

# ENGLISH-ESKIMO AND ESKIMO-ENGLISH VOCABULARIES: SPECIAL INSIGHT INTO LATE 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY ALASKAN ESKIMOS

RENATA ŠAMO

Faculty of Arts, Juraj Dobriča University Pula

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This paper focuses on the *English-Eskimo and Eskimo-English Vocabularies*,<sup>1</sup> published by the Government Printing Office in Washington, D.C. in 1890, which appeared with the general aim to motivate a wider range of people to learn about the Arctic Eskimos and make communication with them easier, but it was initially designed as a handbook for Alaskan school teachers. Although the publication can be approached from different perspectives, allowing many interpretations, the current author emphasizes the crucial circumstances under which it was produced, simultaneously drawing special attention to the existence of Eskaleut languages.

Keywords: Eskimo-Aleut or Inuit-Yupik-Unangan language family, i.e. Eskaleut languages, Alaska, ethnographical insight, English-Eskimo and Eskimo-English entries

## LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

One of the most intriguing questions in linguistics has been whether language shapes culture or vice versa, specifically studied within the branch called ethnolinguistics (Underhill 2012; Tusting 2019), which is sometimes considered to be a part of anthropological linguistics (Foley 1997; Enfield, Kockelman and Sidnell 2014) due to some overlaps with it.<sup>2</sup> The crucial difference between them, however, lies in the fact that the former deals with

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<sup>1</sup> A copy is available at the Library of the University Juraj Dobriča of Pula (see the Marine Library publications, no. 10.143).

<sup>2</sup> The current paper is largely based on the presentation given at the International Scientific Meeting in Honour of Professor Goran Filipi (1954–2021), which was held in Bale/Pula (Croatia), in October 2022.

the interrelation between a language and the cultural behaviour of its users, whereas the latter usually focuses on languages with no written records.

Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803) and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) were among the first scholars posing the given question about language patterns *versus* cultural patterns / cultural patterns *versus* language patterns, along with their followers in the idealist-romanticist tradition (one language = one folk = one nation), mostly in Germany (Kramsch 2007: 236). Fresh investigation impetus in this direction was given much later upon the discovery of a range of structurally different languages and cultures of the American Indians. In the United States, anthropologists, primarily Franz Boas (1911), initiated studies into the American Indian cultures and languages, so American linguistics is usually said to be highly anthropological at its very beginning. During the 1920s and 1930s there appeared a popular proposal of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, named after the famous American anthropological linguist Edward Sapir (1921) and his student Benjamin Lee Whorf (1956), who claimed that the Hopi Native Americans in Arizona viewed the world differently from those who spoke European languages, which was noticeable, e.g., in their treatment of time. They did not think of time in amounts (a week, Sunday, five days, etc.), and that is why their Hopi language did not consist of terms equivalent to our time (clock and calendar) words and phrases. Moreover, Hopi grammar treats animacy differently, referring to stones and clouds, for instance, as living entities, so they put them in the “animate” category. Sapir and Whorf also noticed that Aztec had just one term for concepts such as snow, cold and ice, whereas Eskimo (today Inuit)<sup>3</sup> used many words (presumably up to 50) for snow. Even today this is one of the most frequent examples when it comes to languages used by the Eskimo and Aleut people. The truth is that they have 4 or 5 simple stems referring to snow, but their languages are polysynthetic, which means that many derivational affixes are added to stems, making them expanded (Fortescue 2017) and, as a consequence, providing different ways of expressing concepts they need in their everyday communication. In comparison, Croatian is said to have a smaller number of words for snow, although still a surprising one. It does not mean, however, that Eskimo speakers are much better at segmenting and expressing reality, so Stjepan Babić (1982: 60–62) concludes that certain specific features of snow seem to be more important to the Eskimos, and they simply need special words for them much more than we do.

In linguistics, the idea of language structure having an influence on how people perceive the world is termed “linguistic relativity or relativism” and is generally presented as a weak version according to which language influences cognition and thought. Its strong version, “linguistic determinism”, supports the idea of thought being determined by language. In other words, language determines how a speaker interprets and articulates experience

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<sup>3</sup> Eskimo (“eaters of raw meat”) was long used to refer to Inuit (“the real people” or “the human beings”), but now it is considered pejorative and offensive, although in linguistics the term such as the Eskimo-Aleut language family is still officially used.

