell
<b>quviasuk-</b> (i) to be happy	<b>quviasugniq-</b> (i) to report she/he is happy

(MacLean, forthcoming:869)

**+nIq-2 or =nIq-2 vv, rv, nv (limited) to be (of) V; to experience a V-ing**

<b>auq-</b> (i) to stalk an animal on ice by crawling	<b>auḡniq-</b> (i) for cold air, as mist, to enter house through an open crack in a door, window, etc.
<b>isiqsaq-</b> to begin, commence entering	<b>isiqsaḡniq-</b> to flow upriver
<b>kiiḡnaq</b> or <b>kigiḡnaq</b> face; blade of axe	<b>kiiḡnaḡniq-</b> (i) to be bold, straightforward, unreserved, forthright; to show no respect for authority
<b>qai</b> - to come ( <i>toward her/him/it</i> )	<b>qaisaḡniq-</b> (i) to flow from west ( <i>of ocean current</i> )

(MacLean, forthcoming:870)<sup>12</sup>

MacLean’s (forthcoming) +nIq-1 and +nIq-2 both occur in verbal constituents, but the two lexemes differ in terms of restrictions on what they can attach to; +nIq-1 only attaches to verbal stems, and +nIq-2 may attach to roots and absolutive nouns in addition to verb stems. The Malimiut Iñupiaq expression *niq* is described as a verb elaborating postbase in Lanz (2010) and Nagai (2006), and therefore seems to correspond to the North Slope Iñupiaq expression +nIq-1 in MacLean (forthcoming).

It could have been argued that there is only one lexical item of the form *nIq*, and that it may attach to roots, nominal stems and verbal stems. For reasons concerning the semantic coherency of the respective lexemes, I do however agree with MacLean’s (forthcoming) decision to recognize two lexical entries.

Derivations with *niq2* is limited according to MacLean (forthcoming:870). Judging from the examples provided in MacLean (forthcoming:870), it seems to me that +nIq-2 contributes with a less generalized meaning than +nIq-1, and the result of the derivation depends heavily on the lexical base it derives. For instance, the base *auq-* ‘to stalk an animal on the ice by crawling’ derived by +nIq-2 results in the stem *auḡniq-* which means ‘for cold air, as mist, to enter house through an open crack in a door, window, etc.’ (MacLean, forthcoming:870). Deriving the base *isiqsaq-* ‘to begin, commence entering’ with +nIq-2 results in the stem *isiqsaḡniq-* ‘to flow upriver’ (ibid.). It is

<sup>12</sup> See in MacLean (forthcoming:870-871) for more examples of +nIq-2.

not clear to me how the general description of *+nlq-2* “to be (of) V; to experience a V-ing” in the available draft matches the meanings contributed by *niq* in the derived stems in the examples in MacLean (ibid.).

The concept contributed by deriving a stem with *nlq1*, on the other hand, seems to be more coherent, following MacLean (forthcoming). According to the examples and the general description in the entry, *nlq1*'s meaning contribution is ‘reporting or stating’. From the dictionary entry it does not appear which communicative intentions trigger the choice to use *niq*, when reporting about a state of affairs in the world; why would a speaker choose to express overtly that he is reporting or stating the propositional content of the utterance?

The second example in the entry for *nlq1* – “*niuggaagniqsuaq kataktaqami: ‘I found out he broke a leg when he fell’*” (MacLean, forthcoming:869) seems to match the general description of *nlq2*, since it renders the existence of the speaker’s experience of the propositional content. However, examples given for *nlq2* in MacLean (forthcoming) do indicate that derivations with this morpheme affect the conceptual denotation of the linguistic string and result in idiomatic expressions. *+nlq-1* on the other hand seems to be more productive and to have a more abstract meaning.

The amount of meanings associated with lexemes of the form *niq* in Nagai (2006), Lanz (2010) and MacLean (1986b; forthcoming) suggest that *niq* may have a more abstract meaning than previously assumed. This calls for further investigations of the meaning of *niq*, based on a study of the communicative intentions behind the choice of using *niq* in an utterance.

MacLean’s (forthcoming) recognition of two lexical items of the form *nlq* poses the question whether the findings concerning expressions of the form *niq* in the collected data concern MacLean’s (ibid.) *niq1* or *niq2*. However, in the dataset forming the basis for the present study of the meaning of the form *niq*, I have found no explanations of sentences with *niq* indicating that the presence of this form affects the conceptual meaning of the sentence.

### 3.3 Summary and Questions to Pursued in the Present Study of *niq*

In Inuit, of which North Alaskan Iñupiaq is a dialect, the only obligatory inflectional affixes on the verbal word are those indicating mood, person and number. Enclitics and postbases are optional (Fortescue, 2003; Lanz, 2010; Nagai, 2006). *Niq* only attaches to verbal stems, and the result is

another verbal stem with the same valency (Nagai, 2006; Lanz, 2010; MacLean, 1986b). The verb elaborating postbase *niq* is the last affix before the inflection in the verbal word.

Table 1 and 2 summarize the previous accounts of *niq*'s meaning. The English translations of *niq* are listed in Table 1. In Table 2, the descriptions or labels of *niq* are listed.

Table 1. *Summary of translations of niq in previous studies*

	<b>Translation</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Source</b>
a)	evidently	(4), (6)	Lanz (2010), Nagai (2006)
b)	apparently	(5)	Lanz (2010)
c)	then	(8d)	MacLean (1986b)
d)	do	(8e)	MacLean (1986b)
e)	in fact	(8f), (8g)	MacLean (1986b)
f)	I found out	Second illustration of <i>niq</i> in entry for <i>+niq-1</i>	MacLean (forthcoming)

Table 2. *Summary of descriptions of niq in previous studies*

	<b>Description</b>	<b>Source</b>
a)	Evidential modal	Nagai (2006)
b)	Evidential modal	Lanz (2010)
c)	Confirm/establish	MacLean (1986b)
d)	Relating a past event to the present	MacLean (1995)
e)	To report or state (entry for <i>niq1</i> )	MacLean (forthcoming)

Judging from Lanz (2010) and Nagai (2006), *niq* seems to give rise to a meaning like English ‘apparently’ or ‘evidently’, but sometimes there is no trace of *niq* in the English translation (Nagai, 2006). In Nagai (ibid.), *niq* encodes that the speaker got the information from ‘indirect evidence’. Taking Nagai (ibid.) as point of departure, it remains to be explored what counts as ‘indirect evidence’ in relation to a true and felicitous use of *niq* in Inupiaq. A deeper investigation of the meaning of *niq* must hence include an attempt to isolate information sources for the propositions compatible with uttering a sentence of the form *niq*(p). Moreover, since Malimiut *niq* is described as an evidential modal (Nagai, 2006; Lanz, 2010) it must be investigated if North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* has modal meaning, and in that case which modal relation accounts for its meaning.

MacLean’s (1986b; forthcoming) writings do not support an assumption that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* encodes a meaning like that encoded by English *evidently* or *apparently*. Rather, MacLean (1986b) indicates that *niq* is used to confirm that the propositional content of the utterance is the case, or to render that the speaker observes, realizes or has found out that the propositional content



is the case. We have also encountered examples where *niq* gives rise to do-support in the English translation, and examples where *niq* is part of an interrogative sentence (MacLean, 1986b).

MacLean (forthcoming) recognizes two lexical items of the form *niq*. The findings concerning the meaning of the form *niq* in the data collected for the present study seem to concern a lexical item which comes closer to MacLean's (forthcoming) *niq*<sup>1</sup>.

The many translations of *niq*, as well as the range of meanings associated with this form, makes it plausible that *niq*'s general meaning is more abstract than the respective descriptions in the existing literature, and that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* may contain elements from the various accounts.

In addition to investigating the evidential and modal properties of Iñupiaq *niq* proposed in Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010), the present study is a contribution to the detailed description of *niq*, in that it builds on speakers' elaborations of the communicative intentions behind the choice to use *niq* in an utterance. A systematization of these elaborations and judgments of when to use *niq* is the base for proposing a general description which predicts the felicitous use of *niq* in North Slope Iñupiaq.



## Chapter 4: Method and Data Collection

### 4.0 Introduction

Depending on the purpose and topic of the research, linguists collect data by various means. If a linguist wishes to test a theoretical claim concerning argument structure, she may consult speakers of a range of languages and ask them to judge the grammaticality of various sentences. When the meaning of a certain linguistic expression is the topic of the research, the data set may rather consist of statements about the meaning of the expression. But just like direct questions about e.g. a given predicate's argument structure is unlikely to result in a response predicting the whole distribution pattern of the predicate, direct questions about the meaning of an expression are unlikely to encourage responses concerning the range of meaning nuances and uses of the expression under investigation:

Try, for example, asking an undergraduate linguistics class to explain the felicity conditions on *the*. In my experience, the most common response to this question is that “you use *the* when you are talking about something specific.” This, like most native-speaker generalizations about semantics, contains a kernel of truth but is not explicit enough to have predictive power. What does “specific” mean? A statement of this type may be useful as a first clue, but it does not tell us exactly when *the* can and cannot be used. (Matthewson, 2004:380)

Matthewson (2004) and Peterson (2010a) show how data collection for the purpose of establishing facts about linguistic meaning is better done by approaching linguistic meaning in relation to contexts. Collecting information on when an expression can and cannot be used is not only necessary when the purpose is to develop an accurate account of the meaning of a linguistic expression; when the intention is to document and describe aspects of a language, it is desirable to obtain data which can be used not only for formal linguistic analyses, but also for the production of materials making information about the language accessible outside the community of linguists. It is reasonable to assume that non-linguists interested in a given language value access to examples of situations, in which certain expressions can be used, as well as explicit information of the meaning nuances associated with those expressions<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> The data collected for the purpose of this thesis will also form the basis of a booklet explaining how to use the postbase *niq* in North Slope Iñupiaq. The Tuzzy Consortium Library in Barrow and the Alaska Native Language Archive have expressed interest in keeping copies of the forthcoming booklet and the present thesis.

This chapter discusses the method applied in the pursuit of collecting accurate and detailed information for the purpose of describing the semantics and pragmatics of *niq* in North Slope Iñupiaq.

§4.1 presents methodological considerations relating to semantic fieldwork; §4.1.1 discusses the choice of method and explicates my understanding of the process of eliciting data. §4.1.2 presents the aspects of Matthewson's (2004) and Peterson's (2010a,b) methodology on semantic fieldwork, which I find relevant to the study of *niq*, and discusses relevant complications. Problems relating to lexical ambiguity are treated in §4.1.3.

§4.2 is directly concerned with application of the methodology in the field. §4.2.1. shows how some variants of Matthewson's (2004) suggested methods proved less successful for the study of *niq*, and §4.2.1 describes the main elicitation strategies used for the present research. Before the summary in §4.4, §4.3 introduces the nature of the collected data, which forms the foundation of the present research on *niq*.

## **4.1 Methodological Considerations**

### *4.1.1 Methods in Linguistics*

The phonologist interested in describing the system behind realization of fricatives in a language needs recordings of productions of words containing these sounds (see Manker, 2012). A linguist interested in testing a theoretical claim about e.g. syntactic structure, could make use of grammaticality judgments. This method basically consists of presenting linguistic stimuli to native speakers of the language under description (hereafter l.u.d.), and the data consist of their judgments of whether the stimulus is correct in that language (Tremblay, 2005). As Tremblay (ibid.) notes, grammaticality judgments are not to be confused with introspection. Based on Tremblay (ibid.), I understand the latter as the quest for arriving at an abstract analysis of the grammatical structure in a language by means of attempting to access one's own linguistic knowledge. Introspection is however difficult, because it requires engagement in cognitive and meta-cognitive activities simultaneously (ibid.). Collected grammaticality judgments can only concern the *acceptability* of the sentences (ibid.), and the abstract grammatical analysis is then based on the collected data, which is a list of sentences and the judgments of their acceptability. Acceptability judgments of sentences may come from the researcher, if she has sufficient competence in the language, as well as from consultants.

The present study is devoted to investigate and analyze the meaning of the Iñupiaq morpheme *niq*. It is therefore desirable to obtain judgments of the acceptability of sentences with *niq* in terms of the meaning of those sentences rather than whether the sentence sounds correct. But just like a researcher can not expect herself to engage in cognitive and meta-cognitive activities at the same time, she can not expect language consultants to come up with an abstract semantic analysis predicting all uses of the expression under investigation; semantic facts are, as Matthewson (2004:370) writes, often subtle, context dependent and almost never accessible by direct native speaker intuitions. Preparing for elicitation sessions therefore includes considerations of how to put the questions in order to facilitate a fruitful conversation about linguistic meaning.

Another way to obtain data is by means of recording spontaneous speech. But there is no guarantee that spontaneous speech will include the use of the expression under investigation or manifestations of the linguistic phenomenon of interest. It is therefore desirable to employ an alternative method to avoid wasting time waiting for a certain word or construction to be used. One option is to ask consultants for translations. Sentences in the meta-language are constructed which convey a certain meaning aspect, and the expectation is that the translation string in the language under investigation may include roughly the same meaning.

Translations should however be treated with caution, as the same expression may be translated differently at different times, and hence translations do not necessarily offer sufficient information for making a semantic analysis (Matthewson, 2004). That is, the meta-language and the l.u.d. may indeed divide the semantic landscape differently. The possibility of lexical ambiguity in the meta-language also requires that translations of the expression under investigation are treated with caution (ibid.). As we saw in Chapter 3, Malimiut Iñupiaq sentences with *niq* may include the English expression *evidently* (Nagai, 2006). It is however not given that the set of meanings conveyable by *niq* in Iñupiaq equals the set of meanings conveyable by *evidently* in English. Even though texts in the l.u.d. are available and annotated in detail<sup>14</sup>, they do not necessarily provide enough detailed information to make an accurate semantic analysis of an expression. Annotated texts and corpora are indeed valuable for the formation of hypotheses. However, explications of and reflections on linguistic meaning may only be obtained from speakers with competence in the l.u.d. When a fieldworker attempts to establish facts about linguistic meaning, he or she is therefore highly depended on the competence of native speakers. Even if the linguist has sufficient

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<sup>14</sup> I thank Nagai for sharing annotated texts with me which do not appear in his (2006) thesis.

knowledge of the l.u.d., she still depends on other speakers of the language to avoid limiting the accountability of her semantic analysis to her own idiolect.

The act of obtaining linguistic data together with native speakers is often referred to as ‘elicitation’ in the literature on linguistic fieldwork. The term is rarely defined, but it seems likely that the fieldworkers have something slightly different in mind when they use the term ‘elicitation’, than the action referred to in the entry for *elicit* in the Oxford Dictionaries: “*evoke or draw out (a reaction, answer, or fact) from someone*” (Oxford University Press, 2012). In the context of linguistic fieldwork, the word *elicit* could yield associations to a mechanic question-and-response interaction between fieldworker and consultant, where the responses have the character of facts rather than reflections. I assume however, that most elicitation sessions are similar to those I carried out myself; the linguist asks well prepared questions, and then the interview basically has the shape of a focused discussion about the linguistic phenomenon or expression under investigation. In the context of linguistic fieldwork, I therefore understand the term ‘elicitation’ as referring to the act of interviewing speakers of the l.u.d. by means of asking questions which are carefully prepared for the purpose of a) increasing the researcher’s understanding of the expression under investigation, and b) encourage the consultant’s elaborations and reflections concerning the expression under investigation, which may in turn encourage the researcher to ask further questions about the meaning of the expression. Careful preparation of questions is important because, as argued above, direct questions about the meaning of a linguistic expression is unlikely to spark elaborations about linguistic meaning upon which a semantic analysis can be based. At the same time, the linguist must listen carefully to reflections which are not direct answers to the posed questions; in the present study, consultant’s reflections on why an utterance was (in)appropriate in a given scenario were crucial to my chances of understanding and describing the meaning of *niq*.

The data set thus reflects meta-linguistic knowledge. Supplementing the data from elicitation sessions with observations of how the expression under investigation is used in everyday discourse, will of course enhance the quality of the research. Unfortunately, limits on time did not allow the present research project to include observations of the use of *niq* in naturally occurring discourse, and should hence be seen as a first step towards a detailed analysis of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*.

Elicitation is a useful tool when exploring the meaning of morphemes; elicitation is directly focused on the linguistic phenomenon or expression under investigation, and thereby elicitation

saves time and offers a structured data collection. Therefore the method chosen to explore the meaning of *niq* in the present study is interview sessions where the meaning of sentences with *niq* was discussed in relation to contexts where they may felicitously be uttered.

#### 4.1.2 Approaching the Meaning of Linguistic Elements

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, appropriate data for a semantic analysis is not constituted by the answer of a direct question about the meaning of an expression in isolation. Especially data for analyzing non-referential expressions are unlikely to be obtained by means of simply asking speakers what the expressions mean. Matthewson writes that “[..]it would be very unlikely for a native speaker of any language to be able to describe accurately the meaning of a morpheme having to do with tense or aspect” (2004:384)<sup>15</sup>. Like temporal and aspectual meaning, modal meaning is highly abstract. As seen in Chapter 3, *niq* is described as an evidential modal in Lanz (2010) and Nagai (2006). If North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* has modal meaning, it is reasonable to assume that the task of describing the accurate meaning of *niq* on the spot is extremely difficult. We must therefore aim at collecting concrete examples of situations in which *niq* can be used, and the communication intentions behind the choice to use *niq* in an utterance. Such information will provide the basis for an accurate description of the semantics and pragmatics of *niq*. Furthermore, the examples and explications of thoughts behind the choice to use *niq* in an utterance can be used for materials accessible to anyone who seeks an understanding of the meaning of *niq* in North Slope Iñupiaq.

To spark elaborations on the meaning of *niq*, and to obtain structured information on when to use *niq* in an utterance, I based the data collection on Matthewson’s (2004) and Peterson’s (2010a) suggestions. The ideas from Matthewson (2004) and Peterson (2010a) used for the present purpose can be summarized as follows: the researcher describes an imaginary context, and asks the consultant about the appropriateness of uttering a certain sentence in the l.u.d. *or* she asks the consultant how to convey a communication intention in the l.u.d. in an imaginary context. As we shall see later, the former variant proves more effective for the investigation of a certain expression, whereas the latter probably is better suited when a certain linguistic phenomenon, e.g. evidentiality or expression of location, is the topic of the research. The imaginary scenario, as well as the communication intention in question, is explained in a meta-language. Before outlining the aspects

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<sup>15</sup> I was myself baffled when a student of Danish asked me to explain the meaning of the Danish modal expressions *skal* and *må*.

of Matthewson's (2004) and Peterson's (2010a) methodology relevant to the study of *niq*, a few comments on my choice to use a meta-language for elicitation are in order.

Pictures and other visual stimuli may be used to elicit information on linguistic meaning. The children's book "Where is the Frog?" is a commonly used stimuli to elicit locative meaning<sup>16</sup>. The book contains pictures of a frog located in various places, and there is no text apart from the title. While such stimuli may be useful to elicit linguistic expressions of location, I am not aware of the existence of visual stimuli which targets modality and speaker attitude. Furthermore, by using visual stimuli, one runs the risk that the researcher and the consultant do not interpret the picture in the same way; the researcher can not be certain that the meaning of the sentence offered by the consultant corresponds to the meaning of the sentence she would herself associate with the picture. The researcher can not be sure which aspects of the situation in the picture are conveyed by the utterance without asking further questions. Of course, a description of an imaginary scenario may also prompt different communication intentions for different people. Regardless of whether visual stimuli or imaginary scenarios are used, it is important to aim for exact information on which experiences and attitudes are reflected by uttering the sentence under discussion. As Matthewson (2004) notes, using visual stimuli is a valuable technique, but must be supplemented with follow up questions.

The main reason for exclusively using imaginary scenarios for the present research was the lack of time to develop appropriate visual stimuli to target evidential and modal meaning. The imaginary scenarios were explained to consultants in English. The reason behind this choice is that the author does not master Iñupiaq, and the consultants are all fluent in American English. I am aware that the meta-language may influence the results, but, as Matthewson (2004:395) argues, so may a discourse context presented in the language under investigation.

In her guide to semantic fieldwork, Matthewson assumes the theoretical framework of truth-conditional semantics. However, many of the methodological suggestions will be relevant for any fieldwork which involves establishing facts about meanings (2004:370). The present study follows the notion of truth-conditions as explicated in Matthewson (2004):

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<sup>16</sup> See e.g. Sakel and Everett's (2012) guide to linguistic fieldwork.



Truth conditions are assumed to constitute the core meaning of a sentence. The idea is that when a speaker understands a sentence, she knows the conditions under which that sentence would be true. To understand a sentence, one does not have to know whether it is true; rather, one knows what the world would have to look like for it to be true. (ibid.:372)

Matthewson mentions aspects of meaning, which are not covered by the notion of truth-conditions (2004:372-374). These are felicity-conditions, entailment, implicature, ambiguity and vagueness. The notion of felicity-conditions proves especially relevant to the current study of *niq*. Matthewson (2004:372) gives the following sentences as illustration of the difference between truth-conditions and felicity-conditions:

- (1)           a. It is Mary who wants fish.  
              b. Mary wants fish.

Whereas the two sentences are true in the same worlds, only (1b) is felicitous if e.g. the question concerning who wants fish has come up. As we shall see throughout the next chapters, such information on such constraints on context turns out to be crucial in the present research on the semantics and pragmatics on North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*.

In the first phases of data collection I see no obvious need to distinguish between truth-conditional and non-truth-conditional meaning when eliciting. The investigation of whether a linguistic element is truth-conditional is, according to my experience, not the aim of the first consultations. The researcher first needs to get a sense of the meaning of the expression. The first consultations should therefore aim at getting the discussion going about the meaning of sentences containing the expression, by asking about the appropriateness of uttering sentences with the expression in different scenarios. Afterwards, a closer look at consultant's responses and elaborations may lead to further research questions, e.g. about the level of meaning on which the expression operates. Such questions are then pursued by detailed analyses of the responses available, or by means of employing linguistic tests in later consultations<sup>17</sup>.

Example (1) above showed the elicitation variant of giving a context and asking the consultant how a specific communication intention is conveyed in the language under investigation. Another elicitation variant is to present a context and then ask if an utterance of a certain sentence in the l.u.d. is appropriate in that context (Matthewson, 2004; Peterson, 2010a). The following example is taken from my own data collection:

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<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Faller (2006) for tests concerning the level of meaning contribution.

- (2) You walk into a kitchen and you see a lot of cooked seal. It's already cooked and prepared. Three women are standing around with dirty hands. The utensils are dirty with blood. And you see a lot of cooked seal. Could you then go back into the living room, where your husband is sitting, and say: *agnat kukiuniqsut* ['the women are cooking-*niq*'] to him?<sup>18</sup>

Negative data is data in itself (Matthewson, 2004), since the judgment that a sentence is inappropriate in a scenario contributes to finding the limits of the sentence's extension. The inappropriateness of a sentence in a scenario may indeed be caused by elements in the sentence other than the expression under investigation, and the researcher must hence be careful not to draw hastened conclusions about the extension of the given expression.

An utterance may also be judged inappropriate in a scenario due to the speaker's personal preferences. Example (3) below is extracted from an interview with a native speaker of American English who kindly let me practice elicitation strategies with her prior to my fieldwork.

- (3) Q<sup>19</sup>: you are examining Peter's daughter on his request. You put a hand on her forehead, which is pretty warm. Peter asks you about his daughter's state<sup>20</sup>. What do you say?  
A: she seems warm. She feels warm to my hand, cannot draw conclusions from that.

The elicitation strategy practiced in this interview is slightly different from the strategies employed when collecting data on Iñupiaq, as I did not prompt a certain communication intention in the interview from which example (3) is taken. Doing this would have resulted in complications, since English was the l.u.d. and the meta-language at the same time<sup>21</sup>. However, the example still serves to illustrate the point that a consultant not choosing or not preferring a certain sentence in a given scenario could be due to personal preferences of how to reflect a certain experience.

The scenario was intended to encourage a response encoding the statement that the girl has a fever, either by means of a simple sentence or a sentence with an epistemic modal. The response in (3) does not reflect any conclusions about the girl having a fever. The consultant then told me that she does not trust the 'hand-on-forehead method' when determining whether someone has a fever. This does not necessarily mean that a modalized statement conveying that the girl has a fever could never be uttered in the given context; if one trusts the 'hand-on-forehead method', one may wish to communicate that the girl must have a fever in the given scenario.

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<sup>18</sup> The English translation strings were not mentioned when asking questions about an Iñupiaq sentence.

<sup>19</sup> In my transcriptions of the interviews I use 'Q' for researcher's questions, and 'A' for consultant's answer.

<sup>20</sup> The scenario is inspired by Peterson's (2010a:47) example of a context showing that the extension of Gitksan *ñakw* covers tactile evidence.

<sup>21</sup> I also practised eliciting by means of a meta-language different from the l.u.d. prior to my fieldwork.

Furthermore, the researcher and consultant must talk about the reason behind an acceptability judgment of a sentence because descriptions of scenarios are vague. Even very detailed scenarios are not full descriptions of the world. It is therefore reasonable to assume that consultant and researcher both supplement missing details when imagining the fictive scenario. If researcher and consultant supplement the scenario with different details, there is a risk that the researcher will not be aware that one of the details supplemented by the consultant licenses or blocks the utterance in the scenario. This risk is just another reason why it is important to talk about why a sentence is judged (in)appropriate in a given scenario in order to obtain reliable data.

#### 4.1.3 Lexical Ambiguity

Lexical ambiguity in the l.u.d. must be taken into account when aiming at an accurate account of an expression's meaning. Lexical ambiguity is usually divided into polysemy and homonymy. The former is when the same linguistic form has more than one related meanings, and the latter is when unrelated meanings are denoted by the same linguistic form (e.g. Lyons, 1995). Needless to say, the decision of whether an expression is polysemous or homonymous is not clear cut. Considerations whether a form is polysemous or homonymous are preferably left to later stages in the research, as one must first establish which meanings are associated with the linguistic form under investigation. The decision whether the expression is polysemous or homonymous is in my view a question of how we best account for the meanings associated with the expression. If an analysis of the collected data show that radically distinct meanings are associated with the expression under investigation, it is reasonable to assume more homonymous lexical expressions. If, on the other hand, the findings can be explained by means of a single lexical entry where meaning nuances of the expression in different contexts can be accounted for with pragmatic principles, we can assume that the expression is polysemous.

