No longer gathering dust

The role of digital repatriation in supporting traditional language and culture

Gary Holton, Stacey Baldridge, and Wendy Camber
*Alaska Native Language Archive*
Overview

• Alaska Native languages
• The Alaska Native Language Archive
• Toward digital repatriation: digital resources at ANLA
• Beyond language: cultural resource documentation at ANLA
• Digital transformation: new ways of using ANLA resources
• Collaboration: Community Language Archives
Alaska Native Languages
Alaska Native Language Archive

- Founded in 1972 as part of the Alaska Native Language Center, but collection dates to 1960
- Housed at the University of Alaska Fairbanks; administered jointly by the Rasmuson Library and the College of Liberal Arts
- Comprehensive coverage of Alaska’s 20 Native languages: copies of nearly everything written in or about Alaska Native languages
- Also, significant collections on related languages in Russia and Canada
- Emphasis on preservation of intellectual content rather than physical medium
ANLA Resources

~ 1500 linear ft. manuscripts, including nearly everything written in or about Alaska Native languages

~ 5000 recordings
Digital repatriation

• ANLA has always been nominally “open” to the public, but this does not necessarily equate to being accessible
• As the collection has grown over 50 years to contain more than 15,000 items, ANLA has become an “accidental gatekeeper”
• Digital repatriation attempts to address this issue by making materials more widely accessible and relevant
Why Digital Repatriation?

“You know, all these recordings ... if we don’t get it out and learn about it, where are we going to learn from? These are old recordings. We want to get it out and teach our younger children what the elder people are talking about. I think that’s a very good idea for getting it free so we can listen to them.”

Andrew Balluta
Digitization timeline at ANLA

• 1999 – first electronic catalog
• 2000 – first attempts at digitization
• 2001 – founding member of Open Language Archives Community (OLAC)
• 2003 – founding member of Digital Endangered Languages and Musics Archiving Network (DELAMAN)
• 2004 – Dena’ina Qenaga web portal
• 2008 – electronic catalog goes online
• 2009 – first digital materials available for download
Digital repatriation in the language context

• In contrast to the cultural heritage context, the products of language documentation do not rely on physical materials
• Representations -- either as recordings or in print -- are infinitely reproducible
• Digital representations of language products are just as good (if not better) than the original
From brick and mortar to digital archive
Challenges for resource discovery
Featured collections

Charles V. Lucier Recordings Collections

After graduating from the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 1949 Charles V. Lucier studied Inupiaq culture in the Kotzebue Sound area. During the period 1950-1951 he made several important recordings of Inupiaq stories and song. This collection includes ten open reel recordings. Other materials collected by Lucier, including manuscripts, photographs, and correspondence, can be found at the UAA/APU Consortium Library and the Rasmuson Library Alaska and Polar Regions Collection.

- Lucier tape index
- Lucier Collection at UAA/APU Archives and Special Collections
- Lucier materials at Rasmuson Library (StarArchives)

Recording List

This list may not contain references to all extant audio materials at ANLA. Those items with the icon include scanned digital images which may be downloaded from this site. For a complete list of materials in all formats use the advanced search page.

(8 records)

**ANLC2776**
**Title:** Lucier Collection Reel #6
**Contributor(s):** Lucier, Charles (interviewer); Misiguk (author); Sivik, Chester (author);

**ANLC2779**
**Title:** Lucier Collection Reel #7
**Contributor(s):** Jensen, Charlie (author); Jensen, Lucy (author); Knox, Paul (author); Lucier, Charles (interviewer); Misiguk (author); Sivik, Chester (author);

**ANLC2780**
**Title:** Lucier Collection Reel #8 and #9
**Contributor(s):** Lucier, Charles (interviewer); Misiguk (author); Penn, Flora (author); Sivik, Chester (author);
Online Dictionary Resources for Alaska Native Languages

Many dictionaries of Alaska Native languages have been scanned and are available as searchable PDF documents. Still others include web-accessible versions. The following is a list of electronic dictionary resources in our collection. This list is expanding as we continue to digitize our collection, so check back often for additional resources. Those materials marked with a book icon (📚) can be purchased in book form from the Alaska Native Language Center for a nominal cost.

**Eskimo-Aleut**
- Inupiaq
  - Abridged Inupiaq and English Dictionary (1981, PDF) IN(N)971M1981
  - Kanjisiauitu Uqayusragnikun / Kobuk Inupiat Junior Dictionary (1979, PDF) IN(S)M975SDG1979
- Alutiq
  - Nanwalegmiut Paluwigmist-Ilu Nupugnerit / Conversational Alutiq Dictionary (Kenai Peninsula) (1978, PDF) SU972L1978a

**Athabaskan-Eyak-Tlingit**
- Tlingit
  - 575+ Tlingit Verbs (2010, HTML) online
- Ahtna
  - Ahtna Noun Dictionary (1975, PDF) AT973BK1975
- Dena’ina
  - Kenai Tanaina Noun Dictionary (1974, PDF) TI972K1974i
  - Dena’ina Athabaskan Junior Dictionary / Dena’ina Qenaga Duch’duldh (1979, PDF) TI974WK1979
- Deg Xinag
  - Deg Xinag Ingaiilik Noun Dictionary (1978, PDF) IK974K1978a
  - Deg Xinag Learners’ Dictionary (2007, HTML) Online at Alaska Native Knowledge Network
- Holikachuck Noun Dictionary (1978, PDF) HO975K1978c
- Upper Kuskokwim
  - Dinak’l (Our Words). Upper Kuskokwim Athabaskan Junior Dictionary (1979, PDF) UK964CP1979
Much more than just language