(Yule 2020: 314). Despite controversies over its general validity (Mathiot 1979; Pinker 1994), the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis saw a renewed interest from cognitive psycholinguists and others in the late 1980s and 1990s (e.g., Lakoff 1987; Duranti and Goodwin 1992; Gumperz and Levinson 1996; Duranti 1997; Pavlenko 1999; Niemeier and Dirven 2000), so that such approaches are sometimes called cognitive ethnolinguistics (Bartmiński and Zinken 2012). It should be noted that nowadays the weak version has largely remained accepted, in comparison to the strong version, which has been discarded mostly for three reasons: (1) translation is possible among languages, (2) bilingual and multilingual speakers can use various languages without being dictated by the habits of any speech community, and (3) speakers are getting increasingly diverse in speech communities across the world. As Claire Kramsch (2007: 239) quite rightly explains, all speakers of a language cannot be expected to think in the same way.

Another language-related discipline, known as field linguistics (Crowley 2007; Munro in Aronoff and Rees-Miller 2017: 57–73), has become more and more popular among researchers who are predominantly interested in collecting primary data on the key grammatical features of a usually understudied language from its native speakers in their natural environments (informants), as well as in analysing and disseminating such data. Although focusing on the grammatical aspect of language, this stream of research cannot exclude the cultural aspects of language use since language and culture (as well as thought) are interrelated, contributing to the construction of identity at both levels – individual and collective (Riley 2007).

Indeed, linguists usually approach language as a cultural phenomenon since it can play an important role in how humans perceive the world. For example, the phrase “women are as good as men at driving”, seemingly rather harmless at first, can reveal a kind of sexism implying that being good at driving is more natural and common for men than women. Culture and language share human beliefs, realities and actions, which leads to their obviously inextricable relationship. Language often changes since values in a particular culture change, which means that learning a language without its culture and vice versa is not possible, and additionally suggesting that the two are reciprocally related. Ken Hale (1992) confirms that much culture is encoded in language and believes that, only because of this reason, a large part of culture even goes when a language is lost. Both culture and language are in a constant process of development, but at the same time they both help people look back in history. Language certainly allows us to communicate our own and other culture(s), so (cross-)cultural awareness represents the concept which appears to be an essential part of the non-native language learning process (Kavakli 2020).

The current paper focuses on the example of *in loco* research<sup>4</sup> as presented in the *English-Eskimo and Eskimo-English Vocabularies* (1890), emphasizing the wider circum-

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<sup>4</sup> Important note: the current author did not conduct her own *in loco* research, but analyses the publication that had largely resulted from *in loco* research by the USS *Thetis* interpreter and some of the other crew members (see below).

stances under which the relevant data were collected, as well as drawing attention to the Eskaleut languages.

## GENERAL BACKGROUND

The first edition<sup>5</sup> of the *English-Eskimo and Eskimo-English Vocabularies* was published by the Government Printing Office in Washington, D.C. in 1890 as a result of the compilation by Ensign<sup>6</sup> Roger Wells, Jr. and John W. Kelly, the interpreter on the US *Thetis* navy ship. Its publication was approved by the Bureau of Education (circular of information no. 2), i.e., the body responsible for supervising education in Alaska at the time. The inside cover page additionally reveals that the vocabularies themselves are preceded by Kelly's ethnographical memoranda concerning the Arctic Eskimos in Alaska and Siberia, suggesting to readers that this is much more than “just a collection of entries”, so they can expect useful insights into these interesting ethnic groups as known in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

To make the whole context more understandable, it should be clarified that Alaska (*alaxsxa*, “great land or mainland” in Unangan, see below) became an American territory due to the 1867 Treaty of Cessions,<sup>7</sup> which had declared its transfer from the Russian Empire, gradually ending the Russian efforts to expand trade and settlements to the Pacific coast of North America, which actually started in 1725 when Peter the Great had dispatched Vitus Jonassen Bering (1681–1741) to explore the Alaskan coast (notably rich in natural resources and lightly populated). This decision consequently enabled the US to become powerful in the Asia-Pacific region, although in the first three decades following the purchase (at the price of 2 cents per acre), Alaska was not of great importance to the US. It was initially governed under military, naval or Treasury rule but, in 1884, a civil government was finally constituted. The US became aware of its true importance in 1896, when a major gold deposit was discovered in the Yukon Territory and, especially, in World War II when Alaska was considered to be significant in strategic terms. Alaska became the 49<sup>th</sup> state on 3 January 1959 (Cohen 1996). Its capital city is Juneau, although Anchorage is the largest. According to the 2022 census data, Alaska has 733,391 inhabitants, representing one of the youngest populations of any US state, with a median age of 35.5.<sup>8</sup>

The languages spoken not just in Alaska, but all the way from Greenland to the Russian Far East, belong to the Eskimo-Aleut (EA) language family; nowadays they are increasingly called the Inuit (ex-Eskimo)-Yupik-Unangan (a self-name for the Aleut people)<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> 72 pages in total, 22 x 14 cm.