When aiming at surveying all possible meanings conveyable by a given expression, it is preferable to test the appropriateness of utterances with the expression under investigation in a range of different scenarios targeting different meanings. To avoid shooting in the dark, the choice of scenarios should of course be based on hypotheses about the meanings associated with the expression under investigation. Peterson (2010a) demonstrates that asking consultants to describe a situation, in which they would utter a sentence with the given expression, provides valuable data and leads to more elaborations. Hypotheses based on consultants' descriptions of situations in which to use sentences with *niq*, were afterwards discussed with other consultant by using scenarios

targeting related meanings. This procedure is exemplified in the description of elicitation strategies in §4.2.2.

The use of scenarios when exploring the meaning of a linguistic expression together with native speakers is significant to avoid problems relating to lexical ambiguity in the meta-language. Peterson (2010b) stresses the importance of knowing the meta-language, especially in order to be aware of lexical ambiguity; a researcher cannot ask a consultant how to say e.g. ‘must’ in his or her language, as the meaning conveyed by English *must* is highly context dependent (ibid.). For instance, when asking how to convey the communication intention which is in English conveyed by means of the sentence *Karl must play the piano*, the researcher may have a context in mind where the expression *must* is used with the non-epistemic sense, whereas the consultant has a context in mind where *must* is used epistemically. Non-epistemic *must* yields the interpretation of the sentence that Karl is obliged to play the piano, and epistemic *must* yields the interpretation that it is highly probable that Karl is playing the piano. Without a shared assumption of the kind of context behind an utterance of sentences like *Karl must play the piano*, the researcher can not be sure which meaning is conveyed by the translation offered by the consultant (Matthewson, 2004). It is not given that the expression of epistemic modal necessity in the language under investigation is also used to express non-epistemic modal necessity, as it is the case for English. A researcher interested in expressions of non-epistemic modal necessity in the language under investigation could therefore ask the consultant to imagine a situation where the concert hall is full of people who have bought concert tickets, and it is Karl’s job to play the piano. When the researcher and consultant have a similar context in mind, it makes sense to talk about how to convey the communication intention behind *Karl must play the piano* in the language under investigation<sup>22</sup>.

## 4.2 Applying the Method

### 4.2.1 Studying *niq*

The elicitation strategy of giving a scenario and then ask how a given communication intention is conveyed in that context proved less effective for the study of *niq*; *niq* simply did not occur in the responses. Besides the possibility that an utterance with the given expression is incompatible with the scenario, the expression under investigation may lack in the responses for several reasons. One

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<sup>22</sup> Two people may still have slightly different scenarios in mind, since different people may fill in details in different ways when imagining the scenario; e.g. the color of Karl’s clothes, his working conditions etc. This issue, and how to overcome it, is discussed in §4.2.2 below.

is that the scenario may yield more than one possible communication intention. And even if the consultant and researcher associate the scenario with the same communicative intention, this communicative intention may be fulfilled by other means than the expression under investigation. This can be illustrated with an example from my own fieldwork:

- (4) Q: you put your hand on the oven and it feels warm to you hand. You suspect that Peter would like to know whether the oven is working or not. How would you let him know that it is working? You felt it, it's warm/hot, and then you wanna tell Peter that it's working, its okay, its not broken.  
A: *savaktuq* 'it is working'.

The scenario given in (4) was intended to test if *niq* is appropriate in utterances conveying first hand experiences. The lack of *niq* in (4) is not enough to establish that *niq* is incompatible with conveyance of first hand experiences, as *niq* may lack in the response because the communicative intention is fulfilled without the use of *niq*. Data collected at later points in the fieldwork showed that *niq* is not incompatible with conveyance of firsthand experiences. Hence, data like (4) above show that *niq* is not obligatory when the speaker has first hand experience of the propositional content. It appeared later in the fieldwork that in some scenarios, sentences with *niq* were equally good as the corresponding simple sentences. The use of *niq* is thus not necessarily *required* in the contexts where the use of *niq* is *licensed*.

It hence appeared that the lack of *niq* in the responses were not due to limits on *niq*'s extension, but rather the fact that *niq* hardly ever is obligatory when representing a state of affairs in the world by means of an utterance. When investigating the meaning of a certain linguistic expression, it is desirable to obtain judgments and elaborations directly concerned with sentences containing this expression. By giving scenarios and asking for utterances, the researcher and consultant run the risk of wasting time, because the expression under investigation remains absent from the responses. This strategy could be well suited for exploring how a certain linguistic phenomenon, e.g. like evidentiality, is expressed in a language and whether specification of certain parameters is obligatory. The primary purpose of the thesis is however to explore the meaning of *niq*; hence strategies were chosen which are better suited to encourage responses directly having to do with the meaning of *niq*.

Though adjusted to the purpose of examining the meaning of *niq*, the elicitation strategies used for the present research are based on the methodological framework presented above, i.e. seeking to

understand the meaning of sentences in terms of knowing in which contexts they can be uttered. As I hoped, consultants offered their reflections and elaborations on the meaning of the sentences, in addition to judgments of the appropriateness of the sentences in the given scenarios. Consultants' further elaborations are, in my view, at least as valuable as the direct responses to the questions since they, obviously, led my attention to meaning aspects which I would otherwise never have known could be conveyed by means of *niq*.

#### 4.2.2 Elicitation Strategies

Preparing for elicitation sessions includes considerations on which questions are relevant as well as ways of putting these questions. Three elicitation strategies were used in the interviews: 1) asking for contexts, 2) asking for elaborations on minimal pairs and 3) describing a context and ask for a) judgment of one sentence or b) comparison of two sentences. The strategies are presented in turn.

##### 1. Asking for contexts:

A sentence is presented, and the consultant is asked to describe a context where an utterance of this sentence would be appropriate<sup>23</sup>.

For example, the consultant was asked to imagine a situation in which she would use an utterance of the sentence *Aalaak umiaqaqniqsuq* 'Aalaak has a boat-*niq*'. Asking for contexts resulted in responses with detailed scenarios, such as the datum rendered in (5) below:

- (5) A: the first scenario for me is I've been wondering with else whether this person has a boat. I go and check to see whether that person has a boat. I see that he has a boat, cause I, see it. And then I go back, or I holler back to the person *umiaqaqniqsuq*! Yes he does have a boat!

Asking for contexts has the advantage that the responses are the consultants' description of the meaning of the sentence. Needless to say, this strategy resulted in valuable information about the meaning of *niq*, about which the researcher would never have thought of asking.

The response rendered in (5) indicates that part of the motivation behind using *niq* is that the speaker realizes that something is the case. Sometimes people are surprised when they realize something, and hence it was relevant to test whether *niq* contains a meaning aspect of mirativity. Such hypotheses were tested by means of strategy 3a and b, by means of a scenario where the speaker was surprised to realize the state of affairs.

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<sup>23</sup> This strategy is also employed in Peterson (2010a).

In addition to asking consultants to describe a situation where a certain sentence could be uttered, I also asked specifically for details about a context licensing the sentence. For instances:

- (6) Q: when saying *aalaak umiqaqniqsuq* ‘Aalaak has a boat-*niq*’. How does the speaker know .. has he seen the boat? Has he seen Aalaak with the boat? Has he heard from somebody that Aalaak has a boat?

The motivation behind asking for details about the information source was Lanz’ (2010) and Nagai’s (2006) descriptions of *niq* as an evidential modal. Other follow up questions concerned whether a corresponding simple sentence would work in a scenario offered by the consultant as an explanation of the meaning of a sentence with *niq*.

## 2. Elaborations on minimal pairs:

Two sentences are presented; one sentence containing *niq*, and one corresponding simple sentence or a corresponding sentence with another postbase. The consultant is asked to compare the meaning of the two sentences<sup>24</sup>.

The consultant is asked about the difference between two sentences forming a minimal pair and. For instance:

- (7) a. *tiḡmiruaq uvlaapak*<sup>25</sup>  
b. *tiḡminiqsuaq uvlaapak*

(7a) is a simple construction and translates into ‘it was flying this morning’, where ‘it’ refers to a bird. (7b) is the same construction except the presence of *niq*. The intention behind asking consultants to elaborate on the difference between sentences in minimal pairs, was to become aware of how the language users explain the relevant meaning differences. Language users’ choice of how to explain the meaning differences between expressions in their language should be taken seriously, when aiming for a detailed description of a linguistic element. For instance, consultants rarely mentioned anything about information source, unless I previously in the interview had focused my questions on information source behind other utterances, e.g. like the follow up questions rendered in (6) above. This is interesting to note, when the present research took point of departure in Lanz’s (2010) and Nagai’s (2006) description of *niq* as an evidential modal. The first consultations aimed at finding out *which* information source was encoded by *niq*, not *whether niq* encodes information

<sup>24</sup> I thank Prof. Lawrence Kaplan who suggested this strategy to me.

<sup>25</sup> tiḡminiqsuaq uvlaapak                      tiḡmiruaq uvlaapak  
tiḡmi-niq - tuaq                      uvlaa - pak                      tiḡmi tuaq                      uvlaaq pak  
fly niq 3SG.PST.IND morning during                      fly 3SG.PST.IND morning during  
‘It flew this morning-*niq*’                      ‘It flew this morning’

source. One of Aikhenvald's (2003; 2004) criteria for proper evidentials is that encoding of information source is their core semantics, or primary meaning<sup>26</sup>. Unfortunately Aikhenvald (ibid.) does not go deeper into what is meant by 'primary meaning' or 'core semantics'. The present thesis does not claim that elaborations can form the basis for a description of a linguistic element's 'core semantics' or 'primary meaning', as the nature of what constitute these notions is ill defined. However, the finding that consultants did not consequently include information source in their explanations on the difference in minimal pairs where one of the sentences contains *niq*, seems to point in the direction that other properties are more central to the meaning of *niq* in North Slope Iñupiaq.

### 3a. Describing a context and asking for judgment of one sentence:

- a) A context is presented, as well as a sentence containing *niq*. The consultant is asked if an utterance of the sentence would be appropriate in the imagined situation.

A scenario is described, and the consultant is asked whether an utterance of a certain sentence would be appropriate in the given scenario. The example (8) below is repeated from §4.1.2.:

- (8) Q: You walk into a kitchen and you see a lot of cooked seal. It's already cooked and prepared. Three women are standing around with dirty hands. The utensils are dirty with blood. And you see a lot of cooked seal. Could you then go back into the living room, where your husband is sitting, and say: *agnat kukiuniqsut* ['the women are cooking-*niq*'] to him?

This elicitation strategy facilitated the collection of positive and negative data; when a construction with *niq* can or cannot be used in a context, we are getting closer to establishing the borders of *niq*'s extension. If *agnat kukiuniqsut*, 'the women are cooking-*niq*' is appropriate in a scenario like (8), we have one indicator that *niq* is licensed when the speaker has not seen the event, but sees the evidence that the event has taken place. As mentioned earlier, the first aim was to see what kind of information source *niq* encodes. Based on Aikhenvald's (2004) typology of evidential meanings reflected in languages of the world, the first scenarios were therefore designed to target each of those meanings; e.g. scenarios where the speaker has seen the event, inferred that the event must have taken place or has been told about the event by somebody else. As we shall see in the following chapters, it was not possible to associate *niq* with a specific information source without making false predictions. The attempts to isolate an information source behind *niq* were however

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<sup>26</sup> Aikhenvald (2003; 2004) also poses requirements for evidentials that they be obligatory. The problems of this requirement is discussed in the previous chapter.



not in vain, as the apparent preference for a visual experience of the event – together with other findings – supported a hypothesis that *niq* requires speaker certainty.

Due to the emerging absence of a pattern in terms of information source and the felicity of sentences with *niq*, other scenarios were developed together with consultants to describe and discuss the boundaries of the meaning of sentences with *niq*.

Linguistic elements other than *niq* may of course affect the appropriateness of an utterance in a context. Moreover, the researcher and the consultant may interpret the scenario differently and supplement the scenario with different details. Discussing why the sentence is judged (in)appropriate is therefore highly important in order to obtain valid data upon which to base an analysis of the semantics and pragmatics of *niq*.

### 3b. Describing a context and asking for comparison of two sentences:

- b) A context is presented, as well as two sentences; one sentence containing *niq*, and one corresponding simple sentence or a corresponding sentence with another postbase. The consultant is asked which sentence is most appropriately uttered in the presented scenario, if any at all.

This strategy is similar to 3a, except that the consultant here is asked to choose between two sentences, which form a minimal pair. For instance:

- (9) Aalak comes home and to her surprise she finds that her son is sewing. Does she then exclaim: *miquqtutin!* ‘you are sewing!’ or *miquqniqsutin!* ‘you are sewing-*niq!*’ ?

Consultants were asked if another sentence would be better in the scenario than those suggested by the researcher. Choosing between sentences in a scenario sparked a lot of elaborations on the communicative intention behind the choice of using *niq* in an utterance. Like strategy 3a, 3b is based on the use of scenarios, and 3b is therefore subject to the same complications as strategy 3a, and should hence be applied with the same precautions.

## **4.3 The Data**

Several people have helped me achieve a better understanding of the Iñupiaq language structure. The data presented in the next chapter come from 14 interviews with eight of these kind people. All eight are native speakers of the North Slope Iñupiaq dialect, and all are aged 60 and above. Five

reside in Barrow, where I met them for interviews. Three reside in Fairbanks and Anchorage. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and 2 hours.

The interviews took place in Fairbanks, where I was based during my time in Alaska in the fall of 2011, in Barrow and in Anchorage. I visited Barrow twice and Anchorage once. Both visits to Barrow lasted ten days. The first visit allowed me to observe how Iñupiaq is taught as a second language at the schools in Barrow. Some consultants were interviewed two or three times, and some I only had the chance to interview once. Some of the interviews took place in the homes of the respective consultants, and some interviews took place at the schools in Barrow.

The data has the shape of statements about and explanations of the meaning of utterances with and without *niq*. Each datum is an extract from interviews where consultants elaborate on the meaning of sentences or give judgments on whether a sentence is appropriate in a given scenario.

The Iñupiaq sentences used to discuss the meaning contribution made by *niq* are not naturally occurring utterances. Some of the sentences are put together by myself, following MacLean's (1986a; 1986b) grammar books for Iñupiaq language students. The Iñupiaq sentences are constructed as simple as possible to facilitate the researcher's overview in the attempt to isolate the meaning contributed by *niq* in an utterance. The grammaticality of the sentences was approved by native speakers of Iñupiaq. Other sentences are taken in their full length from grammar books or offered by consultants. Further studies of *niq* could indeed be based on spontaneous speech to see how *niq* is used in natural communication situations.

For annotated representations of the Iñupiaq sentences under discussion, please consult the Appendix.

#### **4.4 Summary**

Linguistic meaning is often opaque and context dependent. Collecting data for a semantic and pragmatic analysis of an expression therefore requires a more sophisticated method, than asking consultants directly about the meaning of a morpheme in isolation. Inspired by Matthewson (2004) and Peterson (2010a), the following main elicitation strategies are pursued in the study of *niq*: 1) Asking for contexts in which a certain sentence could be uttered, 2) Asking for elaborations on the meaning of minimal pairs, and 3) Describing a context and asking about a) the appropriateness of one sentence or b) the difference between two sentences in relation to that context. Such collection of scenarios, in which utterances with *niq* are suitable, exemplifies the use of *niq*, and thereby

contributes to the description of North Slope Iñupiaq in addition to form the basis for a semantic and pragmatics analysis.

Besides making it possible to test if certain meaning aspects are associated with *niq*, the method presented sparked further sharing of reflections behind the choice to use *niq* in an utterance. A good data set also contains such reflections, as they are at least as valuable to an accurate semantic and pragmatic analysis of *niq* as are the acceptability judgments.

The present study is to be seen as a first step taken towards a detailed description and analysis of the meaning and use of the North Slope Iñupiaq postbase *niq*. In future research, recordings of conversations in Iñupiaq followed up by discussions with the conversation participants would improve the study of the meaning and use of *niq*. The follow up discussions could well include questions and elaborations on the speaker's choice to use an utterance with *niq* over an utterance of the corresponding sentence without *niq*. Furthermore, the discussions should include other conversation participant's elaborations on the interpretation of the utterance with *niq*.



## Chapter 5: Data and Findings

### 5.0 Introduction

The basis for the analysis of *niq* proposed in this study is the knowledge shared with me by speakers of North Slope Iñupiaq<sup>27</sup>. When presenting the findings relevant to the understanding of *niq*, I explicitly render the statements and reflections of consultants. The presentation of data therefore has the shape of quotes from the interviews organized according to what they indicate about the meaning of *niq*. Please consult the Appendix for annotations of the Iñupiaq sentences under discussion in the respective data.

The first step in investigating the meaning of North Slope *niq* took point of departure in Malimiut Iñupiaq *niq*'s label as an evidential modal (Lanz, 2010; Nagai, 2006). Data which shed light on *niq*'s evidential properties and further epistemic conditions are presented in §5.1.

When the meaning of *niq* was explained to me, it appeared that utterances with *niq* served certain functions in the discourse such as affirming or confirming the truth of a proposition previously evoked. A fair amount of the data suggested that *niq* is appropriate in utterances conveying unexpected information or settling a question. These discourse functions associated with the use of *niq* are illustrated by the data presented in §5.2. §5.3 presents more data showing the compatibility of *niq* with information which is new in the discourse, and remaining data is placed in §5.4.

Each section of the chapter ends with a brief summary and discussion of the findings presented in that section, and §5.5 sums up the chapter.

### 5.1 Epistemic Conditions

#### 5.1.1 Data Supporting that *niq* is Evidential

Due to Nagai's (2006) and Lanz' (2010) descriptions of *niq*, one of the tasks in the present investigation was to determine exactly which evidential meaning, if any, *niq* encodes. This was done by attempts to isolate through which kinds of information sources the experience of the propositional content may come, when a speaker uses *niq* in an utterance. Hence a speaker's experience prior to uttering a sentence with *niq* was a frequent topic in the interviews. This subsection contains data upon which to make hypotheses about *niq*'s evidential properties.

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<sup>27</sup> I am, of course, myself responsible for any misinterpretations.

Data (1-6) below show responses indicating preference of a visual experience of the content of the proposition modified by *niq*.

(1) is taken from a discussion of the difference between the meaning of *tijminiqsuaq uvlaapak* ‘it was flying this morning-*niq*’, and the corresponding simple sentence *tijmiruaq uvlaapak* ‘it was flying this morning’:

- (1) Q: how would *tijminiqsuaq*<sup>28</sup> *uvlaapak* be different from if you just said to me: *tijmiruaq uvlaapak*?  
A: it was flying. It flew this morning. *Tijminiqsuaq* – I saw it flying.

In (1), ‘I saw it flying’ is given as the meaning of *tijminiqsuaq*, whereas the non-modified sentence *tijmiruaq uvlaapak* is translated as ‘it was flying/it flew this morning’. Datum (1) shows that the presence of *niq* may trigger the presence of ‘I saw’ when outlining the meaning of a sentence with *niq* in English.

The datum in (2) below occurs as the consultant is asked to compare *iglu sunjaraaqtaguniqsuq* ‘the house is blue-*niq*’, where the proposition [house is blue] is modified by *niq*, with the corresponding simple sentence *iglu sunjaraaqtaguruq* ‘the house is blue’.

- (2) Q: *iglu sunjaraaqtaguruq*..? As compared to *sunjaraaqtaguniqsuq*?  
A: *sunjaraaqtaguniqsuq*? It IS true, it turns out that it IS blue<sup>29</sup>.  
Q: how does the speaker know, how did it turn out to the speaker that the house was blue?  
A: he saw it, and it is so.  
Q: if the speaker got some kind of document with some kind of signature saying yes, it is so. Would that count as enough evidence to use *niq*? No?  
A: *valliqsuq*

In (2), the consultant does not include any trace of a visual experience in the English translation first offered of *sunjaraaqtaguniqsuq* ‘it is blue-*niq*’. When asked how it turned out to the speaker that the house is blue if he utters *sunjaraaqtaguniqsuq* ‘it is blue-*niq*’, the consultant replies that the speaker has seen it. Later, I asked if a signed document stating that the house is blue is enough evidence for a speaker to modify the proposition with *niq*, and the answer is no. Instead, the consultant states that *-valliqsuq*<sup>30</sup> ‘it probably is’ is the preferred ending. That is, uttering *sunjaraaqtaguvalliqsuq* ‘it is

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<sup>28</sup> Please recall that *-ruaq* and *-suaq* are allomorph. The phonological rules behind their distribution were explained in Chapter 3.

<sup>29</sup> I use caps to signal stress in the interview transcriptions.

<sup>30</sup> *-valli-* is an allomorph of *-palli-* which translates into English as ‘probably’ or ‘maybe’.

blue-*palliq*' is suitable when a signed document is the source through which the speaker accesses the knowledge of the house being blue.

Datum (2) is especially interesting, because Malimiut Iñupiaq *niq* is described as marking that the speaker got the information through indirect evidence (Nagai, 2006). This meaning property is, judging from datum (2), not shared by North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*, since the indirect experience of the propositional content apparently does not license *niq* in the scenario under discussion in datum (2); rather, the consultant prefers a scenario where the speaker has seen the state of affairs, in order to felicitously use *niq* in an utterance conveying that the state of affairs is the case.

Datum (3) also indicates that direct visual evidence is associated with *niq*:

- (3) Q: if somebody comes over to you and say out of the blue *aġnat kukiuniqsut* ['the women are cooking-*niq*'].. is he then ..?  
A: you saw them cooking..  
Q: you've seen it?  
A: yeah, aha, *aġnat kukiuniqsut*

Datum (4) is taken from a discussion on the meaning of *alakpaaniqsuaq* 'he/she/it was cold-*niq*':

- (4) Q: does it [*alakpaaniqsuaq* 'he/she/it was cold-*niq*'] mean that you have seen the person shiver, or has she called you on the phone?  
A: no, I saw the person shivering.

(4) could be taken as an indication that the meaning of *niq* is incompatible with propositions which are hearsay information; a visual experience of the person looking cold is preferred over a scenario where the speaker has been told that the given person is cold. As we shall see later though, *niq* may be used in utterance conveying information passed on to the speaker.

The data (5-6) are further examples of translations and explanations of sentences with *niq* pointing in the direction that *niq* is associated with visual evidence for the proposition expressed.

In (5) below, *Simik Stuaqqakmi itpallihsuq* 'Simik is at Stuaqqak-*palliq*' is preferred over the simple construction *Simik Stuaqqakmi ittuq* 'Simik is at Stuaqqak', because the speaker in the scenario is speculating on the basis of having seen Simik's car. The corresponding construction with *niq*, *Simik Stuaqqakmi itniqsuq* 'Simik is at Stuaqqak-*niq*', is judged acceptable only if the speaker has seen Simik at Store. Later we shall see that also simple constructions are some times judged acceptable only if the speaker has seen the event expressed.

- (5) Q: on his way home from the Stuaqpak, James meets Aalaak. James suspects Aalaak would like to know where Simik is. James, when he meets Aalaak, remembers having seen Simik's car outside the Stuaqpak<sup>31</sup>, when he was walking by. What should James say to Aalaak? *Simik Stuaqpakmi ittuq* or *Simik Stuaqpakmi itpalliqsuq* ?  
 A: *itpalliqsuq*. You are speculating, because his car is there. *Itpalliqsuq Stuaqpakmi*  
 Q: would it alternatively be an appropriate response for him to say *Simik Stuaqpakmi itniqsuq*?  
 A: only is you have seen him, and were there and saw him.. that he was in Stuaqpak when you were there.

Like datum (2) above, datum (5) weakens the chances that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* is an inferential evidential, because an utterance with *niq* is here judged inappropriate in a scenario where the speaker has inferred that the proposition is the case. *Niq* is however not incompatible with the conveyance of knowledge acquired through inference, as we shall see later.

(6) is taken from a discussion of the use of *niq* in the same scenario as the one behind datum (5):

- (6) A: *itniqsuq* eeehm .. you know, it depends on how the situation is, if you are really wanting to find him. You know we make assumptions.. [talks about how you may see a car that looks like someone's car, and then it turns out that it is somebody else who just happens to have a similar car.]  
 Q: so if one wants to use a sentence with *niq*, one has to be pretty sure?  
 A: yeah, you have to have seen them, yourself. I think.

The consultant discusses whether having seen someone's car at a certain location indeed leads to the assumption that the person is currently at that location. She confirms that for using *niq*, the speaker has to be pretty sure. Having seen Simik's car outside the store does not seem to license *niq* in this scenario, and the consultant states that the speaker should preferably have seen Simik himself.

In (7), the consultant does translate *tijminiqsuaq* with 'I saw it flying', but the fact that she first states that the speaker *probably* saw the event himself, is reason to doubt that *niq* is a visual evidential; apparently it is not necessarily required that a speaker uttering *tijminiqsuaq* 'it was flying-*niq*' has seen the given thing fly by. Datum (7) however does not rule out that *niq* may require firsthand evidence for the embedded proposition:

- (7) Q: If you come around and say to me: *tijminiqsuaq uvlaapak*. Does it then mean that you have seen it flying? Or somebody has told you it was flying?  
 A: You probably saw it yourself. *Tijminiqsuaq*, I saw it flying.

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<sup>31</sup> *Stuaqpak* is the name of the grocery store in Barrow.



### 5.1.2 Data Supporting that *niq* is no Evidential

(1-7) may favor a description of *niq* as a firsthand evidential. In this sub-section we shall however see that *niq* is also compatible with other information sources. Compatibility with conveyance of information acquired through a large variety of information sources obviously weakens the hypothesis that *niq* restricts the kind of information source in North Slope Iñupiaq.

In the same interview as the one from which datum (7) comes, more sentences with *niq* are translated into English sentences containing reference to a visual experience. In (8) below, the consultant is asked to compare the two phrases *Utqiaġviksuaq* ‘he/she/it came to Barrow’ and *Utqiaġvikniqsuaq* ‘he/she/it came to Barrow-*niq*’, and the latter is translated with ‘I saw that person come to Barrow’. Later on, however, the consultant indicates that *niq* is not incompatible conveyance of information from sources other than firsthand:

- (8) A: *Utqiaġvikniqsuaq*, the person [=the speaker] might not have seen the person come to Barrow. *Utqiaġvikniqsuaq*, might have heard. *Utqiaġvikniqsuaq*, like you heard it, heard the person [had] come to Barrow from another person.

Data (9-12) are further indicators that *niq* is compatible with hearsay information.