• Examples of recent requests to ANLA:
  • ethnobotany in the Yukon Flats region
  • eulogy for Father Rysev
  • genealogy in the Upper Koyukuk region
  • Yup’ik music recordings
  • photos from Prince William Sound region
  • information on Russian influence in the middle Kuskokwim River region.
Knowledge of the sky

Bergsland, Knut. [Notes on Aleut wordlists regarding the natural world, 1952-59.] Item AL950B(B170)1952

Music

[Yakutat, Minnie Johnson]
Minnie Johnson, 1974
ANLA item ANLC1674

USUAFV3-271
### Place Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Troth Yeddha’</td>
<td>The name Troth Yeddha’ is from Lower Tanana Alaskan and means “Indian potato ridge” (the plant Hedyosmum stiphnum); troth (potato), yedd (ridge), and a’ (possessive suffix).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Troth Yeddha’**
Photographs

ANLA IK878C1911

UAF-2008-15-96

UAF-2008-15-019
Genealogy

[Roster of Indigenous Families, Census and Baptismal Records] Jules Jetté, 1913 ANLA item KO898J1913a
Old words

Vaũ·gáihlt’·ái
‘the governor of the universe’
Digital transformation

- Access ≠ repatriation
- Access
  - More than 17,000 digital documents are available for download from ANLA
  - These materials have also been distributed on hard drives to numerous tribal entities upon request
- Repatriation
  - New ways of accessing existing materials
  - Transforming materials into useful formats through
    - Addition of appropriate context
    - Enrichment with additional content
    - Use of appropriate media (web, mobile, etc.)
Upper Kuskokwim
Tanacross dictionary app

Dihthâad X't'een lin
Aandëg' Dinahtl'âa'
Tanacross Leaners' Dictionary

Dictionary
Categories
Guide
About

Alaska Native Language Center
version 0.1

Dihthâad X't'een lin
Aandëg' Dinahtl'âa'
Tanacross Leaners' Dictionary

sleep

[eetëŋ]
sleep

she or he is sleeping

[xehteets]
they're sleeping

IMPERFECTIVE

dhihtëŋ
t's'ekteets
dhihtëŋ
dhahteets
eetëŋ	xehteets

[ntëetëŋ]
she or he is going to sleep

ahihté'
Inupiat

constellation *Ursa Major*, Big Dipper Ursa major (tail)… tū’k-tu-o-ru-in.” (Ray: 56), so named because the handle of Big Dipper resembles a single caribou horn extending from the head or ladle of the dipper; constellations * Tupqit and Tuvaat are contained in this constellation”

sample sentence:
Tuttuğruk tautugun.
Fermented Fish

Chuqlin
Fermented Fish
Aired on February 9 and 11, 2010

Dena’ina Lifeways Weekly Radio Quiz

Q: What material was used to line and cover the holes used for storing fish?

Listen live to 90.3FM KNBA 12:30pm Wednesdays, for the question of the week. Call 279-KNBA with your answer.

Dena’ina text, originally published in: K’gizghenu Ht’anc, edited by James Kari, 1978, p. 23:


Translation:
We make fermented fish from red salmon. We dig a hole. Then we line the hole with birch bark. Then we put the fish in the hole. We put birch bark over it. Then we put some grass on it. After that we cover it with dirt. Then in the wintertime,
Liicugtukut Alutiiq

Celebrate Valentines Day by learning new ways to tell the people you care about how you feel in Alutiiq

Happy Valentines Day (click here)

Unguwallriat Atuun
In this video clip you will learn names of animals and their habitats in Alutiiq. This is a favorite in the classrooms and I hope it inspires you to use simple technology,

Dictionary Flash Card
Featured Alutiiq word is guutet
Meaning: teeth

The featured word is made possible through an Alaska Humanities Forum grant and Afognak Native Corporation.

More Words >>

Alutiiq Storybook
The Alutiiq Basic Storybook series is a great way to learn everyday words and short sentences.

Guangnek Atkukutaartua - I Can Dress Myself
Book PDF Audio Recording
Home ➞ Word of the Week

Word of the Week

iishuh, and welcome to WOW – the Eyak "Word of the Week".

Are you ready to make history? The Eyak language was declared 'extinct' when the last native speaker, Marie Smith Jones, died in January 2008. Now, you have the chance to bring the wisdom of Eyak back into the world and make them part of your life. Every Sunday the Eyak word or phrase at this site for you to listen to, practice, and learn. Whether you learn a few words a day, or something to you or endeavor to become fluent, your efforts will mean that this irreplaceable thinking about the world will never be lost.

- Word of the Week 01: Hello (is that you?) - iishuh
- Word of the Week 02: Yes, this is me - aan, xuu q’a’al
- Word of the Week 03: Hello (is that you?) to a group - laXiishuh
Community language archives
A community language archive model

ANLA

Community depositors

Community language archive
Conclusions

• Merely providing access to linguistic documentation resources is not sufficient
• Digital repatriation facilitates new kinds of circulation through transformation and mobilization of resources
• Language archives must engage with communities to develop and repurpose materials
• These efforts are most successful when driven by the communities themselves