<sup>6</sup> An officer of the lowest rank in the US Navy.

<sup>7</sup> The formal transfer of Alaska took place on 18 October 1867 due to the purchase for \$7.2 million dollars.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.populationu.com/us/alaska-population>.

<sup>9</sup> The Russians used the term Aleut for the people who called themselves Unangan.

language family or Eskaleut languages. This language family unsurprisingly consists of two distinct branches, Eskimo and Aleut, which are presumed to have diverged 4,000 years ago (Frawley 2003), if not even earlier. Anna Berge (2009: 371), having in mind the great linguistic diversity on the Alaskan side, explicitly mentions Alaska as the place where this two-part differentiation actually occurred. Since the EA languages descended from the Proto-Eskimo language, they are genetically related, that is, they share structural characteristics, but this does not necessarily imply a strikingly close structural resemblance (e.g., English and Croatian have the same ancestor, Proto-Indo-European, but a different morphological structure). While Aleut represents a single language with two surviving dialects, Eskimo includes at least two subgroups or divisions, Yupik (in Siberia and SW Alaska) and Inuit (northern Alaska, Canada and Greenland). In comparison to Yupik, Inuit (actually, a continuum of dialects, although the differences between eastern and western varieties are substantial today, so there is a problem of mutual understanding between the extremes of the continuum) is considered a single language with many (sub)dialects. Despite differences in phonology and the lexicon rather than in syntax, it is possible to identify certain common EA features (Bergsland 2022). First, these languages have three vowels noted as *a*, *i* and *u*, in simple, short and combined, long forms. Their number of consonants is considerable, e.g., in the Eskimo language it ranges from 13 to 27. They are all polysynthetic languages which means that they have many suffixes, making their long words often equivalent to complete sentences in analytic languages. Furthermore, they all have a great number of demonstratives (about 30). Their characteristic word order is S – O – V. Due to considerable (post-)colonial effects, all of them contain borrowed words from the respective languages, although Aleut and Yupik have a greater number of mostly recent loanwords from Russian, when compared to Inuit. These are not the only characteristics they share, but represent the most obvious and, consequently, the most frequently mentioned ones. To sum up, this is one of the most geographically spread language families in the world, and cannot be related to any other language family, including ours (Indo-European, IE), despite certain attempts in this direction (e.g., studies with the speakers of the North American indigenous languages, showing an absence of the B blood type which was found in the Inuit people).

## ENGLISH-ESKIMO AND ESKIMO-ENGLISH VOCABULARIES

The publication analysed here includes the following: a letter of transmittal, an introductory note, a sketch map of Alaska (furnished by the US Coast and Geodetic Survey), a map presenting tribal boundaries of the Arctic Eskimo in Alaska in 1889, memoranda concerning the Arctic Eskimos in Alaska and Siberia, Anglo-Eskimo Vocabulary, and Eskimo-English Vocabulary. Each of the textual parts will be presented in more detail with an emphasis on the ethnographical memoranda, though. This paper, thus, aims to provide answers to the following research questions: (1) what are the circumstances under which

the publication resulted; (2) what is the main purpose of producing the publication; and (3) what are the crucial perspectives from which the publication can be studied?

## THE LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Dated 10 March 1890, the one-page letter was written by W. T. Harris, the Commissioner and the Secretary of the Interior (signed as “your obedient servant”), to the Department of the Interior, specifically to the Bureau of Education, providing essential information. First, the sender recognizes his feeling of honour to transmit an English-Eskimo vocabulary with 11,318 words and recommends its publication of 10,000 copies to be used by Alaskan teachers as a handbook. Afterwards, he mentions the introductory note (see below) and then explains how valuable he truly considers the manuscript. Here, we find out that the Bureau of Education is responsible for supervising education in Alaska, so he writes to them, adding that the publication should encourage people to learn more about “the native races of that territory” (p. 3) and, thus, to enable easier communication with them. Although he primarily targets teachers as its users, he also considers the publication useful for US Navy officers and those of the Revenue Marine<sup>10</sup> service, all Government officials in Alaska, Congress committees in visit to this country, and all others who may be interested in learning the Eskimo language – no matter for what purpose. Moreover, he mentions the earnest request of the Superintendent of the Census Office to have a publication that could support their activities, as well. In the last paragraph, W. T. Harris somewhat tactfully states that expenses for the publication are not expected to be high, suggesting that these can be covered by the fund, the main task of which is to provide education to children in Alaska “without distinction of race” (p. 3).