(9) and (10) are taken from a discussion of the sentences *Aalaak umiaqāniqsuq* ‘Aalaak has a boat-*niq*’ and *Aalaak umiaqaqtuq* ‘Aalaak has a boat’:

- (9) Q: when saying *Aalaak umiaqāniqsuq* ‘Aalaak has a boat-*niq*’. How does the speaker know.. has hee seen the boat? Has he seen Aalaak with the boat? Has he heard from somebody that Aalaak has a boat?  
A: he can hear from somebody. Somebody telling him *Aalaak umiaqāniqsuq*.  
Q: and then the person can go on and say to a third person *Aalaak umiaqāniqsuq*?  
A: ii (=‘yes’).  
Q: even though he has not seen the boat?  
A: yeah.
- (10) Q: so it would make more sense if he is looking at Aalaak and his boat, and he says *Oh, Aalaak umiaqaqtuq* [Oh, Aalaak has a boat] .. ?  
A: ii. (=‘yes’)  
Q: and if he has heard it from someone and then he says to a third person *Aalaak umiaqāniqsuq* ?  
A: ii. (=‘yes’)  
Q: so it does not have to be the way that if you use *niq* in a sentence you have to have seen it yourself?  
A: yeah, you can hear it from somebody who has seen his boat.

(11) is taken from a different interview than (9) and (10). The consultant is asked whether *qamutitaluiniqsuq* ‘he/she/it is not very good at driving a car-*niq*’ is appropriate if the speaker has heard from somebody else that a given person has crashed his car.

- (11) Q: if we say that Aalaak and Niayuk are talking about whether Simik is a good driver, and Aalak says *Ii qamutitallaruq* [‘yes, he is a good driver’]. And then the next day Aalak hears from another person that Simik has crashed while trying to park. Could Aalak then go back to Niayuk and say *qamutitaluiniqsuq* .. ?  
A: that too.<sup>32</sup>

(12) is one of the scenarios offered by a consultant when explaining the meaning of *niq* to me:

- (12) A: you are starting out with two people who are wondering whether Peter has a boat. And Peter is here in the warehouse with his boat [gesticulates that Peter in the warehouse and the people wondering whether he has a boat, are in two different locations.] And the person Peter has been speaking with comes out so I ran up asking him whether Peter has a boat. Then he says yes, Peter has a boat; *Peter umiaqaqtuq* [‘Peter has a boat’]. He knows for sure that Peter has a boat. Okay. Then I holler to my friend over here; *Peter umiaqaḡniqsuq!*

Besides showing that *niq* is appropriate when the speaker acquired the information through the verbal report of another person, (11) and (12) are interesting in terms of the function the utterances with *niq* have in the discourse: The propositions modified by *niq* in the respective data share some elements with a proposition previously evoked in the scenarios. More data shedding light on this function of *niq*, are saved for the sections on discourse and information structure, i.e. §5.2 and §5.3 respectively.

Recall that consultants tended to give English translations of sentences with *niq* where a visual experience is expressed, and to explicitly state that the speaker has seen the event when the proposition is modified by *niq*. From data (13-18) it appears that simple declarative sentences are also associated with the conveyance of states of affairs which are experienced first hand by the speaker.

The response in (13) is extracted from a discussion on the appropriateness of *aḡnat kukiurut* ‘the women are cooking’ and *kukiuvalliqsut* ‘they are cooking-*palliq*’ in the following scenario:

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<sup>32</sup> *Qamutitaluichuq*, the corresponding sentence without *niq*, was also judged acceptable in this context. The present purpose of showing the datum is however to show that *niq* is not incompatible with the conveyance of a proposition based on reported information.

You walk into a kitchen and you see a lot of cooked seal. It's already cooked and prepared. Three women are standing around with dirty hands. The utensils are dirty with blood. And you see all this cooked seal.

The consultant states that the simple sentence *aġnat kukiurut* 'the women are cooking' is required if the speaker has seen them cook. The sentence *kukiuvalliqsut* 'they are cooking-palliq' is judged appropriate if the speaker does not really know if they are cooking:

- (13) A: *aġnat kukiurut*, you're telling him that women are cooking. Or the other one, *kukiuvalliqsut*, they're probably cooking. [...] But if you have seen it, you have to say *kukiurut*. If you don't know if they are really cooking, you have to say *kukivalliqsut*, maybe they are cooking.

In (14), the consultant suggests that the speaker has probably seen the given person come to Barrow, when uttering the simple sentence *Utqiagviksuaq* 'he/she/it came to Barrow'.

- (14) Q: *Utqiagviksuaq*, then you ... ?  
A: ..have seen it probably.

In (15), the consultant compares *akutchivalliqsuaq* 'he/she/it was probably mixing (something)' with the simple construction *akutchiruaq* 'he/she/it was mixing (something)'. The simple construction is associated with a visual experience:

- (15) A: *akutchivalliqsuaq*, MAYBE she was mixing. But when you say *akutchiruaq* then you have seen the person mixing.

In (16), the consultant is elaborating on the sentence *aġaiyyuviġmiguuq ittuq* 'he/she/it is at the church it is said', which she compares with the simple construction *aġaiyyuviġmi ittuq* 'he/she/it is at the church'. The latter is associated with firsthand evidence:

- (16) A: *aġaiyyuviġmi ittuq*, you have seen her. *Aġaiyyuviġmiguuq*, you have heard.

In (17) the consultant prefers *Simik Stuaqpakmi itpalliqsuq* 'Simik is probably at the store' if the speaker only saw Simik's car. If the speaker saw Simik, the simple construction *Simik Stuaqpakmi ittuq* 'Simik is at the store' is preferred.

- (17) Q: *Simik Stuaqpakmi ittuq* ? Or would it be more appropriate to...  
A: did he see him?  
Q: no. He just saw his car.  
A: oh. *Itpalliqsuq*. Assuming. But if he had seen him, he would say *ittuq*, the ending.

In (18), a visual experience is mentioned as the reason why the speaker can utter the simple sentence *qiaruq* ‘he is crying’:

(18) A: I can say *qiaruq* [‘he is crying’] because I see it myself, and that is how I see it.

### 5.1.3 Speaker Certainty

In datum (2) above, a speaker experience pointing directly at the truth of the proposition modified by *niq* was preferred over an indirect source. Such data could point in the direction that *niq* has other epistemic restrictions such as a requiring the speaker to be certain that the proposition is true; it is reasonable to assume that a direct experience entails more certainty than an indirect one. Data which shed light on *niq*’s relation to speaker certainty are presented in this sub-section.

(19) is part on an explanation of *niq* given to me by a consultant:

(19) A: Peter might have been wearing an apron full of blood or something. That makes you make that assumption that he is a cook, then you can use *niq*. But if Peter is just sitting there with no apparent evidence of him being the creator of that stew, you can’t use [*niq*].

According to datum (19), it is not necessary that the speaker has seen Peter cook in order to use *niq*, as long as he has experienced something making him certain that Peter is cooking. Hence *niq* seems to require that the speaker has an experience which made him certain that the proposition is the case. Data (20-22) further indicate that *niq* restricts the speaker experience to be such that it leads to certainty of the proposition’s truth.

In (20), a consultant is elaborating on when to use *niq* in an utterance. She explicitly states that a speaker must be certain that the state of affairs is the case. She mentions that there must be evidence, but does not specify which kind of evidence.

(20) A: but you can’t say it unless you are certain that.. you have to have the evidence. It’s concrete. There is not a shadow of a doubt, it is so.

In (20) the only restriction on the experience prior to the conveyance of the given state of affairs through an utterance with *niq*, appears to be the existence of a body of evidence making the speaker certain.

In (21), the consultant is given a scenario where someone asks the speaker *Simik umiaqaqpa?* ‘does Simik have a boat?’. In the scenario, the speaker replies *Simik umiaqagnisusq*, which the

consultant spontaneously translates with ‘he does have a boat’. I then ask her if the speaker is not guessing, when he replies *Simik umiaqaḡniqsuq*. She confirms that the speaker knows.

- (21) Q: so if one person asks another person “*Simik Umiaqaqpa?*”, and the other person says “*Simik umiaqaḡniqsuq*” ..  
A: .. he does have a boat  
Q: and he is not guessing in any way?  
A: he knows.

In (22) the consultant indicates that certainty is the function of *niq* in the sentence under discussion. She uses the sentence *tainainiqsuq* ‘it is so-*niq*’ as example, and compares it with the corresponding simple construction *tainaituq* ‘it is so’.

- (22) A: [...] but when we say *tainainiqsuq*, we say for certainty that it is that way.  
Q: *tainai*.. what does that mean?  
A: *tainainiqsuq*. *Tainaituq*, it is so.  
Q: and if you say *tainainiqsuq*, it is for certain that it is that way .. ?  
A: yeah.

Though some consultants have indicated that utterances with *niq* may be ‘stronger’, it was never confirmed that the utterance of a declarative sentence with *niq* requires the speaker to be more certain of the proposition’s truth, than an utterance of a simple declarative construction<sup>33</sup>.

We have seen that *niq* requires speaker certainty when used in declarative constructions in the present tense. It is interesting to note, however, that when combined with the postbase *niaq* which indicates that the event will take place in the future (MacLean, 1986b:32), *niq* may contribute an aspect of uncertainty to the meaning of the utterance. In (23), *īlisāḡniaqtuḡa* ‘I will study’ with the future marker *niaq* is judged to be a stronger statement than the corresponding construction modified by *niq*, *īlisāḡniaḡniqsuḡa* ‘I will study-*niq*’.

- (23) Q: [...] *īlisāḡniaḡniqsuḡa*  
A: I will be sure to study.  
Q: are you then certain that yes it will happen?  
A: I have decided. I don’t know if it will happen, I planned to. [...] *īlisāḡniaqtuḡa*, I will study.  
Q: that’s also something in the future?

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<sup>33</sup> See e.g. datum (24) in §5.2.1.

- A: I'm planning to.. I will, it's a little stronger than the other one before, where I say I would be planning to do so. But *iļisaǵniaqtuņa* is more of .. I WILL do it.  
*-niǵniqsuņa* is more of a hazy, might be, I kind of plan to. Maybe something will change .. change what I do.. But if I say *iļisaǵniaqtuņa*, I will study.
- Q: more determined?  
A: yeah.

#### 5.1.4 Summary and Discussion of Epistemic Conditions

Datum (1) shows that the presence of *niq* may give rise to a meaning conveyed in English by means of the expression 'I saw p'. Data (2-7) indicate that a firsthand experience seems to be preferred behind the felicitous use of *niq* in an utterance conveying the given state of affairs. However, in data (8-12) *niq* appears to be compatible with propositions which are hearsay information, and judging from datum (19) *niq* is appropriate when conveying inferred knowledge. Also simple declarative utterances are associated with firsthand speaker experience, as it appears from data (13-18). The many information sources compatible with *niq* seem to point in the direction that something else than evidentiality governs the felicitous use of *niq*.

Data (19-22) indicates that utterances with *niq* require the speaker to be certain of the proposition's true. Given that we feel more certain about the actuality of our own firsthand experiences, than we do about reported information, the tendency of preferring a visual evidence for the truth of propositions modified by *niq*, could be due to *niq* requiring speaker certainty.

It should be noted, however, that it was not explicitly confirmed in the interviews that a speaker who uses *niq* is more certain than a speaker who utters a simple declarative sentence. Furthermore, datum (23) shows that when combined with the postbase *niaq*, the use of *niq* is interpreted as contributing to the sentence with a meaning aspect of decreased certainty.

## 5.2 *Niq* and Discourse Functions

### 5.2.1 Affirmation and Confirmation

*Niq*'s meaning was sometimes explained to me by means of the notions 'confirmation' (as in (28-29)), 'clarification' (as in (27)) and especially 'affirmation' (as in (24-26) and (28)) in the interviews.

In datum (24), the consultant indicates that a speaker may use *niq* to affirm the propositional content:

- (24) Q: so if someone chooses to use *-niqsuq* on something, on some statement, he is more certain?  
A: he is affirming, that is it that way. He is affirming that it is so.

Datum (25) is part of a consultant's elaboration on the difference between *Nancy tuyuqniqsuaq* 'Nancy wrote a letter-*niq*' and the non-modified counterpart *Nancy tuyuqtuaq* 'Nancy wrote a letter'. Again, 'affirmation' is part of the explanation of a sentence with *niq*. It appears that *niq* is here used to affirm that the event really did take place:

(25) A: in the second one [*Nancy tuyuqniqsuaq*] you are affirming that she really did, she wrote a letter.

In (26), the consultant is elaborating on the difference between *sanatumaruq* 'he is good at carving-*sima*'<sup>34</sup> and *sanatuniqsuq* 'he is good at carving-*niq*'. The sentence with *niq* is explained as a further affirmation of the embedded proposition:

(26) A: I think it is more straight forward that it is so, *sanatumaruq*, that he does a lot of carving and he is good at it. *Sanatuniqsuq* is ehm, further affirms, it's a further affirmation.

In (27), it appears that *niq* is used when clarifying the truth of a proposition. (27) is taken from a conversation, where the consultant has told me that the ending *-niqsuq* '3.PER.SG-*niq*' is used to affirm that something is the case:

(27) Q: his background reason to affirm it [the proposition modified by *niq*], would that be seeing it for himself as well as hearing it from some reliable source? Or would he have to see something yourself before you could say *niqsuq*?  
A: it would have to be true for yourself. *Tainaituq*, it is that way. *Tainainiqsuq*, it clarifies it is that way, it is indeed that way.

Judging from datum (27), *niq* requires that the speaker believes the proposition to be true, and the meaning contribution made by *niq* in *tainainiqsuq* 'it is that way-*niq*' is to clarify that the propositional content is true. The consultant uses the English expression 'it is indeed that way' in her explanation.

A consultant explained that in conversation and storytelling situations, *niq* is appropriate in utterances where information is repeated in order to indicate that one has understood the information in the interlocutor's previous utterance.

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<sup>34</sup> The postbase *sima* surfaces as the allomorph *ma* when preceded by a vowel (e.g. Nagai, 2006:107).

In the discussion, from which (28) is extracted, the consultant was asked how Aaluk should answer, when Nayuk asks Aaluk how her mother is doing. The consultant chooses *nakuuruq* ‘she is good’. *Nakuuniqsuq* ‘she is good-*niq*’, she states, is appropriate for the person who has asked about the other person’s mother, after having received the reply *nakuuruq* ‘she is good’. It hence appears that *niq* may be used to affirm the truth of the propositional content of the previous utterance. Please note that the utterance with *niq* is explained as ‘affirming’ in the fifth line of the datum:

- (28) A: *nakuuruq*. She is good. She is okay.  
 Q: and *nakuuniqsuq* would be kind of strange?  
 A: noo it’s in a different context, *nakuuniqsuq*: When somebody is.. after they ask ‘How is your mother?’ .. [You say] *Nakuuruq*. [The person who asked says]: *Aaah nakuuniqsuq* in response; Oooh so she’s okay! Affirming.  
 Q: so then Aaluk says *Nakuuruq*. And then Nayuk says *Nakuuniqsuq*  
 A: ii. [=yes]  
 Q: and then Aaluk says.. what should she reply?  
 A: just a state .. *Nakuuniqsuq*..  
 Q: oh so it’s not like asking a question..?  
 A: m-m it’s ... His or her question is answered. *Aah nakuuniqsuq*; confirming that their mother is great or whoever he’s asking.

In (29) it appears that utterances with *niq* may be used in a similar way in storytelling contexts to confirm to the storyteller that one is following. Please note that it appears from datum (29) that utterances of simple constructions may do the same job as utterances with *niq*, when showing that one is following:

- (29) A: just like when a storyteller telling a story the person that’s listening has to confirm that they are listening and they say *Ii, nakuuniqsuq*. They have to answer back so the storyteller can keep going..  
 Q: .. and they would do that with the *niq*.. ? *Nakuuniqsuq*..? Or if he’s talking about somebody who has a boat, the audience would answer *aaah umiaqaḡniqsuq!* .. ? Kind of?  
 A: *ii umiaqaḡniqsuq*.....  
 Q: and they wouldn’t answer with *ii umiaqaqtuq* .. ? Or?  
 A: could if they ask him in a certain way. *Ii umiaqaqtuq*. They can in both ways. *Ii umiaqaḡniqsuq*.

(30-32) below show that the paraphrase ‘it turns out that p’ was sometimes used to explain the meanings of sentences with *niq*. Like the frequency of the concept ‘affirmation’ in the explanations of sentences with *niq*, the use of this paraphrase suggests that *niq* is associated with the function of highlighting the truth of a previously evoked proposition; when a speaker desires to convey that ‘it turns out that p is the case’, it is reasonable to assume that p has previously been evoked.



A consultant offered the scenario in (30) when explaining the meaning of *tainainiqsuq* ‘it is that way-*niq*’ to me:

- (30) A: *tainainiqsuq*.. ehm .. if somebody said, somebody painted my mom’s house white. I didn’t believe them, and they said *tainaituq*. So then I go see for myself and then I say *tainainiqsuq*, it is true. It turns out that it is true.

Judging from datum (30), *niq* is appropriate in situations where the speaker has previously made assumptions about the truth-value of the proposition modified by *niq*, and then experiences something which gives him better knowledge about the truth-value of that proposition.

Data (31) and (32) are further examples of the tendency that a translation of an utterance with *niq* includes the expression ‘it turns out that p’:

- (31) Q: *qianiqsut*?  
A: it turns out that they ARE crying.

In (32), the consultant is asked whether *Simik qamutitalaitniqsuq* ‘Simik can’t drive a car-*niq*’ or the corresponding non-modified construction *Simik qamutitalaitchuq* ‘Simik can’t drive a car’ is the most appropriately uttered in the following scenario:

Niayuk asks Aalak *Simik qamutitallava?* [‘can Simik drive a car?’].. and then Aalak says *Ii Simik qamutitalaruq* [‘yes, Simik can drive’]. But then the next day Aalak sees Simik crashing a car as he is trying to park at the store. So Aalak goes back to Niayuk and says *qamutitaluiniqsuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well-*niq*’] or *Simik qamutitaluichuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well’] .... ?

- (32) A: *qamutitaluiniqsuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well-*niq*’]. It doesn’t.. it turns out that Simik is not a very good driver. *Qamutitaluiniqsuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well-*niq*’]  
Q: would that be a better response than simply saying *qamutitaluichuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well’] ?  
A: *qamutitaluichuq* ... ?  
Q: yeah.  
A: it has to do with *qamutitaluiniqsuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well-*niq*’], it turns out that he is not a very good driver because of what I’ve witnessed. *Qamutitaluichuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well’] is ehm .. it is so, *qamutitaluichuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well’].  
He’s not a very good driver.

In the discussion of *qamutitaluichuq* ‘Simik can’t drive a car very well’ as opposed to *qamutitaluiniqsuq* ‘Simik can’t drive a car very well-*niq*’, the consultant explains the latter as “it

*turns out that he is not a very good driver because of what I've witnessed*". It thus appears that *niq* in this case is used to convey that the speaker has made an experience which led him to believe in the truth of the proposition [Simik cannot drive a car very well].

In addition to data (30-32), a paraphrase of a sentence with *niq* also has the shape of 'it turns out that p' in datum (2) presented earlier; here the consultant translates *sunaraaqtaguniqsuq* 'it is blue-*niq*' as 'It IS true, it turns out that it IS blue.'

### 5.2.2 Prior Shared Wondering

If *niq* is associated with the act of affirming the truth of a proposition, it is reasonable to assume that the proposition is somehow evoked prior to the utterance with *niq*. One consultant explained the meaning of *niq* to me by describing scenarios in which the speaker and hearer have both been wondering about a question, which is then settled by the utterance with *niq*. This sub-section presents data, where the proposition modified by *niq* is previously evoked because the speaker and hearer have been wondering about the truth of that proposition.

The following scenario was described by a consultant when explaining the meaning and use of *niq* to me:

- (33) A: [...] the first scenario for me is I've been wondering with somebody else whether this person has a boat. I go and check to see whether that person has a boat. I see that he has a boat, cause I, see it. And then I go back, or I holler back to the person *umiaqañiqsuq!* Yes he does have a boat!

In (33), the speaker and hearer are suspecting that a certain person might have a boat, and in the utterance with *niq*, this previously evoked proposition, i.e. [Peter having a boat], is being established as true. The utterance with *niq* appears to contribute with the new information that p is the case, rather than introducing a new proposition or elements of a proposition.

Datum (34) also shows the association of the use of *niq* with situations where previous questions about the truth of the embedded proposition have come up prior to the utterance with *niq*:

- (34) A: to me it's ehm, there might have been a question or supposition where maybe you are wondering whether Aalak has a boat. And then you observe it and *ah! umiaqañiqsuq* ['he has a boat-*niq*']

In (35) it appears that the lack of shared wondering whether p is the case prior to the utterance, is what renders an utterance of the sentence *umiaqaḡniqpa?* ‘does he have a boat-*niq*?’ odd; the use of *niq* here seems to require that the hearer can be assumed to have thought about whether Peter has a boat.

- (35) A: because if the person who came out of Peter’s house has not been part of this wondering and questioning over here. And I run up to him and say *Peter umiaqaḡniqpa .. ?* It’s kind of a weird question to ask this person. I would say *Peter umiaqaqpa?* Does Peter have a boat? [...]  
 Q: like in English [...] it’s like strange to run up to a person and say *does he really have a boat?*  
 A: mhm! Right.  
 Q: so [*niq*] is like ‘really’?  
 A: it might be yeah. Could be. *Does he really have a boat?* the *really*-part assumes that the person you are speaking with now, has shared something with you before the questioning-situation. You both were wondering whether he had a boat or not.

Datum (36) shows another consultant’s expressed preference for a sentence with *niq* over a corresponding simple sentence, if the utterance is a continuation of a ‘chain of thought’. (36) was given in relation to the following scenario:

Niayuk asks Aalak *Simik qamutitallava?* [‘can Simik drive a car?’].. and then Aalak says *Ii Simik qamutitallaruq* [‘yes, Simik can drive’]. But then the next day Aalak sees Simik crashing a car as he is trying to park at the store. So Aalak goes back to Niayuk and says *qamutitalluiniqsuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well-*niq*’] or *Simik qamutitaluichuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well’] .... ?

The consultant’s preference for the response with *niq* instead of the corresponding simple sentence seems to be due to the speaker and hearer having wondered about p prior to the utterance time; she states that she prefers the sentence with *niq* in this scenario, because the utterance is a continuation of the same discussion, that is, the discussion on whether Simik can drive:

- (36) A: mhm, *qamutitaluiniqsuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well-*niq*’], it turns out that. If it is a continuation of that discussion, the same chain of thought then I would say *qamutitaluiniqsuq* [‘Simik can’t drive a car very well-*niq*’].

Data (11) and (12) presented in §5.1.2 are also examples where the utterance with *niq* represents the answer to the speaker’s and hearer’s previous wondering whether p is the case. The scenario in (12) was given by a consultant as an explanation of a sentence with *niq*, whereas I invented the scenario in (11) inspired by consultants’ scenarios like the one in (12).

### 5.2.3 *Niq and Unexpected Information*

We have seen that *niq* is used in utterances which function to settle a question or affirming the truth of a proposition. The data presented in this sub-section show that *niq* may be associated with conveyance of states of affairs which were not expected to be the case. In Chapter 3 we saw that *niq*, according to MacLean (1995), may be used to relate an event from the past to the present. It seems that this relation may take the form of the present event being contrary to a state of affairs in the past.

Data (37-40) show that *niq* may appropriately modify a proposition, the truth of which is a contradiction to an assumption previously made.

In (37) the utterance of *umiaqaġniqsuq* ‘he has a boat-*niq*’ is appropriate in a scenario where the speaker used to assume that Aalaak does not have a boat, and then discovers that Aalaak does have a boat:

- (37) Q: if we say that Aalak never had anything, never had money, and he always wanted a boat.  
A: but now he’s got one?  
Q: yeah.  
A: *umiaqaġniqsuq*.  
Q: Then you can say that?  
A: yeah.

The use of *niq* in utterances conveying states of affairs which are not inline with the speaker’s previous assumptions does not seem to be affected by negation elements; *umiuiñiqsuq* ‘he/she does not have a boat-*niq*’ is judged appropriate when the speaker used to believe that Aalaak has a boat, and then finds out that he does not. (38) is part of a conversation where a consultant explains how *niq* may function to convey that the opposite of the embedded proposition used to be the case:

- (38) Q: [...] anything that contradicts what things used to be... ?  
A: .. what you thought it was..  
Q: yeah,. or if you.. also the other way around. You know that Aalak has a boat, and he had a boat for many years, and you go visit him, and it turns out that he doesn’t have a boat anymore..  
A: ..*umiuiñiqsuq*.

Datum (39) is taken from a discussion of the sentence *nagliksaanjiññiqsuk ukuak* ‘they(dual) do not suffer-*niq*’, which occurs in a story analyzed in MacLean (ibid.). The consultant indicates that *niq* is used here to convey that the proposition [they do not suffer] used not to be the case. That is, *niq*

here contributes to the meaning of the utterance by implying that the two given persons used to suffer in the past:

- (39) A: There is inference there, that they are not hungry. And they are not suffering. [...] They do not suffer these two; *nagliksaaninniqsuk ukuak*. It could be that.. The only reason you would say that, is that maybe they have been suffering before, but now they are not.  
Q: yeah? Otherwise you would have said it without a *niq*?  
A: right! Otherwise he would say *nagliksaaninsuk ukuak*, they are not suffering these two.

The consultant then tells me that as far as she remembers, the sentence comes from a story where two children used to starve. At a later point in the story, they come to stay with a woman who is a seal. This woman has a stick, which she turns into a hunter, and the hunter brings back a lot of food. The consultant states that the use of *niq* indicates this link between the past and the present; before they were suffering, but now they are not.

(40) is another example showing that *niq* may be used to convey that a speaker, who previously assumed ~p to be the case, discovers that p is the case. A consultant described the following scenario as a situation where uttering the sentence *miquguiñiqsuq* 'he/she is not sewing-*niq*' is appropriate:

- (40) A: if you walked into a house and ehm and the usual activity of that particular person at that hour is that she is sewing - cause she sews a lot. And you walk in, and *oh miquguiñiqsuq*  
Then you Oh! You would make the observation that she is not sewing. Because you have made the supposition that .. you were assuming that she'd be sewing at this time of the day. But she is not. [...] Instead of sewing, she is not. And instead of suffering, they are not.

Utterances of simple sentences also seem appropriate when conveying a proposition the truth of which is a contrast to a previous assumption. In datum (11) presented earlier, the speaker and hearer has been wondering whether Simik can drive. *Niq* is appropriate in an utterance conveying that Simik can not drive a car very well, after the speaker has heard about Simik's car crash. The consultant, who gave datum (11), later stated that a simple sentence is equally appropriate in that scenario.

