

## Skill-check HW #2 | Inuktitut and phonological features

For this assignment, your goal is to demonstrate your understanding of:

- how to justify introducing a new feature into the feature model
- how to use phonological evidence to determine feature values

This data set is from Inuktitut (an Eskimo-Aleut language spoken in Greenland).

*Some notes:*

- The same data set is used for Skill Check HW #1.
- These IPA symbols may be unfamiliar to you: [q ɣ]. Use the [IPA chart](#) linked from the LING 200 course page to see how these consonants are described in terms of their phonetic properties.

[ ivnaq ]	'bluff'	[ qasaloq ]	'bark'
[ iperaq ]	'harpoon strap'	[ ikusik ]	'elbow'
[ imaq ]	'sea'	[ qilaluvaq ]	'white whale'
[ tuluvaq ]	'raven'	[ qatigak ]	'back'
[ itumaq ]	'palm of hand'	[ sakiak ]	'rib'
[ sava ]	'sheep'	[ ugsik ]	'cow'
[ nuna ]	'land'	[ orpik ]	'tree'
[ nanoq ]	'bear'	[ nerdloq ]	'goose'
[ iseraq ]	'ankle'	[ marraq ]	'clay'
[ sermeq ]	'glacier'	[ iga ]	'pot'

- (1) Use our feature model (see handout "[Phonological features: Basic model](#)" and worksheet "[Feature charts](#)") to **attempt to describe** [q] and [ɣ], using as few features as possible while still distinguishing them from the other consonants of Inuktitut as seen in the data set. You will discover that this is possible for one of [q] or [ɣ], but impossible for the other one! **Use features to uniquely describe** the one that works, and **explain what the problem is** for the one that does not work.
- (2) Some phonologists have proposed that a difference between the class of segments that includes [q] and [ɣ], and the class of segment(s) that is causing problems in question (1), can be modeled by extending the feature [±back] to consonants. Other phonologists have proposed that we should use the feature [±high] for this purpose instead. Which of these proposals is supported by the facts of Inuktitut? Why? Make an argument based on evidence from this data set. (*Hint: If you haven't completed Skill Check HW #1, you might want to take a look there for inspiration.*)