## THE INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The following one-page introductory note was signed by Charles H. Stockton, the US Navy Lieutenant Commander, on 17 February 1890. He is mentioned in the letter of transmittal (see above) as the one who gifted the manuscript to the Department of the Interior, having realised its great importance beforehand. As a commander of the USS *Thetis*, he first informs readers that his ship was sent by the Navy Department to cruise, in the summer and autumn of 1889, in the Behring (Bering) Sea and the Arctic Ocean, in search of American whaling and commercial interests, as well as to help the foundation of a house of refuge at the northernmost territory called Point Barrow. In the central passage, Stockton refers to the sources of the materials and the circumstances of the compilation since the crew members were instructed to prepare reports on various aspects of the territory

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<sup>10</sup> Established in 1790, it later became the Revenue Cutter Service, to enforce maritime laws.

they visited. Two reports were, therefore, submitted to him, one by John W. Kelly covering the ethnography of the Eskimos of NW Alaska and the other by Ensign Roger Wells, Jr. who prepared an Eskimo vocabulary which was actually based on data collected by Kelly, the interpreter of the ship, since he had spent three winters with the NW Eskimos and tried to learn the Eskimo language for seven years (with several interruptions). Stockton clearly states that the presented vocabulary is the largest, as far as it is known to him, and includes the language used by Eskimos along their Arctic coast although he particularly refers to a short vocabulary of the American Eskimos on the Asian side of the Bering Sea, which he believes could be valuable. In the last section Stockton expresses hope that the manuscript, resulting from committed crew cooperation, will be of permanent interest to the general readership, expanding their knowledge of Alaska.

## MEMORANDA CONCERNING THE ARCTIC ESKIMOS IN ALASKA AND SIBERIA

There is no doubt that this represents the most intriguing part of the publication. Its author is John W. Kelly, but it was revised and edited by Sheldon Jackson, D.D., the US General Agent of Education in Alaska. Including 21 printed pages in total (pp. 7–28), the memoranda are divided into several sections of various length (from one paragraph to three pages) dealing with the following: location, Siberian Eskimos, Eskimos in Arctic Alaska (Kavea tribe, Tigara mutes,<sup>11</sup> Kinegan mutes, colonies of outlaws, tribes dying out, Point Barrow, Nooatoks), personal appearance, ornamentation, dress, character, customs, courtship and marriage, polygamy, diseases, shamans, religious beliefs and superstitions, festivities, hunting, dressing skins, dwellings, and boats. These are preceded by a brief introductory legend (1.5 page) which poetically describes how the Eskimos appeared in the distant “dim” past, what they first looked like, how day and night as powerful spirits affected the world and even changed the physical appearance of the Eskimos, how they began wandering across the country and then decided to settle down but, after some time, many returned to the home country with just a brother and sister left; however, after one quarrel, he killed her to be constantly followed by her spirit wherever he would go. It is worth noting that this introduction starts with a strong idea about the Eskimos on the Arctic coast of Alaska being “indigenous to the country in which they live” (p. 7). Finishing the entire memoranda, Sheldon Jackson includes a Note on Eskimo Bibliography (1798–1884/1885) in which he refers to some unpublished manuscripts with word lists, printed reports concerning Arctic explorations, dictionaries to be released soon, etc. To show how the Eskimos were really perceived by the Americans, we briefly refer to each of the above-mentioned sections.

<sup>11</sup> *Mutes, tribes, natives, and peoples* are used interchangeably.

## Location, Inhabitants and Dialects

What is clarified initially in the memoranda is the location where Eskimos could be found at the time, including the entire Arctic coast of Alaska and a part of the Siberian coast. Next, special attention is given to different ethnic groups, including both the Siberian and Eskimos in Arctic Alaska. Being in focus, the latter are classified into three main groups: (1) the Kavea tribe (once great, but in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century almost non-existent because of a lack of game, that had been killed or driven away, with a very small number of surviving members across the area of Arctic Alaska), (2) the Tigara mutes (inhabiting Point Hope, which was seen as the centre of power due to its ideal conditions for whaling, sealing, and walrusing, so that a San Francisco firm established a whaling station there in 1887), (3) the Kinegan mutes (inhabiting the Cape Prince of Wales, they experienced the height of their power around 1860, but also its fall). Apart from them, other inhabitants are briefly described, such as the ones in the colonies of outlaws (e.g., Arctic Ishmaelites known as Kevalinyes) as well as tribes who were dying out at the time (e.g., Ootookas of the Ice Cape with just one hut). A section is devoted to Point Barrow, where people enjoyed favourable conditions for catching whales and killing deer, so its territory had around as many as 500 inhabitants. The last group of inhabitants, the Nooatoks, are presented as the “timber people” (p. 14), who were about to overrun the whole country (their stronghold was precisely Point Barrow). This section is the only one where there is any direct reference to the principal dialects used by the Arctic Alaskan people; these are divided into Old Eskimo and Mixed Eskimo, with three additional classifications in each depending on areas where they were actually spoken. A few examples are provided to illustrate variations in different localities, such as the word for MOON: *Abaetoktuk* (St. Lawrence Sound), *Amalitik* (Diomedes), *Amaloktuk* (Nooatok), and *Amala* (MacKenzie River) (p. 14). It is explicitly mentioned that many synonymous terms made the Eskimo language(s) so difficult to understand (e.g., six terms used by a single tribe for the same thing).