In (41), an utterance with *niq* is judged appropriate when conveying a state of affairs which is new or unexpected to the speaker.

The scenario, in relation to which the utterance is discussed, includes a mother who has been at home all day with her son. The son has started to crawl, and when the husband comes home, she tells him. The consultant judges the utterance *paamrukniqsuaq* ‘he was crawling-*niq*’ appropriate, and adds to the scenario that the content of the proposition is ‘new knowledge’:

- (41) Q: what if she [=the mother] says *paamrukniqsuaq* .. ?  
 A: mhm you could say that.  
 Q: context?  
 A: it was that he was .. it turns out that he was crawling, he has just mobilized himself.  
 Q: surprise baked in, like oooh.. ?  
 A: ah, *paamrukniqsuaq*, yeah.  
 Q: that she is happy about it?  
 A: it’s .. she just realized it, she discovered it. New knowledge.

The data in (42-44) below all indicate that *niq* is preferred over a simple construction, when the speaker is surprised. Consultants were asked to choose an appropriate sentence in a scenario where Aalak comes home and to her surprise finds that her son is sewing. The consultants were asked whether Aalaak exclaims *miquqtutin!* ‘you are sewing!’ or *miquḡniqsutin!* ‘you are sewing-*niq*!’. The consultants, whose data is presented in (42-43), responded quickly by choosing *Miquḡniqsutin!* Though datum (43) confirms that *niq* may function to convey the speaker’s surprise, it should be noted that the consultant who gave (43) suggests another sentence *asraa, miquqpin* ‘*asraa* you are sewing’, which she finds even more suitable to express the speaker’s surprise.

- (42) A: *miquḡniqsutinnnnnn!!* You are sewing! Oh man, you are sewingggggg..  
 Q: does it kind of express her ..  
 A: ..surprise. *Miquḡniqsutinnnn..* Kind of surprise, oh you are sewing!  
 Q: is she then sort of surprised in a positive or negative way?  
 A: good surprise<sup>35</sup>.
- (43) A: *miquḡniqsutin.*  
 Q: why do you think it should be that one instead of the other one?  
 A: *miquqtutin* is you are sewing. *Miquḡniqsutin*, it is it appears that it is such that you are sewing. I think it has an element of, she’s surprised. Or she would say “*asraa, miquqpin!*” *asraa* is ‘this is straight highly unusual’.  
 Q: so it [*asraa, miquqpin*] would be more fitting in this context?  
 A: yeah.

In (44), the consultant states that both sentences would be appropriate in the scenario. She does though settle for *miquqniqsutin!* ‘you are sewing-*niq*!’.

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<sup>35</sup> The consultant told me that boys sewing could hardly be disappointing to parents. If a man is out on the ice alone, he needs to know how to repair his mitten if it should become necessary.

- (44) A: I think either one is .. *miquǵniqsutin!* Or *miquqtutin!* It can go either, but ehm.. If you are really surprised, cause he has never really sewn much, you would say *miquǵniqsutin!*  
 Q: so there is there is a bit more surprise when you say *miquǵniqsutin* than when you say *miquqtutin*.. ?  
 A: ii [=‘yes’], yeah. Yeah it’s more ehm exciting or you’re like choked or stunned or, yeah.  
 Q: kind of in a happy way or?  
 A: yeah in a happy way.

It is interesting to note that the utterance with *niq* is only slightly preferred over an utterance of the corresponding simple sentence in datum (44). When asked to elaborate on the difference between sentences with *niq* and corresponding simple sentences in isolation, many consultants indicated that the two sentences were fairly similar in terms of meaning. Some ascribed the difference to the speaker’s choice of ‘wording’, while others would state that *niq* was just an extra syllable. It thus seems less likely that *niq* affects the truth-conditions, but rather may pertain to speaker attitude or structure the information in the utterance.

#### 5.2.4 Summary and Discussion of Discourse Functions

Judging from data (24-28) and (29), the use of *niq* is associated with the act of affirming or confirming that a given state of affair is the case. The notion ‘affirmation’ is used in the explanation of the sentence with *niq* in (24-26), and in (27) the sentence with *niq* is explained as a clarification. In (28-29) *niq* modifies a proposition which is similar to the proposition evoked in the storyteller’s or conversation partner’s previous utterance. The utterances with *niq* in these contexts serve to show that the speaker has understood the information in the previous utterance.

There is a tendency to use the paraphrase ‘it turns out that p’ to explain the meaning of sentences with *niq* (data (2) and (30-32)), and according to data (33-34) and (36) *niq* is closely associated with the conveyance of information which serves to settle the speaker’s and hearer’s previously shared wondering whether p is the case. An utterance of a sentence with *niq* may be more appropriate than uttering a simple sentence, if the relevant utterance is a continuation of the same chain of thought (as in datum (36)). In datum (35), an utterance questioning the truth of a proposition could not contain *niq* if the hearer has not previously been wondering together with the speaker if p is the case.

*Niq* may function to imply that the truth of the modified proposition is contrary to the speaker’s previous assumption (data (37-40)), or to convey states of affairs which are new or surprising to the speaker (data (41-44)).

This section has shown that *niq* is associated with affirmation, the paraphrase ‘it turns out that p’, and the function of settling questions or contradicting previous assumptions concerning the truth of a proposition. Judging from the data presented here, utterances with *niq* may serve the function of highlighting the truth of a proposition which is previously evoked in the discourse. And as for datum (35), *niq* seems to be awkward when the speaker asks whether p is the case, if p can not be assumed to have been previously evoked for the hearer.

In the next section we shall see that information other than the truth of the proposition may be highlighted in an utterance with *niq*.

### 5.3 *Niq* and Information Structure

#### 5.3.1 Translations with Emphasized Elements

In §5.2 we saw examples where *niq* is used in sentences where the truth of p is the main meaning contribution, as the proposition modified by *niq* was previously evoked.

Data (45) and (46) below are examples of the tendency to translate sentences with *niq* into English sentences where the copula is emphasized by means of intonational stress. Since stress on the matrix verb is associated with highlighting the truth of the proposition in English<sup>36</sup>, it seems that *niq* can be used to structure the information in such a way that the truth of the proposition is the prominent information in the utterance.

In (45), the consultant elaborates on the difference between *tiḡmiruaq uvlaapak* ‘it flew this morning’ and *tiḡminiqsuaq uvlaapak* ‘it flew this morning-*niq*’:

(45) A: *tiḡmiruaq uvlaapak* - it flew this morning, it flew away this morning. Something like that. [...] *tiḡminiqsuaq uvlaapak* – somebody has seen the flying thing, and it WAS flying this morning.

(46) is from an elaboration on when to use *piḷaiḡaniqsuaq* ‘he/she was tired-*niq*’ as compared to *piḷaiḡamaruaq* ‘he/she was tired-*sima*’<sup>37</sup>, which is the corresponding construction modified by *sima* ‘it is known’:

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. Gutzmann & Miró (2011).

<sup>37</sup> The postbase *sima*, here surfacing as the allomorph *ma* in *piḷaiḡamaruaq*, seems to share some semantic space with *niq*. The difference between *niq* and *sima* is not always obvious according to the consultants. In MacLean (forthcoming) there are two verbelaborating postbases of the form *sima*. *Sima*<sub>1</sub>, which is the only one which may surface as the allomorph *ma*, is described as “for the speaker to realize that one has V-ed, is V-ing, or is V; it is evident” (ibid.:975). This meaning aspect *sima* seems to share with *niq*, as *niq* is also associated with the speaker having experienced something which makes the propositional content evident (see data (2), (12), (19), especially datum (61) and all the data where the utterance with *niq* is paraphrased by means of the English phrase *it turns out that* (e.g. in (30,31,32)). It does



(46) A: when you are saying it, he WAS tired, *piłainiqsuaq*, Peter WAS tired.

In addition to (45-46), also datum (2) from §5.1.1 and datum (31) from §5.2.1 exemplify the tendency of having stressed matrix verbs in the English translations of sentences with *niq*. It is further interesting to note that in data (21) and (33), presented in §5.1.3 and §5.2.2 respectively, the English translation of sentences with *niq* contain do-support; *do*-support is used in English to, among other things, highlight the truth of the proposition.

In the data (47) and (48) below, an element other than the matrix verb is stressed in the English translations.

In the conversation from which (47) comes, the consultant was asked to compare *Utqiaġviksuaq* ‘he/she/it went/came to Barrow’ and *Utqiaġviġniqsuaq* ‘he/she/it went/came to Barrow-*niq*’. The English translation of the sentence with *niq* contains stress on the element *to*, whereas the translation of the simple construction does not:

(47) A: *Utqiaġviksuaq?* The person went to Barrow. She came to Barrow. The person came to Barrow. Something like that. [...] *Utqiaġviġniqsuaq* – the person had come TO Barrow.

In (48), the consultant was asked about the meaning of *iġġitigun tiġminiqsuq* ‘it is flying through the mountains-*niq*’. When elaborating on the meaning, she gives the English translation ‘it is THAT way. That’s how it’s flying’ with stress on the expression *that*:

(48) Q: *iġġitigun tiġminiqsuq*.  
A: how would that be different from saying *Iġġitigun tiġmiruq*?  
Q: oh. Okay! *-niqsuq* and the *-ruq*. *Iġġitigun tiġmiruq*, it is flying through the mountains. *Iġġitigun tiġminiqsuq*, ehm.. the situation it thus that it is flying through the mountains. It is.. it is THAT way. That’s how it’s flying. [Like if someone says]: *Iġġitigun tiġmiruq. Ii Iġġitigun tiġminiqsuq*. [‘it is flying through the mountains. Yes, it is flying through the mountains-*niq*’]  
Q: okay! So it’s sort of confirming...?  
A: .. yeah. It is true. *-niqsuq*.

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though seem that at least some meanings conveyable by means of *sima*, are not associated with the use of *niq*; *sima* may be used to convey that the action is being done or was done (MacLean, 1986b:33). This meaning aspect was never brought up by consultants when discussing the meaning of sentences with *niq* in the interviews. The other way around, the meaning aspects of ‘endearment’, as we shall see later, and ‘affirmation’ are sometimes associated with *niq* but not with *sima*. I will not go deeper into the differences and similarities between *niq* and *sima* here, but rather leave it to further research to determine the exact semantic relation between those expressions.

### 5.3.2 New Information

Examples have been given where *niq* modifies a proposition which is already given, and thereby contributes with the information that the given proposition is true. *Niq* may, however, also modify propositions which are only partly previously given. That is, utterances with *niq* sometimes contribute with new information which is not the truth of the proposition, but rather part of the propositional content.

In (49-50), it appears that utterances with *niq* may answer questions such as ‘who is cooking?’.

(49) is part of a consultant’s explanation of *niq*. The consultant has described a scenario where the hearer is wondering who is cooking, and the speaker goes to the kitchen to see who is cooking. The speaker sees that Peter is cooking, and goes back and says: *Peter kukiuniqsuq* ‘Peter is cooking-*niq*’.

(49) A: [...] *niq*, I guess, presupposes that the question of who is cooking has come up prior to making the observation. [...] If you wanna say *kiñakiaq kukiuraa*, I wonder who is cooking, okay? Then you can go and check. And the person who sees Peter cooking can say *Peter kukiuniqsuq*.

Neither the hearer nor the speaker seems to have believed or suspected that *Peter* is cooking (i.e. they were wondering *who* is cooking; not whether *Peter* is cooking), so in (49) the utterance with *niq* is not establishing the truth of a proposition which was previously suspected to be true. That someone is cooking is old information, and the new information is *Peter*; *Peter* is cooking and not somebody else.

In (50), the consultant states that *Peter iganiqsuq* ‘Peter is cooking-*niq*’ is an appropriate response to *kiñakiaq igamava*:

(50) A: I can answer *kiñakiaq igamava* with *Peter iganiqsuq*.

In (51), an utterance with *niq* is appropriate when supplying the information on Simik’s location, if the speaker and hearer have both been wondering where Simik is. Again, *niq* occurs in an utterance where parts of the propositional content are new information:

(51) A: but then you can’t use *niq* in reporting to Aalak, unless you’ve had that question of whether.. that both of you wondered where Simik is.

In (52) *iganiqsuq* ‘he/she is cooking-*niq*’ is reported as being appropriate when the question was ‘what is he doing?’, and the speaker comes back after having realized that the person under discussion is cooking:

- (52) A: *summava?* or *sunniqpa?* What is he or she doing in there? And then you come back and say *iganiqsuq* or *igamaruq*.

The choice to translate a statement with *niq* into an English cleft construction in (53) seems to support an assumption that *niq* may be used to highlight information other than the truth of the proposition. In (53), the consultant was asked about the meaning of *Simik iganiqsuq* ‘Simik is cooking-*niq*’. In the English translation in the first line of the datum, the constituent *Simik* is clefted, and hence *Simik* is the highlighted information. The consultant hereafter translates the simple Iñupiaq construction *Simik igaruq* ‘Simik is cooking’ into a simple English construction:

- (53) A: *Simik iganiqsuq*, it is Simik who is cooking.  
Q: so is he kind of emphazising.. ?  
A: yeah, *iganiqsuq. Iganiqsuq Simik!*  
Q: so if we compare to if he just says *Simik igaruq*  
A: Simik is cooking. He is.. cooking.

If *Simik* is indeed the prominent information in the Iñupiaq sentence with *niq*, the choice to use *niq* in the sentence highlighting *Simik* could well be that *Simik* is new information, whereas it is already given that someone is cooking.

Sometimes utterances of simple sentences and utterances of sentences with *niq* appear to be equally appropriate, when the speaker and hearer have been wondering who is cooking. In (54) and (55) the consultant was given the scenario rendered below and was asked whether the sentence *Simik iganiqsuq* ‘Simik is cooking-*niq*’ could be appropriately uttered in that context.

Aalak and Peter are having a conversation, and Aalak hears or smells that someone is cooking in the kitchen next door. And then she asks: *Kiña igava?* [‘Who is cooking?’] And Peter says *Aachu* [‘I don’t know’].. and then five minutes later, Peter comes back. He has been in the kitchen and he comes back to Aalak and says *Simik iganiqsuq* ‘Simik is cooking-*niq*’.

According to the consultant, *Simik iganiqsuq* ‘Simik is cooking-*niq*’ and the corresponding simple construction *Simik igaruq* are equally good:

- (54) A: or it's supposed to be *Simik igaruq, iganiqsuq, igaruq*, same thing. It can be either way.
- (55) Q: what do you think he should say if he and Aalak have been wondering who is cooking, and then he finds out that it's Simik, and then he tells Aalak. Do you think he should tell her by saying *Simik iganiqsuq* or *Simik igaruq* .. ?  
A: either way.

It appears from the data above that *niq* is appropriate in utterances conveying new information concerning 'who', 'what' and 'where', when this information has been requested in the discourse. Questions concerning how a person is doing may however not always be answered by an utterance with *niq*, according to datum (28) presented in §5.2.1 and datum (56) below. In datum (28) presented above, a response with *niq* is judged less appropriate than a simple sentence to answer the question 'how is your mother?'. In (56) below, the utterance with *niq* is judged inappropriate when the speaker answers a question on how her daughter is doing. The sentence *Nakuuruq, nigiruuq* 'she is doing good, she is eating' is preferred over the corresponding construction with *niq*. The scenario, in relation to which the sentences are discussed, includes a mother whose daughter has been without appetite for a while. One day the mother comes home, and finds her daughter eating. Next day at work, the boss asks the mother *paniksik qanuritpa?* 'how is your daughter?'. The consultant is asked to choose an appropriate response for the mother to utter in this scenario.

- (56) Q: if the boss had known this whole thing about the daughter having been without appetite, do you then think she should say *niginiqsuq* or *nigiruuq* ? Or something else?  
A: *nakuuruq, nigiruuq*  
Q: no *niqsuq* ?  
A: no.

The datum (57) may however contradict the assumption that *niq* is inappropriate when answering questions like 'how is x?'. In (57) the consultant states that a speaker can say *piłaiñaniqsuaq*, 'he was tired-*niq*' about Peter, in a conversation where the hearer asks about Peter:

- (57) A: yeah, *piłaiñaniqsuaq* [...] You are conversing with somebody, and they ask about Peter, *piłaiñaniqsuaq*, 'he was tired'.

As for cases where all propositional content is new information, *niq* appears to be inappropriate judging from datum (58). Here all propositional content is new in the scenario, and the simple sentence is preferred over a sentence with *niq*, when conveying that Fred is tired:

- (58) Q: even though nobody has requested the information, would you then use it with the *niq* or without the *niq*. Like *piłaiņaniqsuq* or *piłaiņaruq*?  
A: *Fred piłaiņaruq*. He is tired

#### 5.3.4 Summary and Discussion of *niq* and Information Structure

In data (45-46), as in (2), the English translations of sentences with *niq* contained a stressed matrix verb, which is associated with highlighting the proposition's truth in English. English translations of sentences with *niq* do however display stress on constituents other than the matrix verb (data (47) and (48)), and the subject constituent may be clefted in the English translations (datum (53)).

*Niq* may be used in utterances where only parts of the propositional content are previously evoked; it appears that *niq* is felicitous in the utterance settling questions concerning *who* is cooking (data (49-50) and (54-55)), *where* Simik is (datum (51)), and *what* somebody is doing (data (52)). But according to data (28) and (56), *niq* may not be used when conveying requested information on how a person is doing. Datum (57) however indicates that *niq* may be appropriate in the utterance conveying how a person is doing, in a context where the hearer has asked about that person.

In datum (58) a simple sentence is preferred over a sentence with *niq* when the utterance conveys all new information.

#### 5.4 Remaining Data

In this section I present data which do not seem to fit neatly into any of the groupings above. We shall see data indicating that *niq* may function to convey 'endearment' (59-60) or serve to make the utterance a less direct confrontation (61).

It turns out that *niq* may be used to convey 'endearment' in some contexts. A volunteer provided this description of *niq*'s meaning contribution, when I asked her to compare the sentences *tuyuqtuaq* 'he/she wrote a letter' and *tuyuqniqsuaq* 'he/she wrote a letter-*niq*'. The latter was judged appropriate if the person, from whom the letter is, is someone dear to the speaker. She stated that if she would get a letter from her daughter, she would choose the construction with *niq* when conveying that her daughter sent a letter. If she received a letter from her boss, she would choose the simple construction.

(59-60) below come from another interview with this consultant. We are discussing appropriate sentences in a scenario where a mother has been at home all day with her son Simik. The son has

started to crawl that day, and when the husband comes home, she tells him. The consultant has earlier told me that the father can use the sentence *Simik paammaksimaruq uvlaapak* ‘Simik was crawling this morning-*sima*’ when telling somebody else that Simik has started to crawl. The corresponding construction with *niq* instead of *sima*, *Simik paammakniqsuaq uvlaapak* ‘Simik was crawling this morning-*niq*’, seems to be reserved for communication with someone close to the speaker:

- (59) Q: you told me that the papa can say *Simik paammaksimaruq uvlaapak* to somebody else.  
 A: ii [=yes].  
 Q: could he alternatively say *Simik paammakniqsuaq uvlaapak* to somebody else?  
 A: he can also say that. But usually *niq* is to somebody close.. somebody close to you, *paammakniqsuaq*.  
 Q: if the person is close to him [=the papa]..?  
 A: yeah, kind of like brag or being proud  
 Q: so this *niq* does have some kind of emotion in it?  
 A: ..and it’s usually to somebody close to you. I mean. To a person of the street you can’t say that. *Paammaksimaruq* probably would say in general, but *paammakniqsuaq* is more like I am really proud and it’s to somebody you are close to.
- (60) Q: I recall that last time I asked you about *tuyukniqsuaq*, you told me that would be when you were happy that your daughter wrote you a letter. If it was your boss writing you a letter, you would say *tuyuktuaq* .. ?  
 A: *tuyuktuaq*, ii [=yes]. It’s not so.. it’s kind of like general.. But *tuyukniqsuaq* means there is something happy and something endearing to you. I mean when your baby starts to walk it’s endearing to somebody .. when you wanna brag, you know, talk about the first, you know, those are special times, that’s the *niq* sometimes.

It hence appears that *niq* may be used to convey the speaker’s emotional relationship to the propositional content, and that the relation to the interlocutor affects the speaker’s choice as to whether he wishes to convey this emotional relationship.

Another function of *niq*, which did not come up often, was that of making the statement less closed for further discussion. This seems conflicting with the property of speaker certainty, which is otherwise associated with *niq* according to the findings presented in §5.2. The scenario behind (61) below is the same as the one behind (11) and (31) above. The statement with *niq*, *qamutitaluiniqsuq* ‘he is not a very good driver-*niq*’ is spontaneously judged less confrontational than the corresponding construction without *niq*, *qamutitaluichuq* ‘he is not a very good driver’:

- (61) Q: and if Aalak chooses to say *qamutitaluiniqsuq*, it it.. ?  
 A: it’s more like, it’s not a direct confrontational.. *Qamutitaluichuq* is a confrontation; it

is so that he is not. And *qamutitaluiniqsuq*; it is because of *that* that this is so. So it's less direct. So if you say it like bluntly, *qamutitaluichuq*, I am opposing what you have just said. And it kind of puts the other person a little back, and the other person has no other way than to agree. [...] And with *niq*, *qamutitaluiniqsuq*, is it turns out that he is not, and *qamutitaluichuq* he doesn't know how. So this other is more closed to any further discussion.

Q: So if you say *qamutitaluichuq*, it's period?

A: yeah.

## 5.5 Summary

§5.1 contained data which shed light on *niq*'s epistemic conditions. Attempts to survey which evidence a speaker has for the propositional content when modifying the proposition with *niq* resulted in data indicating preference for a firsthand speaker experience, when *niq* is used in an utterance (data (1-7)). But *niq* may also modify propositions which the speaker came to believe through inference (as in (19)) or via a verbal report from another individual (as in (8-12)).

Looking at data (19-22,) it appears that *niq*'s epistemic restrictions are speaker certainty rather than a specific information source. *Niq* does however not seem to communicate more certainty than simple sentences (see datum (24)), and when combined with *niaq* the presence of *niq* weakens the expressed certainty (as in (23)).

In the data presented in §5.2, it appears that *niq* may contribute to the meaning of the utterance by means of affirming ((24-26) and (28)), clarifying (datum (27)) or confirming (data (28-29)) that the proposition is the case. Furthermore, the use of utterances with *niq* appeared to be closely associated with situations where the speaker and hearer have been wondering about the truth of a proposition; an utterance with *niq* in these scenarios served the function of conveying the truth of this previously evoked proposition (data (11-12), (33-34) and (36)). As for questions containing *niq*, it appeared that *niq* could not be used to question the truth of a proposition, if it can not be assumed that the proposition is previously entertained by the hearer (datum (35)).

We have seen that *niq* may be used in an utterance to imply the assumption that the opposite of the embedded proposition used to be the case (data (37-40)), or to convey states of affairs which are new or surprising to the speaker (data (41-44)).

More data shedding light on the new information contributed by utterances with *niq* were presented in §5.3. Here we saw that sentences with *niq* may translate into English constructions associated with highlighting the truth of the proposition. The English translations contained stressed matrix

verbs (datum (2) first presented in §5.1.1 and data (45-46)) and *do*-support (data (21) and (33) first presented in §5.1.3 and §5.2.2 respectively). However, other constituents in the English translations of sentences with *niq* may be stressed (data (47-48)), and the subject constituent may be clefted (datum (53)). We then saw more data indicating that *niq* may be used when parts of the propositional content are new information. *Niq* appears to be appropriate when the new information in the utterance concerns *who* is cooking (data (49-50) and (54-55)), *where* Simik is (datum (51)), and *what* somebody is doing (datum (52)). When the new information in the utterance concerns how a person is doing, *niq* sometimes appears to be appropriate in the answer (datum (57)) and sometimes not (datum (28) and datum (56)). However, when all propositional content in the utterance is new information, *niq* seems to be inappropriate (datum (58)).

It appears that the use of *niq* is often associated with utterances where a sub-set (but not necessarily a proper sub-set!) of the propositional content is previously evoked: In data (36) the sentence with *niq* is chosen if the utterance is a continuation of the same chain of thought, and in data (12), (30), (33-34) and (36) the meaning and use of a sentence with *niq* is explained by means of a scenario where the propositional content has been up to discussion. And in some of the data, it even seems like a requirement for the felicitous use of *niq* that a sub-set (ref. data (49-51)), but not a proper sub-set (ref. data 35)), of the propositional material in the scope of *niq* is previously entertained.

In addition to speaker certainty, conveyance of unexpected information, the functions of affirming propositions, settling questions, and highlighting parts of the propositional content, two more functions appeared to be associated with *niq*: *Niq* may be used to express that the propositional content is endearing to the speaker (data (59-60)), and a speaker may choose to use *niq* in an utterance when he wishes to make the statement a less direct confrontation (datum (61)).

Throughout the chapter we have seen that sentences with *niq* display certain similarities with utterances of simple declarative sentences. Utterances with *niq* are often associated with firsthand evidence for the propositional content (data (1-7)), and so are utterances of simple declarative sentences (data (13-18)). When the speaker is surprised, an exclamation of a simple sentence is almost as good as one with *niq* (datum (44)), and a simple sentence as well as a sentence with *niq* may be used when the utterance settles the speaker's and hearer's wondering concerning who is cooking (data (54-55)).



## Chapter 6: *Niq*, Evidentiality and Epistemic Restrictions

### 6.0 Introduction

Choosing an analysis to account for the collected data implies elimination of relevant alternative analyses. The finding that *niq* is compatible with propositions representing firsthand as well as second hand information, weakens the hypothesis that restriction of the kind of information source is part of the semantics of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*. However, because Malimiut Iñupiaq and North Slope Iñupiaq are both sub-dialects of the North Alaskan Iñupiaq dialect, and because *niq* is described as an evidential modal in Malimiut Iñupiaq (Nagai, 2006; Lanz, 2010) a conclusion that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* is no evidential must be founded on a serious exploration of relevant possibilities for an evidential analysis of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*. §6.1.1 argues why the collected data prevents the assumption that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* restricts the kind of information source. Interestingly, North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* displays, according to the collected data, similarities with the Quechua ‘Best possible Grounds’ evidential *mi* (Faller, 2002). It is therefore worthwhile to investigate the differences between *mi* and *niq* in order to strengthen the argument that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* is not an evidential expression. This is done in §6.1.2.

In §6.2, *niq*’s epistemic restrictions are analyzed based on the collected data and previous descriptions. After proving that *niq* is neither an evidential, nor a modal, but still restricts the epistemic conditions for felicitous use, parts of the collected data are still left unanalyzed. §6.3 sums up the present chapter and provides an overview of the findings which are to be analyzed in Chapter 7.

### 6.1 *Niq* and Evidentiality

#### 6.1.1 *Niq* and Information Source

In Nagai (2006), Malimiut Iñupiaq *niq* is an evidential modal indicating “[...]that the speaker got the information given in the sentence from indirect evidence“ (ibid.:110). Since Nagai (2006) explicitly adopts Palmer’s (2001) framework for modal meaning, I use Palmer’s (ibid) notion of indirect evidence when testing North Slope *niq* for evidential properties similar to those of Malimiut Iñupiaq *niq*.

Palmer (2001) writes that Abkhaz and Turkish both have a direct and an indirect evidential marker. The former is used when the speaker has direct experience of the state of affairs represented by the proposition in the utterance. The indirect evidential in Abkhaz and Turkish respectively is

used when conveying information acquired through verbal report of others or through inference (Palmer, 2001:47-48). According to the data set, North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* is compatible with propositions representing hearsay information (ref. data (8-12)) and one datum shows that *niq* is compatible with propositions which the speaker infers to be true (ref. datum (19)). But in datum (2) and (5), the consultants prefer scenarios where the speaker has directly experienced the state of affairs represented by the proposition when *niq* is used in an utterance. For instance, in (5) the experience of seeing Simik’s car outside the store did not license the use of *niq* when conveying that Simik is at the store. It hence appears that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* is not an indirect evidential. And the compatibility with hearsay information does not make *niq* a reported or quotative evidential either, since the data collected on North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* suggest a tendency of associating *niq* with a firsthand experience of the propositional content (ref. data (1-7)). The label ‘direct evidential’ is hence also a candidate for a description of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* as an evidential. Let us explore the basis for calling North Slope Iñupiaq a firsthand evidential. Table 3 below summarizes the findings concerning *niq* and information source:

Table 3. *Information sources behind statements with niq*

Information source		Source
Firsthand/direct	Visual	Data (1-6)
	Other firsthand	Datum (7)
Secondhand/indirect	Inference	Datum (19)
	‘Indirect evidence’	Nagai, (2006:110)
	Reported	Data (8,9,10,11,12)

In data (1-6) *niq* is judged felicitous in scenarios where the speaker has seen the event represented by the embedded proposition. Datum (7) however rules out that *niq* signals visual evidentiality. In datum (7), the consultant states that the speaker *probably* saw the event himself; i.e. judging from datum (7), *niq* does not require a visual experience of the propositional content. However, the consultant’s reason for saying that the speaker *probably* saw the event himself, could be that a context where the speaker has audible evidence<sup>38</sup> also licenses *niq*; audible evidence and visual evidence are in some languages encoded by the same evidential expression, which is labelled ‘firsthand’ evidential in Aikhenvald’s (2004) typology.

<sup>38</sup> The category of audible evidentials should not be confused with reported or hearsay evidentials. Audible evidence could in this case be something like the following: The speaker has heard bird song increasing and thereafter decreasing in volume.

That simple sentences seem as closely associated with direct evidence (ref. (13-18)) as sentences with *niq*, does not weaken a hypothesis of *niq* being a direct evidential. We know that evidential marking is not obligatory in Iñupiaq; in Inuit, the only obligatory verbal inflection indicates person, number, tense and mood (Fortescue, 2003; Lanz, 2010; Nagai, 2006). If *niq* was a firsthand evidential, the speaker would have a choice as to whether he wishes to use the “firsthand evidential *niq*” or utter a simple sentence, when he has experienced the given event firsthand.

But, as we have seen, *niq* appears compatible with propositions based on indirect evidence, such as seeing Peter with his apron (ref. datum (19)), and with propositions which are hearsay information (ref. data (8-12)). If *niq* had been a ‘firsthand’ or ‘direct’ evidential, *Utqiagvikniqsuaq* ‘he/she/it came to Barrow-*niq*’ would have been inappropriate in a situation where the speaker has been told that the person has come to Barrow. This is not the case as seen in datum (8). Data like these not only rule out *niq*’s status as a firsthand or direct evidential, but also questions *niq*’s status as an evidential whatsoever, because it becomes impossible to isolate a kind of information source that seems to be encoded by *niq*. Therefore, North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* can hardly be said to specify the kind of information source, which is one of Aikhenvald’s (2003) requirements for evidentials. Palmer’s (2001) notion of evidential modals also fails to apply to North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*, as *niq* does not specify how the speaker came to believe the propositional content of the utterance.

Interestingly, *niq* does seem to indicate the existence of evidence judging from datum (20). Here the consultant indicates that *niq* can not be used unless the speaker is certain and has the evidence. However, a requirement of the existence of evidence behind the use of *niq* does not favour a description of *niq* as an evidential, as long as *niq* does not restrict the type of evidence.

In the next sub-section, I explore the possibility of formulating a restriction on information source for *niq*, if we see the information source restriction as a function of information source and the kind of information; that is, if we see the restrictions on information source as sensitive to the kind of information expressed in the utterance.

### 6.1.2 *Niq and the Best Possible Grounds Evidential mi*

It should be clear by now that *niq* does not restrict the kind of information source, in the sense of restricting the information channel. However, expressions may restrict other aspects of the information source. This is seen in Faller’s (2002) analysis of the evidential enclitic *mi* in Cuzco Quechua, which is spoken in Peru. According to Faller (ibid.), *mi* appears to restrict the information

source in terms of it being the ‘Best possible Grounds’ (hereafter BpG). This means that *mi* conveys that the speaker has the best possible source for the information in the utterance (ibid.). It hence appears to me that *mi* does not restrict the specific information channel, but rather deserves the evidential-label because the use of *mi* seems to observe restrictions on information source as a relation between information source and the kind of information in the utterance; the information source licensing *mi* hence depends on the kind of information.

The Quechua enclitic *mi* displays properties similar to *niq* in terms of meaning. Since it is possible to describe *mi* as an evidential (Faller, 2002), *niq* should be tested for the evidential properties displayed by *mi*, before finally ruling out that *niq* is an evidential.

According to Nuckolls (1993), Parker states that “[..]-*mi* indicates both a personal conviction and a first-hand experience[..]” (Parker in Nuckolls, 1993:237). Nuckolls (1993:237) herself claims that *mi* often, but not always, implies first-hand experience. Floyd (1996:74) argues that *mi* indicates the speaker’s commitment to the proposition and puts ‘certainty’ in the umbrella box in his illustration of the basic semantic network for *mi*. Also Faller (2002) recognizes that a high degree of certainty is associated with *mi*. She does though find that this interpretation is not encoded by *mi*, but rather is the interpretation of assertions in general (ibid.:21).

We have seen that *niq*, like *mi*, is sometimes but not always associated with a firsthand experience. *Mi* is, like *niq*, associated with speaker certainty. And furthermore, *mi*, like *niq*, is not necessarily blocked when the embedded proposition represents an event reported to the speaker, (Faller, 2002; Floyd, 1996; Nuckolls, 1993).

Faller (2002) shows a pattern in her data on Cuzco Quechua indicating that *mi* is used when the speaker has the information from the best possible source. This means, that the speaker got the information through direct observation if the event is something one can observe, and through the second most direct source, when the proposition represents an event not observable to the speaker. The latter kind of source is, for instance, a report from the person whose mental state is described in the utterance. Concerning the use of *mi* in utterances describing other peoples’ mental states, Faller (2002) argues that since other peoples’ mental states are not directly observable, “[...]the speaker has to have obtained the conveyed information in the most direct way possible, either by having observed the particular external signs of sadness, and/or by having been told by Inés herself.” (ibid.:131). In Faller’s example rendered in (1), the proposition expressed is ‘Inés is sad’, and the

evidential marker *mi* signals that the speaker has the best possible grounds for the proposition; in this case from Inés herself (ibid.):

- (1) Inés-qa llakiku-n-mi.  
Inés-top be.sad-3-mi  
p='Inés is sad'.  
(Faller, 2002:127)

Faller (2002) shows that the same pattern can be observed when it comes to statements conveying general or obtained knowledge. In Faller's datum (2), the proposition is [in Africa, there are elephants], and *mi* is licensed because the speaker has this information from an authority (ibid.:52)<sup>39</sup>:

- (2) Africa-pi-mi elefante-kuna-qa ka-n.  
Africa-loc-mi elephant-pl-top be-3  
p='In Africa, there are elephants.'  
ev= speaker learned that p from an authority  
(Faller, 2002:52)

In this way, *mi* is appropriate with a proposition representing firsthand knowledge as well as with propositions representing secondhand information; the restriction on information source is so that it must be obtained through the best possible source taking the kind of information into account<sup>40</sup>.

As seen in the previous sub-section, the main argument for not seeing *niq* as an evidential was that *niq* is appropriate with propositions representing firsthand knowledge as well as secondhand and inferred information. Following Faller (2002), compatibility with various kinds of information channels is apparently not enough to prevent an expression from being an evidential, as long as it restrict information source in another fashion, e.g. by restricting the kind of information source in relation to the kind of information. Taking Faller's (ibid.) study of Quechua *mi* into account, it must be considered whether *niq* follows a pattern similar to *mi*.

In spite of apparent similarities between *mi* and *niq*, *niq* does not lend itself to a description as a BpG evidential. The data on *niq* does not reveal a pattern of appropriate information sources in relation to the kind of information represented by the embedded proposition.

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<sup>39</sup> If the speaker does not have any idea about what elephants are or that Africa is a continent, the speaker would use the reported evidential *-si* instead of *-mi* (Faller, 2002:20).

<sup>40</sup> For the sake of simplicity, Faller writes (2002:21), she chooses to call *mi* the 'Direct enclitic' throughout the thesis.

In datum (12), the utterance *Peter umiaqaqniqsuq* is judged felicitous in a scenario where the speaker has spoken to a person who has just been in the warehouse with Peter. The situation ‘Peter with his boat’ is indeed an observable event, and hence hearing from somebody else that Peter has a boat can hardly be seen as the best possible source for this kind of information. Furthermore, the speaker in (12) does not even have the information about Peter having a boat from Peter himself, but rather from somebody who has seen Peter with his boat. Also in datum (11), *niq* is appropriate when the embedded proposition represents a state of affairs for which the speaker could have obtained better evidence than the evidence in the given scenario; as we saw, the consultant indicates that a speaker can say *qamutitaluiniqsuq* ‘he can not drive very well-*niq*’ when he has heard from another person that Simik has crashed a car.

It appears to me that *mi* restricts the information source relative to the kind of information, whereas *niq* rather restricts the speaker’s judgment of the validity of the experience as leading to the information. In other words, *mi* requires the information source to be the best possible one, taking the kind of state of affairs into account, while *niq*’s requirements pertain to the speaker’s evaluation that an experience leads to certainty about the state of affairs represented by the embedded proposition.

### 6.1.3 Summary of *niq* and Evidentiality

Because of the compatibility with a variety of information sources, North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* hardly lends itself to a semantic analysis specifying for kind of information source. The Quechua BpG evidential *mi* and North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* share a range of similarities, but do turn out to differ in slightly in their epistemic requirements. Felicitous use of *mi* requires the information source to be the best possible one, taking into account the kind of information. *Niq* rather restricts the link between experience and proposition in such a way that the speaker evaluates the given experience to be solid evidence for the propositional content.

The next section is a deeper exploration of *niq*’s epistemic restrictions.

## 6.2 *Niq* and Epistemic Restrictions

Now that it is clear that *niq* is no evidential, data like (20) rather demonstrate the tendency of associating *niq* with speaker certainty. When the consultant, who gave datum (20), states that you have to have the evidence when using *niq*, and that *niq* means there is no shadow of doubt, it seems

that the felicitous use of *niq* requires a certain quality of the link between the speaker's experience and the embedded proposition. A firsthand experience of a state of affairs obviously provides a strong link to the certainty of the truth of a proposition representing this state of affairs<sup>41</sup>. This may explain the tendency of preferring a firsthand experience of the event represented by a proposition modified by *niq* in an utterance (ref. data (1-7)).

That *niq* requires certainty is also supported by MacLean (1986b). Here the English expression *in fact* occurs in two of the English translations of Iñupiaq sentences exemplifying the meaning and use of the postbase *niq*.

When an utterance with *niq* is judged felicitous in scenarios where the speaker does not have direct evidence, it appears that the experience must be so that it makes the speaker certain of the propositional content. For instance, in datum (19) the experience of Peter merely being present in the kitchen does not license the utterance *Peter kukiuniqsuq* 'Peter is cooking-*niq*', whereas the experience of Peter wearing an apron full of blood does. Furthermore, in datum (6), the presence of Simik's car outside the store did not license an utterance of *Simik Stuaqpakmi itniqsuq* 'Simik is at Stuaqpak-*niq*'; it could have been somebody else who drove the car to the store. I therefore conclude that *niq* requires the speaker to have experienced something that makes him certain that p is the case. The consultants, who I asked whether this could be the case, expressed agreement.

The hypothesis concerning *niq* and the existence of an experience leading to the certain belief in the propositional content is supported by MacLean's translation of an example sentence with *niq*, which includes the English phrase *I found out* (forthcoming:869). Furthermore, consultants tended to use the English paraphrase *it turns out that(p)* when translating or elaborating on the meaning of sentences with *niq* (ref. data (2), (11-12) and (30-32)). For instance, in (32) the consultant gives the following paraphrase of *qamutitaluiniqsuq* 'Simik can't drive a car very well-*niq*']: "*it turns out that he is not a very good driver because of what I've witnessed*".

In this way, *niq* appears to display epistemic requirements, because *niq* restricts the speaker experience – or more precisely; *niq* restricts the speaker's evaluation of an experience as leading to the certainty that p is the case.

It should be noted that datum (23) could weaken the assumption that *niq* requires speaker certainty, as the sentence *īlisagñiaqtuṅa* 'I will study' is judged to be a stronger statement than the corresponding construction with *niq*, *īlisagñiaḡniqsuṅa* 'I will study-*niq*'. The sentences under

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<sup>41</sup> See e.g. Payne (1997:252) for the claim that we are likely to be more certain about information obtained through direct experiences.

discussion in datum (23) contain the future marking postbase *niaq*. *Niaq* is glossed as FUT and *will* in MacLean (1995:§4.4.2; §4.3.0), and the entry for *niaq* in MacLean (forthcoming) reads: “*one who endeavors/strives to V; to try to, strive to V*” (ibid.:863). As we shall see in Chapter 7, the analysis of *niq* as a marker of narrow information focus offers a possible explanation for datum (23), without weakening the hypothesis that *niq* requires speaker certainty.

Arguing that *niq* restricts the speaker’s evaluation of the evidence, poses the question whether *niq* has epistemic modal meaning. A further reason to test this is that Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010) do categorize Malimiut *niq* as a modal.

Modal expressions are generally understood as conveying a relation of either compatibility or necessity between the embedded proposition and a modal source (Eide, 2005; Papafragou, 2000). The modal relation is also known in the literature as the quantificational strength (Von Stechow 2006:4), as it determines whether the modal quantifies existentially (= a possibility relation) or universally (= a necessity relation) over relevant possible worlds. Expressions of epistemic modal necessity convey that the embedded proposition is true in all the possible worlds where what we know is true, and hence quantifies universally over relevant possible worlds. Since *niq* is associated with speaker certainty, as argued above, it is irrelevant to ask whether *niq* could encode a modal relation of compatibility or possibility.

But stating that the proposition modified by *niq* is true in all the possible worlds where what we know is true, at best complicates the semantic description of *niq* unnecessarily. In fact, *niq* does seem to indicate that the embedded proposition is true in the actual world and not merely in the set of all relevant possible worlds where what we know in the actual world is true. This is especially evident from data (1-6), where utterances with *niq* indeed seem appropriate when the speaker has firsthand evidence for the propositional content. When it comes to the epistemic status of the proposition, utterances of sentences with *niq* seem fairly similar to utterances of simple sentences in Iñupiaq, as utterances of simple statements also seem associated with firsthand experiences according to data (14-18). That North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* does not lend itself to a modal semantics is therefore a reasonable assumption based on the collected data.

### **6.3 Summary and Properties of *niq* to be Analyzed**

Apart from the analysis of *niq*’s epistemic restrictions, this chapter has mainly been concerned with ruling out competitive analyses. Due to the two existing descriptions of Iñupiaq *niq* as an evidential



modal, serious attempts were made in this chapter to formulate restrictions on North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*'s information source. The Quechua enclitic *mi*, which is described as a 'Best Possible Grounds' evidential in Faller (2002), displays a range of properties similar to *niq*. It was therefore worthwhile to compare *niq* and *mi*, to strengthen the conclusion that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* can not possibly be an evidential. We saw however that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* could not be specified for restrictions on information source in the lexical entry. Nor does *niq* appear to have modal meaning.

The many data indicating a preference of a firsthand experience of the propositional content when *niq* is used in an utterance was explained by showing how *niq* requires certainty that the proposition is true. A firsthand experience of a state of affairs obviously leads to certainty that a proposition representing this state of affairs is true. We also saw how the link between the speaker experience and the assumption that the proposition is true, must be of a certain quality to license *niq*.

Now that I have argued that *niq* does not have evidential meaning it is time turn to the major tendencies in the data collection to explore what North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* does seem to convey. These are summarized in Table 4.

*Niq* seems associated with speaker certainty, as argued in this chapter. Moreover is it interesting to observe the tendency that the proposition modified by *niq* or elements of it are previously entertained in the discourse scenarios as questioned (ref. data (33-36), (49-54) and (56-57)), and that *niq* is associated with conveyance of propositions which are previously entertained with the opposite truth-value (ref. data (37-44)).

The preference of utterances with *niq* over simple sentences in scenarios where the utterance expresses the opposite of what the speaker previously assumed to be the case, is interesting in relation to MacLean (1995). Here *niq* is described as relating an event from the past to the present. It thus seems that *niq* is used to trigger assumptions concerning what things used to be like, or assumptions concerning what the speaker used to assume about the world. Due to MacLean (ibid.) and to the data indicating that the propositional content of the utterance with *niq* is partly of wholly previously entertained, *niq* seems to require the embedded proposition to have a bearing on the previous discourse.

Table 4. Findings concerning the meaning conveyed by *niq*

Property of <i>niq</i>	Evidence of property	Source
<b>Speaker has an experience leading to certainty that p</b>	‘I found out(p)’	(MacLean, forthcoming)
	‘it turns out that(p)’	Data (2), (11-12) and (30-32)
	Speaker certainty (similar to simple statements)	Data (19-22)
	‘in fact’	MacLean (1986b)
<b>Emphasis</b>	‘Reporting/stating that V’	MacLean (forthcoming)
	<i>do</i> -insertion	MacLean (1986b) Datum (21)
	Stress in translations	Data (2), (31) and (45-48)
	Clefting in translation	Datum (53)
	Affirming	Data (24-28)
	Confirming/establishing	MacLean (1986b:78; 1986b:92)
<b>Bearing on previous discourse</b>	Propositional content in <i>niq</i> ’s scope is wholly previously entertained (e.g. as questioned)	Data (12), (30) and (33-36)
	Propositional content in <i>niq</i> ’s scope is partly previously entertained (e.g. as questioned)	(49-50), (52-55) and (57)
	No <i>niq</i> , when no propositional elements are evoked	Data (35), (51) and (58)
	Relating an event from the past to the present	MacLean (1995)
	The embedded propositions used not to be the case	Data (37-40) and (42-44)
<b>Remaining</b>	Endearment	Data (59-60)
<b>Remaining</b>	Haziness when combined with future	Datum (23)
<b>Remaining</b>	Less direct confrontation	Datum (61)

## Chapter 7: The Narrow Information Focus Marker *niq*

### 7.0 Introduction

Analyzing a linguistic expression implies choosing a suitable label to account for the collected data, and the understanding of the label chosen to account for the findings must be explicated. Based on the findings presented in the previous chapters, the this chapter is a step towards an account of the North Slope Iñupiaq postbase *niq* through the application of the label ‘marker of narrow information focus’.

One approach to the notion of focus is through the idea of emphasis; a focus expression has the *function* of emphasizing a meaning aspect in the utterance. When describing a linguistic expression suspected to be a focus expression, I believe the main requirements to the analysis are the following: a) accounting for which kinds of meaning aspects can be emphasized by means of the expression under description, and b) accounting for the contribution made by the expression under description to the interpretation of the utterance, or, the other way around, accounting for the communicative intentions behind a speaker’s choice to use the expression.

I shall in §7.1.1 discuss two approaches to focus; the alternative approach (Krifka, 2006) on the one hand and the approach distinguishing between contrastive focus and information focus (Gundel and Fretheim, 2004) or identificational focus and information focus (Kiss, 1998) on the other. In §7.1.2 the notion of relational focus is found to be the best candidate for explaining the function of *niq*, and the subsection presents how this notion is intended to predict the meaning and use of *niq*.

It appears that *niq* can be used to mark information focus on the truth of the proposition, and on elements of the proposition; wide information focus is ruled out. Whether *niq* marks focus on the truth of the proposition or an element of the proposition in the utterance is determined by the context. In §7.2, the data is accounted for by means of the notion of narrow information focus as a relational focus sense. First the data showing *niq*’s ability to mark focus on the predication of a propositional element to a topic element are discussed in §7.2.1. Hereafter data demonstrating how *niq* may be used to mark focus on verum are discussed in §7.2.2. The contextual requirements for marking verum focus in an utterance are not consistent in the literature on the phenomenon. In §7.2.3 we shall see that some of the data on *niq* do not fit the strictest understanding of verum focus

(Gutzmann and Miró, 2011), and I shall demonstrate how Höhle's (1992) understanding of verum focus captures these data on *niq*.

Exactly because of *niq*'s association with certain contextual requirements, it seems that the use of *niq* may instruct the hearer to accommodate certain assumptions about the familiarity of some of the embedded propositional material. This is discussed in §7.2.4.

In §7.2.5 the few remaining data, for which further research is needed in order to draw conclusions, are discussed.

Demonstrating how *niq* seems to fit Gundel and Fretheim's (2004) concept of information focus may satisfy requirement (a) mentioned above. A good description of an information focus expression must however also offer a hypothesis about the speaker's choice to use this expression. Such hypothesis is outlined in §7.4.

§7.5 summarizes the conclusions concerning the semantics and pragmatics of the North Slope Iñupiaq postbase *niq*. Here I also relate previous descriptions of *niq* to the analysis proposed in this study.

## 7.1 Focus and Information Structure

### 7.1.1 Approaching Focus

Whereas Krifka (2006) approaches focus as indicating alternatives, Gundel and Fretheim (2004) argue that information structure focus has to do with a relational givenness-newness distinction.

Krifka (2006)<sup>42</sup> gives the following definition as the most successful understanding of focus:

Focus indicates the presence of alternatives that are relevant for the interpretation of linguistic expressions. (ibid.:6)

This I take to mean that focusing a meaning aspect in the utterance triggers the idea of alternatives which could fill the focused meaning slot. For instance, the focal stress on the constituent *peter* in example (1) below triggers the idea that among all the relevant alternative entities that possibly stole the cookie, the referent of *peter* rightfully fills the slot:

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<sup>42</sup> I shall only discuss Krifka's (2006) notion of the focus uses that have to do with Common Ground (CG) management, i.e. his pragmatic use of focus. Uses of focus that have truth-conditional effects are irrelevant to the present study, since *niq* does not seem to affect the truth-conditional content of the utterance.

- (1) B:[PEter]<sub>F</sub> stole the cookie.  
 Ordinary meaning of the answer: STOLE(COOKIE)(PETER)  
 Focus-induced alternatives: {STOLE(COOKIE)(x) | x ∈ ENTITY}  
 (Krifka, 2006:10)

As I understand Krifka (2006), pragmatic use of focus may be used to e.g. correct, confirm and highlight parallels. Krifka's (ibid.) pragmatic use of focus could thus explain some of the findings concerning *niq*, such as the association of *niq* with confirming (MacLean, 1986b). Krifka (2006) gives the following illustration of how pragmatic focus may be used to confirm:

- (2) A: Mary stole the cookie.  
 B: Yes, MARY stole the cookie.  
 (ibid.:12)

In cases like (2) above, Krifka writes, “[...] *the focus alternatives must include a proposition that has been proposed in the immediate preceding CG*” (2006:11). The interpretation of utterances like B's in (2) is that the expressed proposition is the only one among the alternatives that holds, according to Krifka (2006). It hence seems that the felicitous focusing of *mary* in (2) restricts the Common Ground (CG) in a such a way that the assumption that other people could have stolen the cookie, are available in the CG.

Krifka (2006) disregards all claims that focus expresses the most important or new part of the utterance, and maintains that all uses of focus can be subsumed under the use of alternatives to indicate covert questions in the context.

Another way of defining information structure focus is Gundel and Fretheim's (2004) notion of relational focus. First they mention a misconception of the notion of 'focus' in the linguistic literature, and argue that this is partly due to a misconception of the two types of givenness-newness distinctions; relational givenness-newness and referential givenness-newness. Referential givenness-newness concerns where the referent is represented in the addressee's mind, that is, the cognitive status of the referent (see Gundel, Hedberg and Zacharski, 1993). This givenness-newness distinction is not directly related to information structure. Information focus according to Gundel and Fretheim (2004) is concerned with relational givenness-newness in terms of the newness of a predication about a given referent. According to Gundel and Fretheim (ibid.) there are two conceptually distinct interpretative notions of focus:



- (4) A: What did Fred eat?  
B: Fred ate the beans.

Following Gundel and Fretheim (2004), I assume that the prominent pitch accent in B's utterance will fall on the information focus, i.e. *beans*. However, the speaker may or may not choose to highlight the newness of the predication of *beans* to 'Fred ate x' by making the pitch accent more prominent than in a default intonation pattern. In other words, I assume that the information structure, i.e. topic and focus, is determined by the context, whereas the speaker has a choice whether he wishes to highlight the information structure in his utterance.

The *marking* of information focus in the present study is therefore understood as the use of linguistic means to call attention to the very predication.

The conception of the other kind of focus – contrastive focus – in Gundel and Fretheim (ibid.) is when the speaker calls material to the addressee's attention, thereby often evoking a contrast with other entities that might fill the same position:

[...] marking the information focus is not the only reason to call attention to a constituent. A constituent may also be made prominent because the speaker/write does not think the addressee's attention is focused on some entity and for one reason or another would like it to be[...] (Gundel and Fretheim (2004:7))

In this fashion, Gundel and Fretheim's (2004) notion of contrastive focus is similar to Krifka's (2006) notion of focus.