## Physical Appearance, Ornamentation and Clothing

The memoranda then describe the crucial traits of Alaskan Eskimos according to three types, as follows: (1) tall and underweight natives on the coast, always with “a hungry look” (p. 15), (2) tall, strong and courageous natives “of a splendid physique that would be remarkable in any part of the world” (p. 15) living in the mountains (the Nooatoks), and (3) short and stumpy natives. It seems that all of them liked being ornamented, for instance, at the age from 16 to 22, males usually had their lower lips pierced under each corner of the mouth for labrets, while some old people especially known for their successful record as whalers tattooed cheeks with either a triangular or a rectangular design. Girls usually pierced ears in their thinnest parts to be able to wear ivory earrings, whereas women generally tattooed their chins. Their clothes items were mainly made of water-proof seal skins



to be necessarily replaced by reindeer skins in summertime, while old people additionally wore warm duck-skin items. Making clothes was expectedly the women's business in wintertime, but when snow started melting, they would repair garments only if highly needed.

## Character and Customs

As for the character of the Alaskan Eskimos, first it can be read that “they are intelligent beyond what might be expected of them, and have good natural abilities” (p. 17), anxious to adopt the methods of white people, good at wood or ivory carving with “grotesque and hideous” pictures used to show events in their life and, thus, communicate with each other, while the pictures of Westerners were not understandable to them at all. Also, they are seen as very selfish people who would surely expect a double reward as soon as possible, although they are also described as very honest people, hardly prone to steal anything. Even when they stole just a small-value trinket, they could not keep it a secret. Naturally, they are presented as being skilful in hunting, fishing, sealing and shore-whaling. Finally, readers can find out that the Eskimos appreciated no feature that is (was) generally ascribed to white people. They had a custom to give their children from two to six names, those of ancestors (not parents) or distinguished relatives, referring to foxes, seals, birds, winds, tides, etc. Individuals with special needs, although scarcely found among the Eskimos, would eat only leftovers and have worn-out garments, but they were “permitted to live, contrary to what might be expected of these people” (p. 18). All births, as well as deaths, took place in “out-houses”.

## Courtship, Marriage and Polygamy

Even at first glance, the section about courtship and marriage seems very interesting not just because of the issues described, but also because it contains three “love songs”, short poems that Kelly translated into English. In the first paragraph it is initially said that girls reached puberty at the age of thirteen, but after that they had no protection (not even from parents or siblings), so that anyone could easily hurt them. Usually modest and quiet by nature, girls also furiously fought when attacked, trying to protect themselves after the initial shock. Upon finding a husband, a woman was rarely exposed to violence. A man started his courtship by offering a woman some delicious food (body parts of reindeer and seal) or a cloak. When she accepted gifts, she was obviously willing to take him for her husband, but she usually showed reluctance by rejecting the gifts, even preferring something else to what had been offered. However, after such a decision, she was not in a good position because she became unprotected again for days and months before the man finally gave the marriage up. When she agreed without any hesitation, the relationship was hardly permanent, though. Wives generally tended to be loyal to their husbands,

but unfortunately their husbands often forced them into prostituting with whalers to ensure revenue for the household, or they simply liked to exchange their wives for a season. Maternity could be a huge burden in women's lives, so it was not uncommon for them to kill unborn babies, which was often done secretly. If a husband had discovered this, he would beat a wife up and finally threw her out. Without being able to cope with their life conditions, women also committed suicides by hanging themselves. Polygamy was hereditary, that is, when father had several wives, his sons had the same number, regardless of their wealth and ability to support them. Many had two wives, rarely three. There is mention of an interesting example of a Tigara group man who left as many as five wives upon his death. The first wife took all possessions for his eldest son (aged 12), completely neglecting other children and relatives.