In (5) below, the prosodic prominence on the constituent *coat* is explained as indicating contrastive focus in Gundel and Fretheim (ibid.):

- (5) A: We have to get rid of some of these clothes. That COAT you are wearing, I think we can give to the Salvation ARMY.

(Gundel and Fretheim, ibid.:7)

If I understand Gundel and Fretheim (2004) correctly, *coat* is made prominent because A would like to call the hearer's attention to the referent of *coat* as opposed to other referents, and hence the prosodic prominence of *coat* is an instance of contrastive focus.

Following Kiss (1998:248), I assume that an emphasized constituent can either perform exhaustive identification on a set of entities given in the context or situation<sup>43</sup>, or simply mark the

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<sup>43</sup> Kiss' (1998) identification focus thus seems similar to Gundel and Fretheim's (2004) contrastive focus.





topic referent is not represented in the sentence, the whole sentence is information focus, and hence an instance of wide focus in information structure terms.

As we shall see, *niq* is not felicitous when the whole utterance conveys information newly predicated about a topic. The other way around, an utterance with *niq* must realize a familiar referent. *Niq* is namely limited to express narrow information focus on either a constituent in the utterance or on the verum/truth of the proposition.

Krifka argues against the notion of ‘newness’ as explication of focus, because it, in his view, gives false predictions (2006:16-17). Rightfully Krifka argues that a focused constituent in many cases refers to something previously mentioned; in example (7), the referent of *john* is not new in the discourse, but so is the information that ‘John’ satisfies the description *x stole a cookie* (ibid.):

- (7)           A: Who stole the cookie, John or Mary?  
              B: JOHN stole the cookie.  
  (ibid.:17)

I agree with Krifka’s observation that the new information in B’s utterance is the relation between ‘John’ and ‘stole the cookie’. But this is not a reason to disregard of the newness-notion to explain the focus in examples like (7). The predication of *john* to the topic [stealing the cookie] is indeed new in the discourse in (7). Krifka’s (ibid.) example is thus important to the understanding of relational focus, as it clearly shows that a predication itself may be new even though the topic referent and the predicated referent are both discourse old.

While I sympathize with the general ideas presented in Gundel and Fretheim (2004), I am not sure that *newness* of the predication offers the whole explanation of why a speaker would use a marker of information focus in an utterance; why would a speaker want to convey that a certain predication is new? After all, as participants in the conversation, the speaker and hearer do know what is discourse new and discourse old information. Furthermore, Gundel note that all sentences have an information focus (in Gundel and Fretheim 2004:7). This I take to mean that an utterance in a context<sup>46</sup>, will always consist of a predication of information to a topic which may or may not be part of the utterance. That is, as for an utterance with narrow information focus, a sub-set of this utterance will be information predicated about a topic, where the latter is more familiar in the discourse than the former. But the utterance may or may not employ linguistic means to highlight or emphasize the present partition of the information into given and new parts.

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<sup>46</sup> More precisely, the enriched logical form of the utterance, i.e. the explicature.

Therefore, we need a theory that explains why a speaker would choose to employ linguistic means to highlight the information focus in an utterance. In other words, accounting for an expression by means of calling it a marker of information focus requires the formulation of a hypothesis concerning the speaker's communicative intentions when he uses linguistic means to draw attention to the information predicated about the topic in an utterance. In §7.4 I shall suggest how Relevance Theory may offer an explanation for the motivations behind the choice to use a marker of narrow information focus in an utterance.

### 7.1.2 *Niq* as a Marker of Narrow Information Focus

As seen in Chapter 5, a simple statement and a statement with *niq* are both judged acceptable in some scenarios (ref. data (11), (44) and (54-55)). Interestingly however, the sentence with *niq* is slightly preferred over the simple sentence in the scenario in (44), and consultants sometimes ascribed the difference between sentences with *niq* and corresponding simple sentences to the wording of the speaker. It hence appears that *niq* does not affect the truth-conditions of the sentence. Rather, *niq* seems to be associated with the fulfillment of certain contextual requirements; data (12), (30), (33-40), (42-43), (49-52), (55) and (57-58) all indicate the felicity of using *niq* in an utterance, when the propositional content is partly or wholly previously entertained; in other words, *niq* seems to require that some of the embedded propositional material may serve as topic.

I propose the following denotation for *niq*:

*niq* = marker of narrow information focus

When I call *niq* a marker of narrow information focus in the sense of Gundel and Fretheim (2004), this means that *niq* highlights the non-presupposed nature of a predication in the utterance. *Niq* thus parts the information in the utterance into something given, and something which is predicated about this given material.

We shall see that *niq* may be used to mark focus on a) the predication of a truth value to a given proposition<sup>47</sup>, and b) the predication of a new propositional element to a more familiar propositional element. What constitutes the new predication, highlighted by *niq* in an utterance depends on which

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<sup>47</sup> Please note that entertaining a proposition does not imply entertaining the proposition as a truthful description of the world. Therefore, if p is contextually given, it is not necessarily given as true. A proposition is here seen as a set of truth-conditions which may acquire a truth-value when measured against the world.

material of the propositional content is evoked in the discourse. When all propositional content in the scope of *niq* is familiar, *niq* highlights the predication of verum to the (given) propositional content. When only parts of the propositional elements in the scope of *niq* are familiar, *niq* emphasizes the predication of the non-familiar elements to the more familiar elements.

Krifka's notion of focus seems less suited for capturing *niq*, because it can not explain how utterances with *niq* may be used to emphasize different constituents. *Niq* does not change its morphosyntactic place in the string according to whether the verum or a constituent is focus. That focus evokes alternatives hence does not explain why *niq* may focus meanings represented by various kinds of expressions in an utterance such as verum or various constituents.

Gundel and Fretheim's (2004) notion of information structure focus as a relational givenness-newness distinction is suitable for accounting for the contextual dependence of whether *niq* focuses the predication of the truth-value or another aspect of the utterance meaning such as the subject referent. *Niq*'s ability to focus different meaning aspects in the utterance depending on context is not surprising, taking into account the idea of information structure in Gundel and Fretheim (ibid.). Recall that also sentences without linguistic means of emphasis have an information focus (ibid.). What constitutes the information focus depends on which information in the sentence is newly predicated about the topic. The prediction made for *niq* when calling *niq* a marker of narrow information focus, is that *niq* restricts the possible topics in such a way that it must be among the embedded propositional material.

## 7.2 Accounting for the Data

### 7.2.1 Marking Narrow Focus on Propositional Elements

As we saw, *niq* is sometimes appropriate in contexts where only a part of the propositional content in the utterance is previously evoked, e.g. the subject or the activity/state denoted by the verbal constituent. However, *niq* does not seem felicitous when none of the material in the proposition is previously evoked. In datum (58), the consultant chooses the simple sentence *Fred pilaiṅaruq* 'Fred is tired' over the corresponding construction with *niq*, in a scenario where no one has requested information about Fred. The reason why the sentence with *niq* is dispreferred in the scenario in datum (58), is, according to the proposed analysis, that none of the propositional content, i.e. neither Fred nor the idea of somebody being tired, is evoked prior to the utterance in the scenario. *Niq* may

therefore, according to the collected data, not mark wide information focus, but is rather limited to the marking of narrow information focus. This assumption is supported by data (51) and (57).

In datum (51), the consultant states that *niq* cannot be used in an utterance reporting to Aalaak where Simik is, unless Aalaak, as well as the speaker, has been wondering where Simik is. It hence seems that *niq* requires from the context that at least some of the embedded material in the embedded proposition is previously evoked. Datum (57) is a further indicator that *niq* is only appropriately used when some of the propositional material is topic. In (57), the consultant volunteers the following contextual detail when explaining the meaning of *pilainiqsuaq* ‘he was tired-*niq*’: “*you are conversing with somebody, and they ask about Peter, pilainiqsuaq, he was tired*” (datum (57), chapter 5). Prior to this statement, I have asked her whether a speaker can say *pilainiqsuaq* ‘he was tired-*niq*’, when he has heard from someone else that Peter is tired. In addition to letting me know that a speaker can say this without having seen Peter himself, the consultant adds to the scenario that the speaker is conversing with someone who asks about Peter. It therefore seems that *niq* is licensed here because the referent of *peter* is familiar.

Furthermore, datum (52) demonstrates the use of *niq* in contexts where parts of the propositional content have been evoked. Here a consultant elaborates on which questions can be answered by means of *iganiqsuq* ‘he/she is cooking-*niq*’, and it appears that questions concerning what someone is doing may be answered by means of an utterance with *niq*. This shows that *niq* is felicitous when new information is predicated about a given topic, such as a subject referent.

*Niq* may thus be used to focus the predication of a verb-referent to a topic subject referent.

Moreover, *niq* may focus the predication of a subject referent to an action or condition which is referentially given, as seen in the data (49-50) and (53-55).

In datum (50), a consultant elaborates on the kind of question which may be answered by an utterance of the sentence *Peter iganiqsuq* ‘Peter is cooking’, and states that this sentence is appropriate for answering a question concerning who is cooking. If someone asks *who* is cooking, it is given that someone is cooking; hence the cooking itself is referentially familiar, when the utterance conveying that Peter is cooking occurs. In datum (49), a consultant indicates that the use of *niq* in the sentence *Peter kukiuniqsuq* seems to actually *require* that a question concerning who is

cooking has come up prior to the utterance. Datum (49) is hence again an indicator that *niq* is licensed when a sub-set of the propositional content has been previously evoked<sup>48</sup>.

Like data (49-50), data (54) and (55) also show the appropriateness of using *niq* in an utterance constituting an answer to the question of who is cooking. However, the consultant who gave these data also stated that a simple construction is equally appropriate when answering that question. This is in accordance with the proposed analysis, as every utterance has an information focus (Gundel and Fretheim, 2004), which the speaker may or may not choose to express overtly by special linguistic means. An utterance with marked information focus may be felicitous in certain contexts, but not necessarily required.

Datum (53) is especially interesting, because the consultant chooses an English translation of the sentence *Simik iganiqsuaq* ‘Simik is cooking-*niq*’, where *Simik* is the clefted constituent. The corresponding simple sentence *Simik igaruq* ‘Simik is cooking’ she translates into a simple English construction. As shown in Gundel and Fretheim’s (2004) example rendered §7.1.1 above, clefting a constituent is in English associated with expression of information focus. Therefore, since *Simik* is clefted in the English translation, it seems that the Iñupiaq utterance with *niq* may be used to focus the predication of *Simik* to the familiar element in the proposition namely ‘is cooking’. The consultant’s choice to translate the sentence with *niq* by means of clefting the subject constituent hence supports the assumption that *niq* is associated with the expression of narrow information focus in Iñupiaq.

In datum (47) the stress falls on the directional expression in the English translation; *Utqiaġvigñiqsuaq* is translated into “*the person had come TO Barrow*”<sup>49</sup>. Labeling *niq* a marker of narrow information focus would explain datum (47) in the following way: *niq* is here interpreted as focusing the predication of the direction to the topic, which is here the person and his location/motion in relation to Barrow. This datum is the only one in the collection where *niq* seems

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<sup>48</sup> Please note that the felicitous use of *niq* merely requires the givenness of a *sub-set* of the propositional content, and not necessarily a proper sub-set. Stating that a *proper* sub-set of the propositional content must be given, will conflict with the finding that *niq* may function to mark narrow information focus on the verum of the proposition.

<sup>49</sup> It could be noted that the expression corresponding to English *to* is not overtly realized in the Iñupiaq sentence *Utqiaġvigñiqsuaq* (please consult the appendix for glosses). However, when the GOAL constituent is a place name the postbase indicating direction is not obligatory (MacLean, 1986a:118), and moreover the consultant’s translation leaves no doubt that the concept represented by English *to* is indeed part of the meaning of the Iñupiaq sentences discussed in datum (47).

to focus the predication of a directional concept. Future research will show how common this use of *niq* is.

Another finding which deserves more attention is datum (23). Here we saw that *ilisaǵniaqtuǵa* ‘I will study’ was judged to be a stronger statement than the corresponding construction with *niq*, *ilisaǵniaǵniqsuǵa* ‘I will study-*niq*’. The consultant explains that “[...] -*niaǵniqsuǵa* is more of a hazy, might be, I kind of plan to. Maybe something will change .. change what I do.. But if I say *ilisaǵniaqtuǵa*, I will study.” (ref. datum (23)). *Niaq*, which appears in both sentences under discussion in datum (23), is a future marker, but interestingly it does not seem to encode certainty that the event represented by the embedded clause will take place; the entry for *niaq* in MacLean (forthcoming) reads: “one who endeavors/strives to V; to try to, strive to V” (ibid.:863). But how come *ilisaǵniaǵniqsuǵa* ‘I will study-*niq*’ is more ‘hazy’ than the corresponding sentence without *niq* when both sentences contain *niaq*? The datum (23) was given as part of an elaboration on the difference between *ilisaǵniaǵniqsuǵa* ‘I will study-*niq*’ and *ilisaǵniaqtuǵa* ‘I will study’, and it is possible that the consultant interprets the former sentence in such a way that *niq* expresses narrow information focus on the concept encoded by *niaq*. In this fashion, the use of *niq* in *ilisaǵniaǵniqsuǵa* ‘I will study-*niq*’ conveys that the predication of *niaq*, which seems to be something like ‘I plan to’ in the sentences under discussion in datum (23), is new information about the topic, i.e. [the speaker as studying]. *ilisaǵniaǵniqsuǵa* ‘I will study-*niq*’ hence expresses a more ‘hazy’ plan than the corresponding sentence without *niq*, since the predication of the concept of planning or intentions is emphasized by means of *niq*.

The proposed analysis of *niq* thus provides a possible explanation for datum (23) without weakening the hypothesis presented in Chapter 6 that *niq* requires speaker certainty. However, the combination of *niq* with *niaq* needs to be explored further in order to support or disclaim the explanation suggested for datum (23).

It is interesting to note that an utterance with *niq* is not judged appropriate in the scenario in datum (56). In this scenario, the speaker’s boss asks the speaker how her daughter is doing. The consultant prefers the response *nakuuruq nigiruuq* ‘she is doing good, she is eating’ over an utterance of the sentence *nakuuruq, niginiqsuq* ‘she is doing good, she is eating-*niq*’, even though the boss in the scenario knows that the speaker’s daughter has been without appetite for a while. Calling *niq* an expression of information focus apparently does not predict the infelicity of *niq* modifying the

proposition [she is eating] in this scenario; the referent of the daughter is evoked, i.e. there is a topic about which something new is predicated in the utterance where *niq* is judged infelicitous.

Datum (28) could pose a similar problem to the conclusion that *niq* is licensed when a subset of the propositional elements in the utterance are previously evoked. In datum (28), the consultant judged an utterance of *nakuuniqsuq* ‘she is good-*niq*’ inappropriate in a context where the speaker has been asked how her mother is doing. The mother of the speaker is apparently topic. Why may a predication about her not be focused by means of *niq*? We have seen above in datum (57) that if someone asks about Peter, the speaker may reply by uttering *pilainiqsuaq* ‘he was tired-*niq*’. The subject in the embedded proposition is previously entertained in data (28), (56) and (57), but only in datum (57) *niq* is judged appropriate. Judging from the collected data, it therefore seems that *niq* is less appropriate when the subject referent is topic. Another possibility is that *niq* is more felicitous the more of the embedded propositional content functions as topic. As it appears in the collected data, there is consistency in the judgments that *niq* is appropriate when the whole propositional content is previously entertained (ref. data (12), (30), (33-34) and (36)), and when none of the propositional content is entertained as familiar, *niq* seems to be inappropriate (ref. data (35), (51) and (58)).

To sum up: In data (49-50) and (54-55) we saw that *niq* may mark narrow information focus on the predication of a subject referent to a referentially familiar action. Data (51-53) and (57) demonstrate *niq*’s ability to mark narrow information focus on the predication of an action, a condition or a location to an entertained subject referent. And finally, data (51) and (58) point in the direction that *niq* is less appropriate when no elements of the embedded proposition are previously evoked.

However, we have also seen that *niq* is sometimes inappropriate in a context where a new predication is made about a given subject referent, as seen in (28) and (56). Taking into account that *niq* always seems felicitous when the whole propositional content is previously entertained, it is likely that the more propositional material previously entertained, the more appropriate is the use of *niq* in an utterance.

The next sub-section treats the use of *niq* for marking verum focus.

### 7.2.2 Marking Narrow Focus on Verum

In Chapter 5 we saw data where *niq* is associated with affirmation of the propositional content (ref. data (24-28)) and settling of the question whether a proposition is the case (ref. data (11-12), (30),

(33-34) and (36)). We have also seen that English translations of sentences with *niq*, as compared to simple sentences, may contain *do*-insertion (ref. datum (21)) and stressed finite verbs (ref. data (2) and (45-46)). As will be shown below, these findings demonstrate that *niq* may be used to focus the predication of verum to the propositional content.

Höhle (1992) coined the term Verum Focus for cases where the truth of the proposition is focused. Verum is a semantic operator in Höhle (ibid.), which takes the proposition in its scope, and may be paraphrased as *es trifft zu/ist wahr* ‘it is correct/true that p’.

The literature on verum focus does not seem to agree on whether there is a difference between verum and verum focus, and hence does not agree whether simple sentences have verum. Gutzmann and Miró (2011) do not seem to distinguish between verum and verum focus<sup>50</sup>, and in Romero and Han (2004), the verum operator is added in certain constructions<sup>51</sup>. According to Romero and Han (ibid.:21), Höhle (1992) leaves ‘verum’ undefined. However, if I understand Höhle (1992:114) correctly, he suggests that the effect of the stress on the verb in cases like example (8) below can be paraphrased, if we introduce a predicate like ‘true’ and view its content as emphasized. Höhle (ibid.) further states, that the *meaning component*, which is highlighted in utterances like B’s in example (8), he calls verum. The *highlighting* of this meaning component, he calls verum focus (Höhle, 1992:114)<sup>52</sup>. Furthermore, if we assume that a speaker cannot present a state of affairs as actual without at the same time expressing belief in the existence of this state of affairs (Vanderverken, 1990:117), verum seems to be an inherent part of utterances of simple sentences when these are used to communicate a proposition; communicating that p is the same as communicating that p is true<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>50</sup> The use-conditions Gutzmann and Miró (2011) propose for verum seem to be based on the examples they use to show the felicity conditions of verum focus. Furthermore, Gutzmann and Miró (ibid.) claim that their proposed use-conditions for verum can account for the many discourse conditions under which verum focus is infelicitous. It therefore appears to me, that since Gutzmann and Miró (ibid.) put use-conditions of verum operator on a par with the felicitous use of verum focus, verum and verum focus are not associated with different linguistic expressions in Gutzmann and Miró (ibid.).

<sup>51</sup> In Romero and Han (2004), an epistemic verum operator is added when a yes-no-question is negated, whereas positive yes-no-questions are without verum. Utterances of interrogative sentences do of course not communicate that p is true, other things being equal, and hence the verum in yes-no-questions is, in this study, assumed to be anchored to the hearer. The present study assumes that Romero and Han’s (2004) positive yes-no-question contain verum, in that they seek information whether p is true, and their (ibid.) negative yes-no-questions contain verum-focus, in that they seem to seek *clarity* whether p is true.

<sup>52</sup> My emphasis.

<sup>53</sup> Please note the difference between communicating a proposition and entertaining a proposition; entertaining a proposition does not imply entertaining the proposition as being a true representation of a state of affairs in the world, whereas communicating a proposition implies communicating that p is a description of the world, other things being equal.



Therefore, when claiming that *niq* may focus the predication of the verum to the propositional content, it does not mean that *niq* in itself expresses the verum. Rather, *niq* highlights the predication of verum to the topic, the topic being a set of truth-conditions, i.e. a previously entertained proposition which is not necessarily entertained with an assigned a truth-value.

In German, verum focus is expressed by means of stressing the finite verb as in B's utterance in (8), or by stressing the complementizer. In the case of the latter, the focus will apply to the truth-value of the proposition expressed by the complement clause of the sentence.

- (8) A: Ich habe Hanna gefragt, was Karl gerade macht, und sie hat die alberne Behauptung aufgestellt, dass er ein DREHBuch schreibt.  
'I have asked Hanna what Karl is doing these days, and she has ridiculously claimed that he is writing a screen play<sup>54</sup>.'
- B: (das stimmt) Karl SCHREIBT ein Drehbuch.  
'(it's true) Karl does write a screen play / Karl IS writing a screen play.'  
(Höhle, 1992:112)

B's utterance in this context is hardly intended to highlight the lexical content of *schreiben* 'write', but rather the message that he holds the proposition<sup>55</sup> [Karl writes a screen play] for true (Höhle, 1992:112). All parts of the proposition [Karl writes a screen play] is already evoked explicitly in the context by means of A's utterance. This is one of the properties of verum focus according to Höhle; that the proposition in the scope of the focalized verum is known (1992:117). B's utterance hence contributes to the conversation with the information that this evoked proposition is true.

Gutzmann and Miró (2011) argue that the felicitous use of a verum focus expression restricts the discourse in such a way that the question 'whether p' must be maximal in Question under Discussion (QUD). The meaning of verum takes truth-conditional content as its input and returns use-conditional content output (Gutzmann and Miró, 2011). This means that the propositional content in the scope of verum must be part of the QUD, i.e. ?p is on top of the stack of the partially ordered questions under discussion. The use of verum focus signals that the utterance attempts to down date the question whether p is the case from the QUD (ibid.:160-161).

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<sup>54</sup> My own translation.

<sup>55</sup> Höhle (1992:112) use the word *Gedanke* which is better translated into English by 'thought'. Like the linguistic literature building on Höhle (1992), e.g. Gutzmann and Miró (2011), I shall use the English term 'proposition'.

Further ways of expressing verum focus are by means of *do*-insertion and *sí* in English and Spanish, respectively, as in (9), and by means of *really*, as in (10), or stressing the auxiliary as in (11).

- (9) A: In wonder whether Carl has finished his book.  
B: Carl did finish his book.  
B: Carlos sí acabó su libro.  
(Gutzmann and Miró, 2011:144)
- (10) Context: speaker says *Gore really won the election though Bush is president*,  
A doubts it, and speaker then insists:  
He did really win the election.  
(Romero and Han, 2004:fn11)
- (11) She WILL cook the goose<sup>56</sup>.  
(from Gutzmann and Miró, 2011:147)

Among the data collected on *niq*, there are several indications that *niq* may function to mark focus on the verum of the utterance, i.e. highlight the predication of the truth-value to a previously given propositional content. Data (12), (30) and (33-36) are the clearest instances of *niq* marking verum focus, as they are all cases where the meaning of a sentence with *niq* is explained as felicitous in scenarios, where the propositional content is previously evoked by means of being questioned.

For instance, in datum (12) the meaning of a sentence with *niq* is explained by the consultant by means of a scenario, where the speaker and hearer have both been wondering whether Peter has a boat. The speaker hears from a person, who has just been in Peter's warehouse, that Peter has a boat. The speaker then hollers back to the hearer: *Peter umiaqaqniqsuq* 'Peter has a boat-*niq*'.

Also in data (33) and (34), the consultant gives a scenario with two people wondering whether the proposition is the case, and the utterance of the sentence with *niq* contributes with the new information that the proposition is true. In datum (36), an utterance of a sentence with *niq*, i.e. *Simik qamutitalluiniqsuq* 'Simik can't drive a car very well-*niq*', is preferred over the corresponding simple sentence if the utterance is a continuation of the discussion whether Simik can drive.

Datum (30) is also an indication that *niq* is felicitous in an utterance establishing the truth of a proposition previously entertained as questioned<sup>57</sup>. In (30), the consultant offers a scenario as

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<sup>56</sup> Example (11) is taken from one of Gutzmann and Miró's (2011) translation of a German sentence with expressed verum focus.

<sup>57</sup> It should be noted that an utterance with *niq* seems licensed, but not required, when the propositional content of the utterance is previous evoked as questioned in the discourse; in datum (11), an utterance of the *qamutitalluiniqsuq* 'Simik can't drive a car very well-*niq*' as well as the corresponding simple sentence are both judged appropriate in a scenario where the speaker has heard that Simik has crashed, after she and the hearer have been wondering whether Simik can drive.

explanation of the meaning of *tainainiqsuq* ‘it is so-*niq*’, where the speaker hears that somebody has painted her mother’s house white. The speaker does not believe it, and goes to her mother’s house, where she sees that the house is white, and then utters *tainainiqsuq* ‘it is so-*niq*’<sup>58</sup>.

Also datum (35) demonstrates how *niq* is sometimes explained as requiring that (at least some of) the propositional content is previously evoked. The consultant states that it would be strange to ask a person whether Peter has a boat, by means of uttering the sentence *Peter umiaqaqniqpa?* ‘does Peter have a boat-*niq*?’, if the hearer has not also been wondering whether Peter has a boat. The consultant agrees with my parallel to the use of English *really* in that situation, because the use of *really* would also assume that the hearer has been wondering whether Peter has a boat. As we saw in the example (10) above, *really* may be used to express verum focus according to Romero and Han (2004).

At first glance, it could seem counter intuitive that an interrogative construction contains focused verum, since verum is explained in the literature as the truth of the proposition. This may be illustrated by Höhle’s (1992) description of example (12) below, which is appropriate when the expressed proposition is already known, i.e. in the sense of being entertained, and the speaker wishes *clarity* as to whether the proposition is true (Höhle, 1992:113):

- (12) HAT er den Hund denn getreten?  
‘HAS he kicked the dog? / Did he kick the dog?’<sup>59</sup>  
(Höhle, 1992:113)

A corresponding simple interrogative utterance would merely request information *whether* the proposition is true, and hence does not require the proposition to be previously entertained by the hearer. It therefore seems that verum takes part in an interrogative flip, like illocutionary adverbs. If verum indeed takes truth-conditional content as its input and returns use-conditional content output (Gutzmann and Miró, 2011), the meaning of verum is likely to belong above the level of the proposition like illocutionary adverbs do. Faller (2006:14) shows that in assertions, the illocutionary adverb is anchored to the speaker. That is, the illocutionary force of the utterance comes from the speaker; it is the speaker who asserts that p. In questions on the other hand, illocutionary adverbs

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<sup>58</sup> It is reasonable to interpret the scenario in such a way that the speaker in the scenario, prior to the utterance with *niq*, has entertained the propositional content as questioned; she does not believe the person who said that the house was white, but she still goes to the house to see whether it is indeed white.