### Diseases, Treatments and Death

Kelly continues that scrofula, diphtheria, bronchitis and pulmonary diseases were common, along with sore eyes and partial blindness caused by excessive sunray reflections on the snow from April to June. When “the white people” came, they brought syphilis, first to the coastal areas and later to the inlands, as well. Since many ethnic groups (“tribes”) accepted adultery, among themselves or with whale traders, some of the diseases quickly spread within the whole group. When fatally ill, they were carried to “the out-house” to die there; if not, they asked someone to kill them (to stab them with a knife in the breast or the temple). Upon death, first, two black stones were put on their eyes, and their bodies were wrapped up in reindeer skins with the head directed towards the east. The corpse was then laid in a box on the ground level. Family members mourned for four days, without being permitted to enter anyone's place. After the burial, natives walked around the corpse, formed a circle, dropped stones through their cloaks, and then walked back home. Sickness was generally seen as the manifestation of evil spirits or devils, and for the treatment they needed shamans (called *unutkoots*, p. 22) whose vocation was hereditary (daughters were also allowed to learn this trade, but only its basics); shamans were classified according to seven degrees, which depended on their knowledge and spiritualism. One common treatment performed by more skilful shamans, accompanied by drumming in a dark room and in presence of household members, is also described. Rheumatism, swellings (caused by fractures), or syphilis were treated with a knife cutting into the affected parts. Interestingly, shamans wore a mask or changed their voice when dealing with children to distract them and simultaneously to ease their pain.

### Religious Beliefs and Superstitions

The Eskimos believed in ghosts, and additionally supposed that souls (good, bad, angry, evil, etc.) transfer to the natural world, i.e., spirits return in animals, winds, rocks, ice and

water. They were very superstitious, and Kelly mentions, for instance, that they chanted, drummed, howled, started fires or even set graves on fire in order to change the wind. Their greatest consternation and fear was apparently caused by moon eclipses, which they related to Arctic earthquakes.

## Festal Occasions

Early December was their time of festivity, when they had much fun, every day in a different hut; in the evening they would usually assemble to dance, sometimes to complete exhaustion. Each festival day was devoted to something different, e.g., whales, reindeer, seal, whaleboats, sleds, husbands, sweethearts, and wives. Another season for entertainment came in June, when they stopped whaling and exchanged presents, gave scraps to poor people, or tossed each other up in blankets. In summertime, tribe representatives customarily paid visits to each other, so it was time for dances, wrestling matches, polo games, throwing sandballs with hands (in winter girls would kick snowballs with feet), and alike.

## Hunting and Dressing Skins

Although the Eskimos obviously knew how to get entertained during their festivities, they certainly worked hard, being mainly engaged in hunting, so Kelly provides a few paragraphs about this activity. Specifically mentioning the animals that they usually hunted (reindeer, seal, walrus, whales, birds, foxes, and lynx), he also describes the weapons that they needed for hunting (and protecting themselves) and the ways in which they generally used them. This section ends with interesting information about the Eskimos annually receiving \$30,000 worth of arms, ammunition, muslin and flour from ships in exchange for furs and whalebones. Based on what is said here, they knew how to set good prices for their goods and make most of common rivalry between traders (p. 26). Kelly then briefly explains how women “dressed” skins with the first snow.

## Dwellings and Boats

The last two sections, prior to the note on Eskimo bibliography, are about their dwellings and boats. Readers learn that the coastal people spent wintertime in underground houses in villages (protected from low temperatures and poor weather conditions), in other words, they had a sedentary way of life in this part of the year, whereas in summertime they protected themselves in deer-skin tents and often turned themselves into nomads moving to different places, even far beyond their own hunting-grounds, in order to exchange goods

with others. People from the Nooatok tribe lived in huts covered with reindeer skins and snow (in winter), and Kelly compares them to wolves since they used to follow reindeer and change places whenever the food supply was over. Eskimos also needed different kinds of boats to survive, which is shortly explained in the two final paragraphs.

## The Note on Eskimo Bibliography

This last section of the memoranda is the only one prepared by Jackson, in which he provides valuable information about some other publications and/or manuscripts, pointing out that somewhat extensive data were already collected in different languages and dialects. Based on its abundant sources and a large number of people in its data collection procedure, Jackson, for instance, first reveals his true impression of Pilling's compilation *Bibliography of the Eskimo Language*<sup>12</sup> ("very complete", as he puts it).<sup>13</sup> Jackson also refers to some of the most important vocabularies in the past (in his opinion), among which one was published in Philadelphia as early as 1798, but finishes by mentioning Turner's<sup>14</sup> work during the 1880s on the preparation of a vocabulary with over 12,000 words in different languages that was about to be published in a cooperation with the Signal Service of the US Army.