<sup>59</sup> My own translation.

are anchored to the hearer (Faller, 2006), which means that the illocutionary force of the adverb applies to the hearer and the reply the speaker expects from him<sup>60</sup>.

Datum (35) is hence an example of *niq*'s ability to express verum focus, as an utterance of the interrogative sentence with *niq* is judged appropriate only if the hearer has entertained the question concerning the truth of the propositional content, prior to the speaker's request to know whether p is really the case. It seems that *niq* follows a pattern of interrogative flip, by anchoring the focused material to the hearer in utterances of interrogative sentences; by using *niq* in an interrogative utterance, the speaker requests clarity whether the predicated material, in this case the verum, in the utterance truthfully represents a state of affairs in the world. Also the meaning contributed by *niq* in the examples (8b) (8d) (8f) from MacLean (1986b:78) presented in Chapter 3 may be accounted for in a similar way; the speaker requests clarity whether the least familiar material in the utterance may truthfully be predicated about the most familiar material.

So far we have seen how data (12), (30), (33-34) and (36) are consistent with Gutzmann and Miró's (2011) requirement for verum focus expressions that the utterance with verum focus functions to down date a question under discussion, as well as Höhle's (1992) notion of verum focus as highlighting the truth of an already entertained proposition.

Data (24-28) are further demonstrations that *niq* may be used to express verum focus. The meanings of utterances with *niq* in these data are explained by the notions of affirming (data (24-26) and (28)) or clarifying (datum (27)). For instance, in datum (25) the consultant explains the meaning of the sentence *Nancy tuyqniqsuaq* 'Nancy wrote a letter-*niq*' as "you are affirming that she really did, she wrote a letter". In data (28), the utterance *nakuuniqsuq* 'she is good-*niq*' is explained as felicitous in a scenario where the speaker affirms the propositional content of the hearer's previous utterance.

Data (24-26) do not include information about the discourse around an utterance with *niq*. However, the sentences with *niq* in these data seem to be explained as affirming the propositional content as a whole, which makes (24-26) indicators that *niq* may express verum focus. It is reasonable to assume that if an utterance is intended to affirm something, be it the truth of a state of affairs or another piece of information, some of the information in that utterance must be evoked in the preceding discourse. In other words, it is likely that a speaker who performs a speech act of

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<sup>60</sup> Faller gives the following example where the illocutionary adverb *honestly* participates in an interrogative flip: *honestly, who has eaten the guinea pigs?* (2006:14). The speaker, who utters this sentence, asks the hearer to give an honest response – he is not questioning *whether* the speaker is being honest (Faller, 2006).

affirming that Nancy really did write a letter, does so because it is not given that she did, i.e. the question whether Nancy wrote a letter is previously entertained in the discourse. And *niq* seems to be the expression of the affirmation aspect in the sentences in data (24-26).

In datum (27) the meaning of *tainainiqsuq* ‘it is so-*niq*’ is explained as “*it clarifies it is that way, it is indeed that way*”. Again, a speaker’s desire to clarify something is likely to pertain to the lack of clarity about a state of affairs referred to in the preceding discourse. That is, calling *niq* an expression of information focus predicts the explanations given of sentences with *niq* as affirming or clarifying that a state of affairs is the case; when the propositional content in the utterance with *niq* is entertained in the discourse, *niq* functions to highlight the predication of the truth-value to this (familiar) propositional content.

The finding that sentences with *niq* tend to be paraphrased by means of the English expression ‘it turns out that p’ as in data (2), (30-31) and (41) further indicate that some of the propositional content is previously entertained. If it turns out to the speaker that a proposition is the case, it is reasonable to assume that the propositional content is entertained as familiar; if the propositional content is not given, it is hardly relevant to state that it *turned out* to be the case. According to the interpretations of *niq* as conveying a meaning similar to ‘it turns out that p’ it thus again appears that *niq* restricts the context in such a way that some of the propositional content must be entertained as familiar.

The data (2), (21), (31) and (45-46) also demonstrate that *niq* may be used to express verum focus. This is seen by the choice of translating sentences with *niq* by means of English sentences with a stressed finite verb in data (2), (31) and (45-46), the *do*-insertion in the English translation in data (21), and in the example taken from MacLean’s (1986b:78) rendered as (8e) from Chapter 3. We saw above that verum focus may be expressed by stressed finite verbs and *do*-insertion in English (Gutzmann and Miró, 2011:144). The presence of these strategies in the translations of a sentences with *niq* therefore supports the assumption that *niq* may be used to highlight the truth of the proposition, i.e. express verum focus.

Other data, (47-48), show that sentences with *niq* may give rise to stressing elements in the English translations other than the finite verb. In datum (47), the stress falls on the directional expression in the English translation, and this datum was hence discussed in the previous subsection where marking of narrow focus on propositional elements was discussed. In datum (48), the

stress in the English translation is on the expression referring to the manner of how the bird/plane is flying, and not on the finite verb. At a first glance, this datum could seem to demonstrate *niq*'s ability to function as narrow information focus on propositional elements. However, as closer look at the consultant's explanation shows that datum (48) demonstrate the use of *niq* to highlight the predication of verum to the propositional content. The English translation of *iġġitigun tiġminiqsuq* 'it is flying through the mountains-*niq*' is translated into English as 'it is THAT way. That's how it's flying'. The consultant then gives the example sentence *iġġitigun tiġmiruq. ii iġġitigun tiġminiqsuq*, 'it is flying through the mountains. Yes, it is flying through the mountains-*niq*', and I ask her if it is sort of confirming. This she confirms, and then indicates that the ending *-niqsuq* '3.SG.PRES.IND-*niq*' means "it is true". Hence the meaning of *niq* in this sentence does seem to contribute to the utterance meaning by emphasizing the truth-value. It therefore appears to me that the use of *niq* in the second sentence in the example sentence given by the consultant in datum (48) should be understood as emphasizing the truth of the previous sentence in the example. In this way, the explanation of *niq* given in (48) seems to indicate that *niq* expresses verum focus; the truth of the previous communicated proposition seems to be emphasized by means of repeating this proposition and modifying it with the meaning of *niq*. So even though the stress falls on an expression other than the finite verb in the English translation, a closer look at the elaboration of the meaning seems to indicate that the use of *niq* in the second sentence emphasizes the predication of the truth of the proposition evoked in the immediately preceding sentence.

Interestingly, in (48), *niq* is felicitous in *ii iġġitigun tiġminiqsuq*, 'it is flying through the mountains-*niq*', which appears to communicate the proposition [it is flying through the mountains] as true. It seems that the very same proposition is also communicated as true in the previous sentence *iġġitigun tiġmiruq* 'it is flying through the mountains', as this is a simple declarative sentence with the same propositional content as the sentence with *niq*. Also in datum (28), the propositional content of the utterance with *niq* is preceded by an utterance communicating the very same proposition as true. *Niq* seems to be associated with affirmation of the propositional content in (28) and (48), and these data thus demonstrate *niq*'s use to mark verum focus. However, appreciating the givenness-newness distinction used to explicate the relational focus sense in Gundel and Fretheim (2004), data like (28) and (48) encourage a closer examination; it is not clear what constitutes the newly predicated information in the utterances with *niq* in these data. This issue is treated in §7.3.

To sum up: The data (12), (30) and (33-36) demonstrate the use of *niq* to mark verum focus, in that the use of *niq* in these data seems to divide the information in the utterance into topic and focus; the propositional content is previously evoked, and hence serves as topic referent, while the predication of verum to the propositional content is highlighted by means of *niq*.

In data (24-28) the use of *niq* is associated with affirmation or clarification of the propositional content. Assuming that the desire to clarify or affirm that a proposition is the case, the propositional content must be previously entertained, whereas the truth-value of this propositional content is not given. Again, the predication of verum is fairly new in relation to the topic, which is the propositional content.

Data (2), (31) and (45-46) show the tendency of stressing the main verb of the construction in English translations of Iñupiaq sentences with *niq*; stressing the finite verb is a strategy of expressing verum focus in German and English. In datum (21), the English translation contains *do*-support, which may also be used to express verum focus in English.

In spite of the stress on the constituent expressing manner in the English translation in (48), this datum was analyzed as showing *niq*'s ability to express verum focus; the sentence with *niq* discussed in (48) seems to be explained as confirming the truth of the proposition previously expressed.

### *7.2.3 Contextual Requirements for the Verum Focus Use of niq; the nature of the evoked material*

The prediction made for *niq* so far is that when part of the propositional content in an utterance with *niq* is contextually given, *niq* focuses the constituent representing the referent which is not previously entertained. When the whole propositional content is previously given, *niq* focuses the predication of verum. However, there are some data in the collection where *niq* is used in an utterance where the whole proposition is previously given, but which do not fit neatly into the notion of verum focus in the literature. These data are discussed in the present sub-section, where I attempt to solve the problem by revisiting the notion of the contextual requirements of verum focus.

According to the collected data, an utterance of *niq* is not only appropriate when the whole propositional content is previously entertained as questioned, but also when the propositional content is previously entertained as false. This is the case in data (37-44). Appreciating Gutzmann and Miró's (2011) proposed use-conditions for verum focus, i.e. that the propositional content must be previously entertained as questioned, these data thus raise the question whether there are other

functions of *niq* than verum focus, when *niq* is used in an utterance where the whole propositional content is previously evoked, or whether the definition of verum focus should be revised.

In data (37) (38) (40), the use of *niq* is judged appropriate in scenarios where the propositional content of the utterance with *niq* has been entertained mentally by the speaker with the opposite truth-value. That is, the speaker has previously assumed that p is not the case, and the utterance with *niq* conveys that p is the case. In (37), for instance, the utterance with *niq* is appropriate when conveying that Aalaak has a boat, when the speaker has previously assumed that Aalaak did not have a boat. The consultant indicates that the speaker may then utter *umiaqaqniqsuq* ‘he has a boat-*niq*’, when discovering that Aalaak now has a boat.

The function of *niq* according to data (37-38) and (40) falls outside Gutzmann and Miró’s (2011) requirement for verum focus, because the proposition in the scope of *niq* is not entertained as questioned. Hence the utterance with *niq* can not be assumed to down date the question under discussion whether p is true. Höhle’s (1992) understanding of verum focus may point in the direction of a solution to this problem.

In Höhle (ibid.) the main requirement is that the thought is known. This requirement of Höhle’s (ibid.) can not be taken to imply that the thought must be known in terms of p must be known. In that case, Höhle’s (ibid.) example rendered in (8) above would not fill the contextual requirements for verum focus. The proposition, whose truth-value is highlighted in B’s utterance, is that Karl is writing a screen play. But this proposition can not be said to have been entertained as true, since the hearer hardly entertains this proposition as true. Recall that A, the hearer, says that Hanna has ridiculously claimed that Karl is writing a screen play. A can hence not be assumed to entertain the thought that p [Karl is writing a screen play] is true. But the idea of [Karl writing a screen play] is indeed known, however without a truth-value. It hence seems that Höhle’s (1992) requirement that the thought must be known means that the set of truth-conditions must be known, or, more precisely, must be entertained.

Is this contextual requirement similar to Gutzmann and Miró’s (2011) requirement that p must be previously entertained as questioned? A questioned proposition is after all also a set of truth-conditions without a truth-value. The way I understand Höhle (1992), however, he does not state that the thought is entertained in a certain way, e.g. as questioned. For instance, in example (8) it is not obvious that A is wondering whether p is the case; A’s utterance could actually be interpreted to convey the assumption that p is false. I therefore assume that the nature of the thought, which must



be known prior to an utterance with verum focus according to Höhle (1992), corresponds to a proposition which is entertained as true, false or questioned.

Furthermore, if verum focus is understood as focus on the truth of the proposition (Höhle, 1992), it seems counterintuitive that verum focus should be limited to settling questions. For instance, I see no reason why B's choice to stress the finite verb in example (13) below should not be taken as highlighting the truth of the proposition she communicates. B's utterance demonstrates a partition between a topic, [Karl as good looking], which is entertained as false, and the predication of something new, namely the fulfillment or truth of the evoked proposition:

- (13)           A: Karl is not good looking.  
              B: No, he IS good looking.

Assuming that verum focus is felicitous when the propositional content in its scope are previously entertained with any truth-value, data (37-38) and (40) demonstrate interpretations of *niq* as marking narrow information focus on verum, as the embedded proposition is here previously entertained as negated. The proposition with a different truth-value is referentially given in the mind of the speaker, and the relation of a new truth-value to the given material seems to be highlighted by means of *niq* in data (37-38) and (40). The scenarios behind data (37-38) and (40) remain silent about the presence of a possible interlocutor. It should be noted that the utterances with *niq* in data (37-38) and (40) are inflected for the third person singular. It is hence possible that the scenarios may be interpreted in such a way that the speaker talks to herself. That is, she recognizes that Aalaak now has a boat, and says to herself *umiaqaqniqsuq* 'he has a boat-*niq*'.

The main point of this sub-section was to support the hypothesis that *niq* receives a verum focus interpretation, when the embedded propositional material is previously entertained as false or questioned. This was not given according to the strict felicity-conditions for verum focus posed by Gutzmann and Miró (2011), which seem limited to contexts where the propositional material is previously entertained as questioned. Based on Höhle (1992), I have argued that verum focus does not restrict whether the propositional material has been entertained as true, false or questioned, and hence found basis for a revision of verum focus which allowed us to conclude that *niq* receives a verum focus interpretation not only in the data where the propositional content was previously questioned, but also when the propositional content was previously entertained as false.

With less restrictions on how the propositional content must be previously entertained in order for *niq* til yield a verum focus interpretation, we may revisit data (28) and (48) where the

propositional content is previously evoked with the same truth-value as in the utterance with *niq*. The lack of newness of the relation between the truth of the proposition and the propositional content however prevents data (28) and (48) from fitting neatly into the idea of relational focus in the sense of Gundel and Fretheim (2004). I shall come back to the issues concerning newness in the explication of information structure focus later.

#### 7.2.4 Accommodation of Topic

This sub-section discusses how the information focus analysis of *niq* applies to the data where an utterance with *niq* is felicitous even though the set of truth-conditions, communicated as fulfilled by the utterance with *niq*, have not been explicitly evoked.

The hypothesis is that if *niq* may indeed function to highlight the newness in predicating something to a given topic, it is possible that a speaker may expect her interlocutor to accommodate assumptions about familiarity of certain propositional elements, when *niq* is used in an utterance. This seems to be demonstrated by data like (39) and (42-44).

Datum (39) is especially interesting with respect to *niq*'s ability to trigger accommodation. Datum (39) is a discussion about the sentence *nagliksaaninnisuk ukuak* 'they(dual) are not suffering-*niq*' about which the consultant states that the only reason for using *niq* here is that maybe they have been suffering before, but now they are not. I do not find evidence in the story (in MacLean, 1995), from which the sentence is taken, that the propositional content has been previously evoked, at least not explicitly. Furthermore, the consultant, who gave datum (39) indicates that *nagliksaaninnisuk ukuak* 'they(dual) are not suffering-*niq*' encourage an inference that maybe the two persons have been suffering in the past. That is, the use of *niq* here appears to trigger the assumption that the falsity of the embedded proposition [they are not suffering] used to be a truthful description of the world. It thus seems that *niq* may trigger the accommodation of the assumption [they are suffering] as a previously true description of the world, and this assumption is used to interpret the meaning of the sentence *nagliksaaninnisuk ukuak* 'they(dual) are not suffering-*niq*'. This use of *niq* is predicted by the description of *niq* as a marker of narrow information focus on a propositional element or verum. A good reason to highlight the predication of e.g. truth-value to some propositional material is that this predication yields a description of the world which is the contrary of a previous description of the world.

It should be noted that the embedded proposition in *nagliksaaninnisuk ukuak* ‘they(dual) are not suffering-*niq*’ is negative. There is no doubt that the negation is part of what triggers the contextual assumption that it could have been the case that the two given persons were suffering. In addition, the focalization of predicating the truth of the (negated) proposition most probably strengthens the contextual assumption that is it not given that the two persons do not suffer. The predication of the (opposite) truth-value is new information about the two persons and their wellbeing.

According to Höhle’s (1992) requirements for verum focus, the utterances with *niq* in data (42-44) could be analyzed as instances of exclamatory focus. Exclamatory focus should not be confused with verum focus in spite of both phenomena being of an exclamatory-emphatic character (ibid.:117). Some of Höhle’s (ibid.) examples of exclamatory focus are rendered in (14):

- (14) a. (mein Gott!) HAT dieser Kerl sich angestrengt!  
           ‘my God! How this guy has given effort!’<sup>61</sup>  
       b. der HAT aber groser Füsse!  
           ‘how big his feet are!’

(Höhle, 1992:117)

Höhle states that verum focus is different from exclamatory focus in that the latter does not presuppose that the represented thought is known (ibid.:117). We may therefore argue that the difference between the utterances in example (14) and the utterances with *niq* in data (42-44) are exactly that the speakers of the latter have previously entertained the proposition expressed in the utterance; recall that the mother in the scenario knows that her son does not usually sew, which results in her being surprised when she finds him sewing. The sentence with *niq* is chosen by consultants over the corresponding simple sentence in this scenario, because it conveys the speakers surprise; the observation that her son is sewing is contrary to her previous assumptions concerning his sewing habits.

The son has not necessarily entertained thoughts concerning his sewing habits, and he might not even know that his mother has. Furthermore, the son obviously knows that he is sewing, when his mother walks in; the predication of the truth to the set of truth-conditions [the son is sewing] is hence not new to the son. The hypothesis is that because *niq* focuses the predication of something new, e.g. the truth-value, to something given, e.g. a set of truth-conditions, *niq* may be used to instruct the speaker to access assumptions about the familiarity of certain propositional material.

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<sup>61</sup> My own translation.

Hence, when the mother uses *niq* to modify the proposition [you are sewing], i.e. the son is instructed to access the contextual assumption that from the point of view of his mother, it was not given that he would be sewing, and hence the predication of [sewing] to him is new to the mother. In this sense, the predication of verum to the set of truth-conditions is communicated as new, and the son is encouraged to access the assumption about the newness of this predication in relation to the truth-conditions, [him sewing].

Datum (41) also deserves some extra attention in the discussion of *niq*'s ability to trigger assumptions about the familiarity of certain material. The scenario discussed in relation to a sentence with *niq* in datum (41) remains silent as to whether the interlocutors have made any previous assumptions concerning the propositional content. In (41), an utterance with *niq* is judged felicitous in the following scenario: The mother has been at home all day with the son Simik, who has just started to crawl that day. When the husband comes home, she tells him by uttering *paamrukniqsuaq* 'he has started to crawl-*niq*'. In our discussion on the meaning of this sentence in the scenario, the consultant notes that the information is new knowledge to the mother. It seems that *niq* is licensed in the utterance because the mother has just realized that Simik has started to crawl.

It is reasonable to assume that both interlocutors have entertained thoughts concerning their son's motoric development. The mother can therefore assume that thoughts concerning Simik and crawling are known to be shared by her and her husband. This assumption is further supported by data like (59), where the concept of 'endearment' is used by the consultant to explain a use of *niq*. In (59), the consultant explains that you can say *paamrukniqsuaq* 'he has started to crawl-*niq*' to a person close to you, but not to a person of the street. It therefore seems that the felicity of *niq* in data like (41) lies in the assumption that due to the close relation between the speaker and hearer, and their mutual knowledge of their emotional relation towards the propositional content, a sub-set of this propositional content can be assumed to be highly accessible. In this way, Simik's motoric development, as in [Simik crawling], is a retrieved topic referent, and the predication of verum is new information, and the speaker uses *niq* to mark the newness of this predication.

It is reasonable to assume that *niq* instructs the hearer to accommodate topic referents when used in an utterance out of context, if we recall the explanation given by a consultant in (36). Here the sentence with *niq* is chosen if the utterance is a continuation of the same chain of thought. If this is indeed a salient function of *niq*, it is highly possible that *niq* instructs the hearer to accommodate

assumptions about how the utterance is a continuation of the same chain of thought, also in cases where none of the propositional material is previously evoked. The lack of an apparent topic in the prior discourse forces the hearer to retrieve an appropriate topic referent among the embedded propositional content, i.e. the choice of topics can be made among a sub-set of the truth-conditional content in the utterance with *niq*.

### 7.3 Remaining Findings

The findings remaining to be accounted for are discussed in this section. In data (28-29) and (48), it is less obvious how *niq* marks a partition of the information in the utterance into something given and something new, since the same proposition seems to be conveyed as true in the uttered sentence preceding the sentence with *niq*. In data (59-60), *niq* was explained as conveying an endearing attitude towards the propositional content, and in (61) *niq* seems to have the function of making the statement a less direct confrontation. These findings are treated in turn.

According to Gundel and Fretheim (2004), it seems that the predication of the focus meaning to the topic is a new relation. Judging from the majority of the data set, it is reasonable to assume that *niq* may be used to mark that the non-given part of the utterance is entertained as constituting new knowledge. This property of *niq* seems especially clear in datum (41) where the utterance *paamrukniqsuaq* ‘he has started to crawl-*niq*’ is explained as conveying new knowledge; “*she just realized it, she discovered it. New knowledge.*” Further indications that *niq* is associated with the conveyance of new knowledge is the tendency to paraphrase sentences with *niq* by means of the English expression ‘it turns out that(p), as seen in data (2), (30-31) and (41).

In data (28-29) and (48) the utterances with *niq* all satisfy *niq*’s topic-restriction that a sub-set of the embedded propositional material is familiar. It is not obvious however, what is the new relation in the utterance with *niq*, as neither the predication of verum nor any other predication to the topic is new in the discourse. It appeared in the explanations in data (28-29) that *niq* may be used in an utterance where the information in the embedded clause corresponds to the information conveyed in the hearer’s previous utterance, in order to show the hearer that one is following what he is saying. Recall the scenario from datum (28), where Nayuk appropriately may utter *nakuuniqsuaq* ‘she is good-*niq*’ as a response to Aalaak’s utterance conveying that Aalaak’s mother is doing good.

A hypothesis is that the new relation overtly marked by means of *niq* can hold between the higher-level explicature of the utterance and the proposition expressed. The relevance theoretic notion of a higher-level explicature is defined in the following way in Carston (2002):

a particular kind of explicature which involves embedding the propositional form of the utterance or one of its constituent propositional forms under a higher-level description such as a speech-act description, a propositional attitude description or some other comment on the embedded proposition. (Carston, 2002:377)

Data (28-29) suggest that *niq* may function to convey that the speaker has internalized the information uttered by the hearer in the previous utterance. In data (28-29) *niq* may thus be used to constrain the interpretation of the utterance in terms of signaling the relevance of the utterance's higher-level explicature, which has a shape like 'speaker has internalized that(p)' or 'speaker understands that(p)'. In this sense, the embedded proposition is topic and the higher-level explicature is newly predicated about the topic and hence focus. As for datum (48), the higher-level explicature, whose relevance is signaled by means of *niq*, could be analyzed as having an assertive character. This hypothesis is subject to further research and theoretical considerations.

If *niq* may indeed be used to signal the relevance of the utterance's higher-level explicature, it is reasonable to assume that this is exactly what yields the less confrontational interpretation of an utterance with *niq* in contexts like the scenario in datum (61). In the scenario discussed in (61), the utterance with *niq* communicates a previously evoked propositional content concerning Simik's ability to drive a car with a different truth-value than the one accompanying the proposition when it was previously entertained by the speaker and hearer in the scenario. In this way, the datum fits the description of *niq* as a marker of narrow information focus, because *niq* seems to mark the partition of the information in the utterance into topic and focus, i.e. the predication of the new truth-value is new information about the propositional content. However, the consultant who gave datum (61) told me that an utterance of *Simik qamutitalluiniqsuq* 'Simik can't drive a car very well-*niq*' instead of the corresponding simple sentence makes the statement less closed for further discussion. If *niq* may signal the relevance of a higher-level explicature of a shape like 'speaker asserts/understands that(p)', as we hypothesized above, a reference to the speaker attitude may contribute to the utterance's less confrontational character, because the proposition is presented as less dogmatic.

The data set is however too small at the present moment for drawing conclusions concerning *niq* and less confrontational speaker attitude.

Last but not least, we have seen that *niq* is some times associated with the conveyance of endearment. It is possible that the propositional content of the sentences under discussion in data (59-60) may contribute more to the endearment interpretation than *niq*; in (59) the embedded proposition is that the speaker's son has started to crawl, and in (60) the speaker's daughter has sent a letter. It is reasonable to assume that both of these states of affairs are endearing to the speaker. It remains to be explained however why *niq* may be used when conveying that the speaker's daughter wrote a letter, but not when the boss wrote the speaker a letter, and why a father can use *niq* when telling someone close to him that his son has started to crawl, but not when telling a stranger.

An explanation is possible in terms of the accessibility of propositional material to constitute topic. As for datum (59), the restriction of *Simik paammakniqsuaq uvlaapak* 'Simik was crawling this morning-*niq*' to contexts where the hearer is someone close to the speaker could be due to the fact that a stranger can hardly be assumed to have entertained thoughts concerning the speaker's son and his motoric development. An utterance of *Simik paammakniqsuaq uvlaapak* 'Simik was crawling this morning-*niq*' to a stranger is therefore infelicitous, because the hearer can not be expected to retrieve a topic referent among the embedded propositional content. People close to Simik's father can, on the other hand, be assumed to have entertained thoughts concerning Simik and his motoric development. As for (60), it is likely that the speaker in the scenario has previously entertained thoughts concerning whether her daughter would write her a letter soon, whereas her boss is less often on her mind. The speaker in the scenario would hence not entertain any of the propositional content in [my boss wrote a letter] as topic.

In spite of the sparse amount of data indicating that *niq* is associated with endearment, the interpretations of the utterances with *niq* in data (59-61) may be predicted by the assumption that *niq* marks narrow information focus, because this implies that a sub-set of the embedded propositional content is entertained as topic.

#### **7.4 Motivations for Marking Information Focus**

We have seen that *niq* is appropriate, but not required, when the predication of the truth-value to the previously evoked proposition is not given information (e.g. datum (11)). Nor is *niq* required when the utterance predicates new information about a given action/state (e.g. datum (54)). These findings by no means weaken the description of *niq* as a marker of narrow information focus; as Gundel and Fretheim (2004) note, all sentences have an information focus (2004:7), but it appears that not all utterances will make use of linguistic means to highlight the information focus.

What makes a marker of narrow information focus interesting is therefore the speaker's motivation for highlighting the very predication of less familiar material in the utterance to the topic by means of this expression.