## ANGLO-ESKIMO VOCABULARY

From page 29 to page 46 there is a set of entries (equivalent to words, phrases, simple sentences), alphabetically arranged in four columns, two by two, which starts with *Abdomen* "Naz'ruk" and finishes with *Yours* "E lip'che". No other information, apart from the translations, is provided. This can be illustrated by using a few examples:

<i>Arrive</i> Te ket'py	<i>Arrived</i> Te kik'took
<i>Boy</i> Il il'e gah	<i>Boys</i> Il il e yar guk
<i>Brother, elder</i> Nugat che'a	<i>Brother, younger</i> Nook'a
<i>Find</i> Pah ket'kega	<i>Find not</i> Pat chu ang'a
<i>Going, I am</i> Ah yung ne ak'to	<i>Going, we are</i> Ah lang ne ak'to
<i>Of</i> A'go	<i>Off</i> An
<i>Not good</i> Pe'lu	<i>Not here</i> Pe'luk
<i>Sea</i> Oo na'ne	
<i>Snowing</i> Kon eek'a rah	

<sup>12</sup> Published in 1887.

<sup>13</sup> See p. 27 in the analyzed publication.

<sup>14</sup> Jackson refers to the 1882–1884 fieldwork by Lucien M. Turner (his notes and manuscripts are in the repository of the Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, DC (more information available in Heyes and Helgen 2014).

<i>Thank you</i>	Ko yan ot u'a		
<i>View</i>	Ite		
<i>Whale</i>	Ok'a wuk	<i>Whale, large</i>	Oo ching no'ak
		<i>Whale, small</i>	In u'to
<i>Woman</i>	Ok an'ok	<i>Women</i>	Ok an'ite
<i>Yes</i>	Ong ek'to		
<i>You</i>	Il'we	<i>You (familiar)</i>	Oo'ma,
<i>You are</i>	E lip'cho	<i>You have</i>	Il im'ne
		<i>You will</i>	E lip'tin, etc.

## ESKIMO-ENGLISH VOCABULARY

This is divided into two parts, Eskimo-English<sup>15</sup> Vocabulary (pp. 47–66) and Eskimo-English Vocabulary – Eskimos in Siberia from Cape Behring to East Cape (pp. 67–72). The first one is clearly more extensive, so that the given A – Y list is followed by numerals (e.g., 3 “Ping i shute”, 5 “Tal'e ma”, 7 “Tal'e ma-mal ro'nik” (5 + 2), 8 “Tal'e ma-ping i shu'nik” (5 + 3), 19 “E nu'e nok o tal'a” (20 – 1), 20 “E nu'e nok”, etc.), and geographical names (e.g., *Point Barrow* “Noo'wooh”, *Franklin Point* “At ten ok'mute”, *Point Hope* “Fig a rok”, *Kings Island* “Ov ke'vok”, *St Michaels* “Tash'uk”). The interpreter John W. Kelly, who worked on this for four years (1885 – 1889), during which he spent one whole year surrounded only by natives with no English around, finishes the list with an explanation that the given words are spelled phonetically, with the English letter-sound correspondence, so that *k* is substituted for *c* (not in *ch*, though), and *k* takes place of *q*. He also mentions that the vocabulary section was corrected and re-written every four months. To illustrate the given list, we again mention a few examples:

<i>Ab'a bah</i>	Talk	<i>Alo'a</i>	Coal
<i>Bonelek'to</i>	Leader		
<i>Che'ra</i>	What now	<i>Chy</i>	Tea
<i>Do'bra</i>	Sufficient		
<i>Eag a we'e kin</i>	Pocket		
<i>Foch i yung'or</i>	Baby deer		
<i>Ik kate'chu ru a</i>	Lazy		
<i>Kal le'ket</i>	Book		
<i>Loo'loot</i>	Web	<i>Loo loo'tuk</i>	Making web
<i>Man</i>	Here		
<i>Nook'a</i>	Brother, or sister		
<i>Ong a yo kog'ara</i>	Old animal	<i>Ong a yo kog'nek</i>	Old man
<i>Pe shook'a'wah</i>	What do you wish		
no R example;			
<i>Se'ku</i>	Ice	<i>Se ku i luk</i>	No ice
		<i>Se ku mer'uk</i>	Frozen
<i>Shu'ma</i>	What	<i>Shu ma'go</i>	What is it
<i>Te upe'tuk</i>	Tough		

<sup>15</sup> *Anglo* is obviously replaced with *English* in this list.

<i>Un'a kun</i>	Wait little while
<i>Wing ar ok'to ak</i>	Dance in honour of fiancé
<i>Yaw hoo'tet</i>	A kind of fish

What follows, as already mentioned, is a list of words and phrases used by Eskimos in Siberia, from Cape Behrens to the East Cape (first Anglo-Eskimo Vocabulary, then vice versa), which starts with *Anchor* and finishes with *Yours*; here are several other examples between the two entries:

<i>Anchor</i>	Oo u're;		
<i>Boat, open</i>	Ung'yet,	<i>Boat, closed</i>	Ky'ak
<i>Eye</i>	E'ye		
<i>How many</i>	Kap seen'a		
<i>No</i>	Wing'a		
<i>Sleep</i>	Ka'vek		
<i>You</i>	Hun		
<i>A bung'e ta</i>	Consumed		
<i>Bo'zruk</i>	Bow-head whale		
<i>E la lu ke ta</i>	Star		
<i>Hun</i>	You		
<i>Ir'ago</i>	Leg		
<i>Kan'ka</i>	Mouth		
<i>Neg'a</i>	Eat		
<i>Oo'lah</i>	Tongue		
<i>To'kok</i>	Dead		
<i>Wing'a</i>	No		
<i>Yup pa</i>	Summer		

The range of different lexical entries included in the complete publication, particularly when seen in close relation to the preceding Memoranda, on the one hand shows relatively obvious cultural elements, such as eating habits, family relations, dressing, architecture, etc. On the other, somewhat hidden cultural elements like values, beliefs, and verbal communication patterns are also given there. These vocabularies, thus, suggest the famous distinction between objective and subjective culture, which was implied by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) in their influential treatise on the society being an objective and subjective reality within which knowledge is constructed. The authors rightly emphasize that the reality of everyday life is filled with objectivations and is even possible because of them, with the human production of signs (signification) as an extremely important case of objectivation. In comparison to other objectivations, a sign is used to represent an index of subjective meanings, the authors further claim. Language is traditionally defined as a system of signs, moreover, the most important sign system the human society has invented. Understanding language becomes crucial for understanding any reality of everyday life. Speaking about culture which consists of “objects” of a society, it is also represented by language which predominantly serves a society, that is, the people sharing a common culture to interpret, mediate and record (their) cultural elements. In this

way, language turns into cumulated practices embedded in a given environment, so its use is influenced by inherent social context(s), simultaneously pointing out that language is not only a means of communication, as is commonly emphasized, but much more than that. These lexical items, directly related to the existential conditions of the Eskimo-Aleut people, to the life principles they cherished, and to the perceptions of the world they developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, therefore, shed light on their reality; but in a specific way they also clarify the context and purposes of their collection itself. However, the main aim here is not to provide deeper lexical insights, which may be considered a limitation of this research, but not a critical one, given that a separate study using the same approach may be recommended.

## CONCLUSION

Starting from the research questions and taking into account the wider context in which the *English-Eskimo and Eskimo-English Vocabularies* (1890) was produced, along with its main purposes, it can be concluded that the publication opens a space for a variety of interpretations among which the following ones may be crucial: (1) linguistic, since it draws our attention to the lesser known Eskimo-Aleut or Inuit-Yupik-Unangan language family; (2) ethnographic and ethnolinguistic, as it raises interest in this unique ethnography along with its specific *in loco* linguistic data collection; (3) historical and socio-political, due to an emphasis on a wide range of conditions of its compilation, preparation for publication, and proposed use; (4) educational, because it recognizes the importance of learning languages for various purposes (commercial, administrative, military, diplomatic, etc.). Using this source which dates back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, we are quite aware of its real potential for further investigations into these ethnic groups beyond their past, on the way to a better understanding of their present and future, which could be recommended as a follow-up study.

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## **ENGLJSKO-ESKIMSKI I ESKIMSKO-ENGLJSKI RJEČNICI: POSEBAN POGLED NA ALJAŠKE ESKIME S KRAJA 19. STOLJEĆA**

U središtu je razmatranja *Englesko-eskimski i eskimsko-engleski rječnik* [*English-Eskimo and Eskimo-English Vocabularies*] što ga je Središnji ured za tisak objavio 1890. godine u Washingtonu kako bi motivirao širi krug ljudi na učenje o Eskimima na Aljasci i tako im olakšao komunikaciju s njima, ali je prvotno sastavljen kao udžbenik za potrebe nastavnika u školama na Aljasci. Premda se navedeni izvor može analizirati s različitih stajališta, omogućujući pritom niz tumačenja, autorica u ovom radu posebno ističe ključne okolnosti iz kojih je isti proizišao i ujedno usmjerava pozornost znanstvenika na eskaleutske jezike.

Ključne riječi: eskimsko-aleutska ili inuitsko-jupiško-unanganska jezična porodica, tj. eskaleutski jezici, Aljaska, etnografski uvid, natuknice u Englesko-eskimskom i eskimsko-engleskom rječniku