Being a marker of narrow information focus, the use of *niq* seems motivated by the speaker's desire to minimize the processing effort for the interlocutor; *niq* facilitates the processing of the information in the utterance by marking overtly that a proper sub-set of the information is a new predication, i.e. *niq* marks the partition of the information into a given part and a part which is new information about the given. As Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) argue, an assumption (communicated by an utterance) is relevant in a context to the extent that the effort required to process it in this context is small. The other condition for 'relevance' is that the cognitive effects yielded by the assumption are large (ibid.:125). The notion of cognitive effects is understood in Relevance Theory as "[...]the result of a fruitful (i.e. relevant) interaction between a newly impinging stimulus and a subset of the assumptions already present in the cognitive system." (Carston, 2002:377). The cognitive effects are a result of a relevant interpretation of the stimulus (in this case the utterance) in the given context, i.e. the derivation of an interpretation which is likely to correspond to the assumption the speaker intended to convey (Carston, 2002; Wilson and Sperber, 1986/1995). In this sense, the use of *niq* may increase the relevance of the utterance, because *niq* minimizes the processing effort by constraining possible topics by signalling that a topic referent is realized in the embedded clause. *Niq* facilitates the derivation of cognitive effects by means of instructing the hearer to look for cognitive effects among the information newly predicated about the topic in the utterance.

## 7.5 Concluding Remarks

### 7.5.1 The Semantics and Pragmatics of the North Slope Iñupiaq postbase *niq*

In this chapter we have seen that *niq* can be used to mark verum focus when the embedded propositional content is evoked. When only parts of the propositional material are evoked, *niq* marks the predication of the new information in the utterance. However, *niq* does not appear felicitous in an utterance where none of the propositional material is evoked.

Based on these patterns I suggest that *niq* is a marker of narrow information focus, where information focus is understood as a relational focus sense like in Gundel and Fretheim (2004).



Gundel and Fretheim's (2004) relational focus sense is preferred in the account for *niq*, because it predicts which meaning aspects of an utterance is topic and focus; topics are per definition familiar, and hence the hearer has a representation available of the topic referent, whereas focus is the material newly predicted about the topic. In this fashion, all sentences have an information focus determined by the context, and linguistic means such as *niq* may be used to overtly mark the partition of the utterance into topic and focus. *Niq* does not appear to affect truth-conditions, and *niq* is not required when new information is predicated about a topic. Rather, the felicitous use of *niq* restricts the context in such a way that a sub-set of the embedded propositional content must be previously entertained; in other words, a sub-set of the embedded propositional material is entertained as familiar, when *niq* is used in an utterance. This explains why a simple sentence is sometimes equally appropriate as a sentence with *niq*, whereas sentences with *niq* are inappropriate when none of the propositional material is either previously entertained or may be entertained as familiar.

Based on the collected data it seems that *niq* is always felicitous when the topic is constituted by the whole embedded propositional content or by the verb phrase, less felicitous when the topic is constituted by the subject of the embedded proposition, and infelicitous when none of the propositional content is topic.

The analysis of *niq* as a marker of narrow information focus in the sense outlined above makes the prediction that a speaker is motivated to use *niq* in an utterance in order to call attention to the newness of a predication. The use of *niq* thus eases the processing effort by means of signaling where in the utterance the hearer should look for cognitive effects.

### 7.5.2 Relating to Previous Accounts of *niq*

The proposed analysis for North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* differs from the analysis of the Malimiut Iñupiaq postbase *niq*, as the latter is described as an evidential modal in Nagai (2006) and Lanz (2010). The data collected for the present study do not support the application of the same label to *niq* in North Slope Iñupiaq. Future research may show whether the differences of our analyses are due to sub-dialectal variation or not.

I have argued that *niq* marks the predication of verum to the propositional content when the latter is entertained in the discourse either explicitly or by means of being easily accessible. Verum focus is in this study understood as highlighting the truth of the proposition, and hence the verum focus use

of *niq* seems closely related to MacLean's (1986b) descriptions of *niq* as being used to establish and confirm. Analyzing *niq* as a marker of information focus supplements the description of *niq* provided in MacLean (1986b), in that it offers a hypothesis about the meaning of *niq* in utterances of interrogative constructions; the speaker requests clarity whether the propositional content is the case, i.e. whether verum may be truth-fully predicated to the proposition expressed. Moreover, the information structure analysis proposed in the present study supplements MacLean (1986b; forthcoming) by offering an explication of the felicitous use of *niq* in terms requiring that a sub-set of the embedded propositional material is topic.

MacLean's (1995) description of *niq* in narratives as relating an event in the past to the present seems to favour the hypothesis that *niq* requires the entertainment of a sub-set of the propositional material as familiar.

None of the collected data seemed concerned with a meaning similar to MacLean's (forthcoming) *niq*<sub>2</sub>; judging from the explanations given of sentences containing the form *niq* in the data set, the presence of *niq* did not seem to affect the conceptual meaning denoted by the linguistic string. The analysis of *niq* as a marker of narrow information focus seems to come closer to MacLean's entry for *niq*<sub>1</sub>, i.e. to report or state that the subject is or has been V-ing (forthcoming:869), since the verum focus is not conceptually far from the idea of stating that something is the case.

## Chapter 8: Summary and Conclusions

Iñupiaq is an Inuit dialect spoken by 2.144 people (Krauss, 2007) in the northern part of Alaska. As we saw in Chapter 2, Alaskan Iñupiaq is highly endangered.

The present thesis is a contribution to the description of this dialect by means of giving a detailed analysis of the semantics and pragmatics of the postbase *niq* in North Slope Iñupiaq. Based on interviews with native speakers of North Slope Iñupiaq, I have suggested that *niq* is a marker of narrow information focus.

Chapter 3 reviewed previous descriptions of the postbase *niq*. Based on descriptions of Malimiut Iñupiaq *niq* as an evidential modal (Nagai, 2006; Lanz, 2010), the point of departure of the present study was to survey the exact evidential properties of North Slope Iñupiaq *niq*.

Among the reviewed literature in Chapter 3 was also a North Slope Iñupiaq school grammar (MacLean, 1986b) and an Iñupiaq dictionary (MacLean, forthcoming). According to entries for *niq* provided in these works, *niq* is used to confirm or establish (MacLean, 1986b) and to report or state that something is the case (MacLean, forthcoming).

The method of data collection found suitable for the present purpose of providing a semantic and pragmatic analysis of *niq* was presented and discussed in Chapter 4. I have argued along the lines of Matthewson (2004) that it makes little sense to ask for explanations of the meaning of a morpheme in isolation, when the aim is to obtain information on which to make generalizations about linguistic meaning. In my attempt to understand the meaning and use of *niq*, I have therefore asked consultants to explain the meaning of sentences with and without *niq* in relation to imaginary discourse contexts. In the interviews, I would therefore ask consultants for contexts in which a certain sentence could be uttered, and for elaborations on the meaning of minimal pairs, or I would describe a context and ask about the appropriateness of one or more sentences. In addition to judgments concerning the appropriateness of relevant sentences with *niq* in various contexts, consultants shared detailed explanations and reflections on when to use sentences with and without *niq*. The data hence consist of metalinguistic knowledge shared with me by native speakers of North Slope Iñupiaq.

In Chapter 5, I explicitly rendered the consultants' statements and reflections, and systematized the data according to what they indicate about the meaning and use of *niq*.

The collected data showed that North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* does not restrict information source, and thus the label ‘evidential modal’ does not apply to the North Slope Iñupiaq postbase *niq*. Chapter 6 argued thoroughly why North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* can not possibly be an evidential, and then showed how the data collected with the intention to shed light on *niq*’s evidential properties turned out to facilitate the establishment of *niq*’s epistemic restrictions; utterances with *niq* are associated with speaker certainty as are utterances of simple sentences.

Because the data set consists of such detailed descriptions and reflections concerning the meaning and use of sentences with *niq*, a closer examination of the collected data provided the foundation for formulating an analysis of *niq*.

It appeared that utterances containing *niq* were appropriate in contexts where part of the meaning conveyed by the utterance was evoked; either because it was entertained in the preceding discourse, or because it was accommodated in the context as familiar. Such findings, together with the tendency of having stressed finites verbs in the English translations of sentences with *niq* as well as the explanations of sentences with *niq* as affirming the propositional content, led to the analysis of *niq* as a marker of narrow information focus in Chapter 7.

Gundel and Fretheim’s (2004) notion of relational focus proved suitable to account for the use of *niq* to mark the predication of verum as well as propositional elements to the topic; *niq* restricts the context in such a way that a sub-set of the embedded propositional material is entertained as topic, and the predication of new information about the topic is highlighted by means of *niq*. In this way, *niq* may be used to facilitate the processing of the interpretation of the utterance, because the hearer is instructed to look for cognitive effects in the information newly predicated about the topic. The proposed denotation for *niq* supplements MacLean’s (1986b; 1995; forthcoming) descriptions, by means of suggesting a general meaning for *niq* which facilitates a hypothesis about the use of *niq* in utterances of interrogative sentences.

The present study has proposed a denotation for North Slope Iñupiaq *niq* as a marker of narrow information focus. There are, however, still questions to be explored concerning the semantics and pragmatics of *niq*. More data would doubtlessly improve the analysis of *niq*. For instance; as we see in the data set, utterances with *niq* are judged appropriate in scenarios where all of the embedded propositional content is evoked. However, there is inconsistency concerning the appropriateness of

*niq* in an utterance where the subject of the embedded clause constitutes topic. Further studies of *niq* could supplement the metalinguistic data collected for the present thesis with observations of how *niq* is used in naturally occurring speech; it would, among other things, be interesting to see how often *niq* occurs in an utterance where the subject referent constitutes topic.



Appendix – Annotations of Iñupiaq sentences from Chapter 5

(1)

tiḡminiqsuaq uvlaapak  
 tiḡmi-niq-tuaq uvlaa-pak  
*fly-niq-3SG.PST.IND morning-during*  
 ‘It flew this morning-*niq*’

tiḡmiruaq uvlaapak  
 tiḡmi-tuaq uvlaaq-pak  
*fly-3SG.PST.IND morning-during*  
 ‘It flew this morning’

(2)

iglu suḡaraaqtaagruq  
 iglu suḡauraaqtaaq-tuq  
*house.ABS blue.color-3SG.PRES.IND*  
 ‘the house is blue’

suḡauraaqtaagniḡsuq  
 suḡauraaqtaaq-niq-tuq  
*blue.color-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
 ‘it is blue-*niq*’

(3)

aḡnat kukiuniqsut  
 aḡnaq-t kukiu-niq-tut  
*woman-PL.ABS cook-niq-3PL.PRES.IND*  
 ‘the women are cooking-*niq*’

(4)

alapaagḡniqsuaq  
 alaapaaq-niq-tuaq  
*be.cold-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
 ‘he/she/it was cold-*niq*’

(5)

itpalliḡsuq stuaqpakmi  
 it-palliḡ-tuq stuaq-qpak-mi  
*be-probably-3SG.PRES.IND store-big-LOC*  
 ‘he/she/it is probably at the store’

Simik stuaqpakmi itniḡsuq  
 Simik stuaq-qpak-mi it-niq-tuq  
*Simik.ABS store-big-LOC be-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
 ‘Simik is at the store-*niq*’

Simik stuaqpakmi itpalliḡsuq  
 Simik stuaq-qpak-mi it-palliḡ-tuq  
*Simik.ABS store-big-LOC be-probably-3SG.PRES.IND*  
 ‘Simik is probably at the store’

Simik stuaqpakmi ittuq  
 Simik stuaq-qpak-mi it-tuq  
*Simik.ABS store-big-LOC be-3SG.PRES.IND*  
 ‘Simik is at the store’

(6)

itniqsuq  
it-niq-tuq  
*be-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he/she/it is'

(7)

tiṅminiqsuaq uvlaapak  
tiṅmi-niq-tuaq uvlaa-pak  
*fly-niq-3SG.PST.IND morning-during*  
'It was flying this morning-*niq* / It flew this morning-*niq*'

tiṅminiqsuaq  
tiṅmi-niq-tuaq  
*fly-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'It was flying-*niq* / It flew-*niq*'

(8)

Utqiagviḡniqsuaq  
Utqiagvik-niq-tuaq  
*Barrow-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she/it came/went to Barrow-*niq*'

(9)

Aalaak umiaqḡniqsuq  
Aalaak umiaq-qaq-niq-tuq  
*Aalaak boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Aalaak has a boat-*niq*'

(10)

oh, Aalaak umiaqaqtuq  
oh Aalaak umiaq-qaq-tuq  
*oh Aalaak.ABS boat-have-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'oh, Aalaak has a boat'

Aalaak umiaqḡniqsuq  
Aalaak umiaq-qaq-niq-tuq  
*Aalaak.ABS boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Aalaak has a boat-*niq*'

(11)

qamutitalluiniqsuq  
qamutitaq-lla-ui-niq-tuq  
*drive.car-can-NEG-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he/she/it is not very good at driving a car-*niq*'

ii qamutitallaruq  
ii, qamutitaq-lla-tuq  
*yes drive.car-can-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'yes, he is a good driver'

(12)

Peter umiaqaqtuq  
Peter umiaq-qaq-tuq  
*Peter.ABS boat-have-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Peter has a boat'

Peter umiaqḡniqsuq!  
Peter umiaq-qaq-niq-tuq  
*Peter.ABS boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Peter has a boat-*niq*!'



(13)

aġnat kukiurut  
aġnaq-t kukiutut  
*woman-PL.ABS cook-3PL.PRES.IND*  
‘the women are cooking’

kukiurut  
kukiutut  
*cook-3PL.PRES.IND*  
‘they are cooking’

(14)

Utqiagviksuaq  
Utqiagvik-tuaq  
*Barrow-3SG.PST.IND*  
‘he/she/it came/went to Barrow’

(15)

akutchivalliqsuaq  
akuchi-palliq-tuaq  
*mix-probably-3SG.PST.IND*  
‘maybe he/she was mixing’

kukivalliqsut  
kukiutut  
*cook-probably-3PL.PRES.IND*  
‘they are probably cooking’

akutchiruaq  
akuchi-tuaq  
*mix-3SG.PST.IND*  
‘he/she was mixing’

(16)

aġaiyyuviŋmi ittuq  
aġaiyyuvik-mi ittuq  
*church-LOC be-3SG.PRES.IND*  
‘he/she/it is at the church’

aġaiyyuviŋmiguuq ittuq  
aġaiyyuvik-mi-guuq ittuq  
*church-LOC-HEARSAY be-3SG.PRES.IND*  
‘he/she/it is at the church it’s been said’

(17)

Simik Stuaqpakmi ittuq  
Simik stuaq-qpak-mi it-tuq  
*Simik.ABS store-big-LOC be-3SG.PRES.IND*  
‘Simik is at the store’

itpalliqsuq  
it-palliq-tuq  
*be-probably-3SG.PRES.IND*  
‘he/she/it probably is’

ittuq  
it-tuq  
*be-3SG.PRES.IND*  
‘he/she/it is’

(18)

qiaruq  
qia-tuq  
cry-3SG.PRES.IND  
'he/she is crying'

(19) – no sentence

(20) – no sentence

(21)

*Simik umiaqaqpa?*  
Simik umiaq-qaq-pa  
*Simik.ABS boat-have-3SG.PRES.INT*  
'does Simik have a boat?'

*Simik umiaqaqniqsuq*  
Simik umiaq-qaq-niq-tuq  
*Simik.ABS boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Simik has a boat-*niq*'

(22)

*tainainiqsuq*  
tainait-niq-tuq  
*be.that.way-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'it is so-*niq*'

*tainnaituq*  
tainait-tuq  
*be.that.way-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'it is so'

(23)

*il̥isagnaḡniqsuḡa*  
il̥isaq-niaq-niq-tuḡa  
*study-will-niq-1SG.PRES.IND*  
'I will study-*niq*'

*il̥isagnaqtuḡa*  
il̥isaq-niaq-tuḡa  
*study-will-1SG.PRES.IND*  
'I will study'

(24)

*-niqsuq*  
*-niq-tuq*  
*-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

(25)

*Nancy tuyuqniqsuaq*  
Nancy tuyuq-niq-tuaq  
*Nancy.ABS write-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'Nancy wrote a letter-*niq*'

*Nancy tuyuqtuaq*  
Nancy tuyuq-tuaq  
*Nancy.ABS write-3SG.PST.IND*  
'Nancy wrote a letter'

(26)

*sanatuniqsuq*  
sana-tu-niq-tuq  
*carve-good.at-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she is good at carving-*niq*'

*sanatumaruq*  
sana-tu-sima-tuq  
*carve-good.at-PERF-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she is good at carving-*sima*'

(27)

*tainnaituq*

*tainait-tuq*

*be.that.way-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘it is that way’

*tainainiqsuq*

*tainait-niq-tuq*

*be.that.way-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘it is that way-niq’

(28)

*nakuuruq*

*nakuu-tuq*

*be.good-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘he/she is good’

*nakuuniquq*

*nakuu-niq-tuq*

*be.good-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘he/she is good-niq’

(29)

*ii umiaqaḡniqsuq*

*ii umiaq-qaq-niq-tuq*

*yes boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘yes, he/she has a boat-niq’

*ii umiaqaqtuq*

*ii umiaq-qaq-tuq*

*yes boat-have-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘yes, he/she has a boat’

(30)

*tainainiqsuq*

*tainait-niq-tuq*

*be.that.way-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘it is so-niq’

*tainnaituq*

*tainait-tuq*

*be.that.way-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘it is so’

(31)

*qianiqsut*

*qia-niq-tut*

*cry-3PL.PRES.IND*

‘they are crying’

(32)

*Simik qamutitallava?*

*Simik qamutitaq-lla-pa*

*Simik.ABS drive.car-can-3SG.INT*

‘can Simik drive a car?’

*ii Simik qamutitallaruq*

*ii Simik qamutitaq-lla-tuq*

*yes Simik.ABS drive.car-can-3SG.IND*

‘yes, Simik can drive’

*qamutitalluiniqsuq*

*qamutitaq-lla-ui-niq-tuq*

*drive.car-can-NEG-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘he can’t drive a car-niq’

*Simik qamutitaluichuq*

*Simik qamutitaq-lla-ui-tuq*

*Simik.ABS drive.car-can-NEG-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘Simik can’t drive a car’

(33)

*umiaqāniqsuq*

umiaq-qaq-niq-tuq

*boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘he/she has a boat-*niq*’

(34)

*ah! umiaqāniqsuq*

ah! umiaq-qaq-niq-tuq

*ah boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘ah! he has a boat-*niq*’

(35)

*Peter umiaqāniqpa?*

Peter umiaq-qaq-niq-pa

*Peter.ABS boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.INT*

‘does Peter have a boat-*niq*?’

*Peter umiaqaqpa?*

Peter umiaq-qaq-pa

*Peter.ABS boat-have-3SG.PRES.INT*

‘does Peter have a boat?’

(36)

*Simik qamutitallava?*

Simik qamutitaq-lla-pa

*Simik.ABS drive.car-can-3SG.INT*

‘can Simik drive a car?’

*Ii Simik qamutitallaruq*

ii Simik qamutitaq-lla-tuq

*yes Simik.ABS drive.car-can-3SG.IND*

‘yes, Simik can drive

*qamutitalluiniqsuq*

qamutitaq-lla-ui-niq-tuq

*drive.car-can-NEG-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘he can’t drive a car-*niq*’

*Simik qamutitaluichuq*

Simik qamutitaq-lla-ui-tuq

*Simik.ABS drive.car-can-NEG-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘Simik can’t drive a car’

(37)

*umiaqāniqsuq*

umiaq-qaq-niq-tuq

*boat-have-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘he/she has a boat-*niq*’

(38)

*umiuiñiqsuq*

umiaq-niq-tuq

*boat-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*

‘he/she does not have a boat-*niq*’

(39)

*nagliksaanĩñĩiqsuk ukuak*  
nagliksaaq-it-niq-tuk u-kuak  
*suffer-NEG-niq-3DU.PRES.IND PROX.DEM-DU*  
'they(dual) do not suffer'

*nagliksaanichuk ukuak,*  
nagliksaaq-it-tuk u-kuak  
*suffer-NEG-3DU.PRES.IND PROX.DEM-DU*  
'they are not suffering these two'

(40)

*oh, miquǵuiñĩqsuq*  
oh miquq-ui-niq-tuq  
*oh sew-NEG-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'Oh, she is not sewing-*niq*'

(41)

*paamǵuǵniqsuaq*  
paamǵuǵ-niq-tuaq  
*crawl-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she was crawling-*niq*'

(42)

*miquqtutin*  
miqiq-tutin  
*sew-2SG.PRES.IND*  
'you are sewing'

*miquǵniqsutin*  
miqiq-niq-tutin  
*sew-niq-2SG.PRES.IND*  
'you are sewing-*niq*'

(43)

*miquǵniqsutin*  
miquq-niq-tutin  
*sew-niq-2SG.PRES.IND*  
'you are sewing-*niq*'

*asraa, miquqpin*  
asraa, miqiq-tutin  
PART *sew-2SG.PRES.IND*  
'you are sewing'

(44)

*miquǵniqsutin*  
miquq-niq-tutin  
*sew-niq-2SG.PRES.IND*  
'you are sewing-*niq*'

*miquqtutin*  
miquq-tutin  
*sew-2SG.PRES.IND*  
'you are sewing'

(45)

*tiḡmiruaq uvlaapak*  
tiḡmi-tuaq uvlaa-pak  
*fly- 3SG.PST.IND morning-during*  
'it flew this morning'

*tiḡminiqsuaq uvlaapak*  
tiḡmi-niq-tuaq uvlaa-pak  
*fly-niq-3SG.PST.IND morning-during*  
'it was flying this morning-*niq*'

(46)

piłaiñaniqsuaq  
piłaiña-niq-tuaq  
*tired-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she was tired-*niq*'

(47)

Utqiaġviksuaq  
Utqiaġvik-tuaq  
*Barrow-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she/it went/came to Barrow'

Utqiaġviġniqsuaq  
Utqiaġvik-tuaq  
*Barrow-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she/it went/came to Barrow-*niq*'

(48)

iġġitigun tiñminiqsuq  
iġġi-tigun tiñmi-niq-tuq  
*mountains-VIA fly-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'it is flying through the mountains-*niq*'

iġġitigun tiñmiruq  
iġġi-tigun tiñmi-tuq  
*mountains-VIA fly-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'it is flying through the mountains'

(49)

Kiñakiaq kukiuraa  
kiña-kiaq kuki-*raa*  
*who-I.wonder cook 3SGsubj.3SGobj.PRES.IND*  
'I wonder who is cooking'

Peter kukiuniqsuq  
Peter kuki-niq-tuq  
*Peter.ABS cook-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Peter is cooking-*niq*'

(50)

kiñakiaq igamava  
kiña-kiaq iga-sima-pa  
*who-I.wonder cook-sima.3SG.PRES.IND*  
'I wonder who is cooking-*sima*'

Peter iganiqsuq  
Peter iga-niq-tuq  
*Peter.ABS cook-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Peter is cooking-*niq*'

(51) – no sentence

(52)

summava?  
su-sima-pa  
*what-sima-3SG.PRES.INT*  
'what is he/she doing-*sima*'

sunniqpa?  
su-niq-pa  
*what-niq-3SG.PRES.INT*  
'what is he/she doing-*niq*'

*iganiqsuq*  
iga-niq-tuq  
*cook-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he/she is cooking-*niq*'

*igamaruq*  
iga-sima-tuq  
*cook-sima-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he/she is cooking-*sima*'

(53)

iganiqsuq. Iganiqsuq Simik!  
iga-niq-tuq                      iga-niq-tuq                      Simik  
*cook-niq-3SG.PRES.IND cook-niq-3SG.PRES.IND Simik.ABS*  
'he is cooking-*niq*. Simik is cooking-*niq*'

Simik iganiqsuq  
Simik            iga-niq-tuq  
*Simik.ABS cook-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Simik is cooking-*niq*'

Simik igaruq  
Simik            iga-tuq  
*Simik.ABS cook-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Simik is cooking'

(54)

Kiña igava  
kina iga-pa  
*who cook-3SG.INT*  
'who is cooking?'

Simik iganiqsuq  
Simik            iga-niq-tuq  
*Simik.ABS cook-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Simik is cooking-*niq*'

Simik igaruq  
Simik            iga-tuq  
*Simik.ABS cook-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Simik is cooking'

(55)

Simik iganiqsuq  
Simik            iga-niq-tuq  
*Simik.ABS cook-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Simik is cooking-*niq*'

Simik igaruq  
Simik            iga-tuq  
*Simik.ABS cook-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Simik is cooking'

(56)

paniksik qanuritpa?  
panik-sik                      qanuq-it-pa  
*daughter.2DU.POSS how-be-INT*  
'how is your daughter?'

niginiqsuq  
niği-niq-tuq  
*eat-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he/she is eating-*niq*'

nigiruuq  
niği-tuq  
*eat-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he/she is eating'

nakuuruq, nigiruuq  
nakuu-tuq                      niği-tuq  
*be.good.3SG.PRES.IND eat-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he/she is good, he/she is eating'

(57)

*piłaiņaniqsuaq*  
piłaiņa-niq-tuaq  
*tired-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she was tired-*niq*'

(58)

piłaiñaniqsuq  
piłaiña-niq-tuq  
*tired-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he/she is tired-*niq*'

Fred piłaiñaruq  
Fred piłaiña-tuq  
*Fred.ABS tired-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'Fred is tired'

(59)

*Simik paammaksimaruq uvlaapak*  
Simik paammak-sima-tuaq uvlaa-pak  
*Simik.ABS crawl-sima-3SG.PST.IND morning-during*  
'Simik was crawling this morning-*sima*'

*Simik paammakniqsuaq uvlaapak*  
Simik paammak-niq-tuaq uvlaa-pak  
*Simik.ABS crawl-niq-3SG.PST.IND morning-during*  
'Simik was crawling this morning-*niq*'

(60)

*tuyukniqsuaq*  
tuyuq-niq-tuaq  
*write-niq-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she wrote letter-*niq*'

*tuyuktuaq*  
tuyuq-tuaq  
*write-3SG.PST.IND*  
'he/she wrote letter'

(61)

*qamutitaluiniqsuq*  
qamutitaq-lla-ui-niq-tuq  
*drive.car-can-NEG-niq-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he is not a very good driver-*niq*'

*qamutitaluichuq*  
qamutitaq-lla-ui-tuq  
*drive.car-can-NEG-3SG.PRES.IND*  
'he is not a very good driver'



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