

A photograph of an elderly man with white hair and glasses, wearing large black headphones, sitting at a desk. He is pointing his right hand upwards and holding a large sheet of paper with some faint markings. Behind him, a woman with white hair and glasses, wearing a grey t-shirt with a 'Van Gogh' logo, is smiling and looking towards the camera. The setting appears to be a workshop or office with bookshelves, a computer monitor, and various papers on the desk. The text 'Language work and language collections: an ongoing exchange' is overlaid in large, bold, black font across the top half of the image.

Language work and language collections: an ongoing exchange

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Alaska Native Language Center and Archive
Digital Heritage Preservation Workshop
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Things I want to talk about

- The archive where I work (ANLA)
- Language work
- Why work with archival materials?
- Barriers to language work – for example, spelling (what are yours?)
- An example of the archival cycle
- Your projects and interests



Alaska Native Language Archive



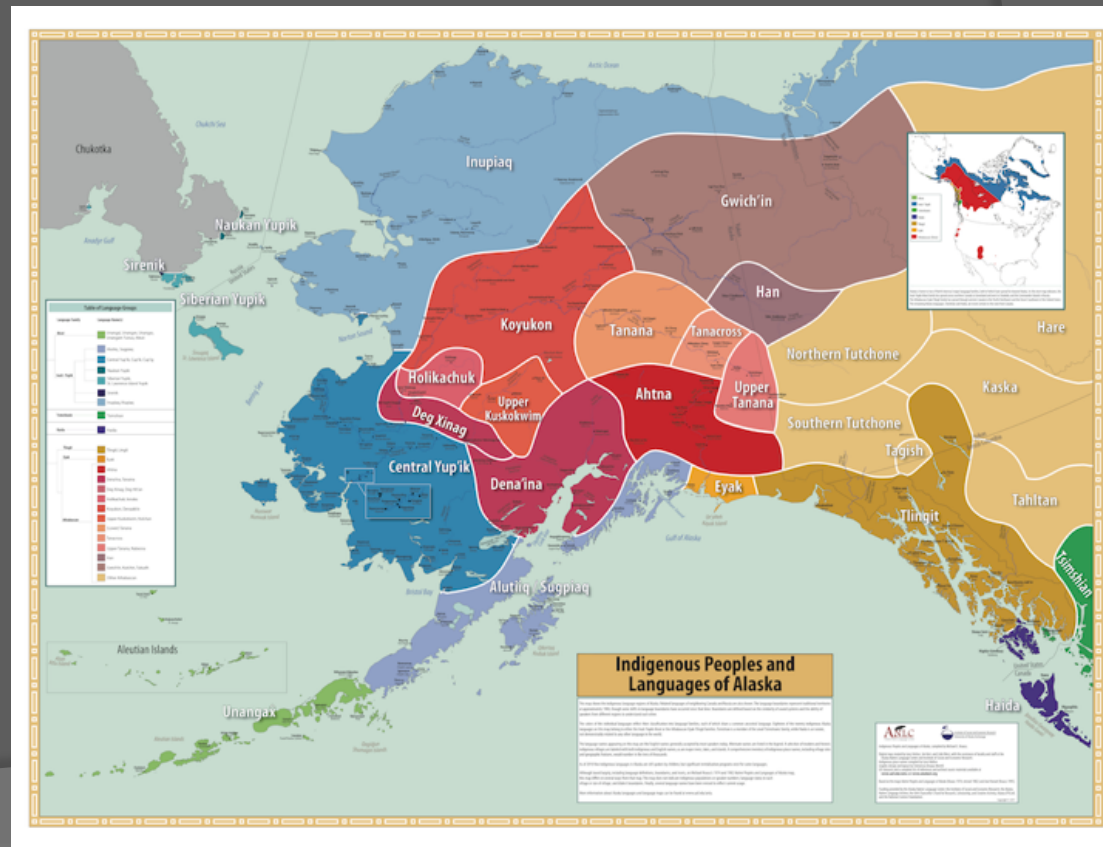
~ 1500 linear ft. manuscripts, including nearly everything written in or about Alaska Native languages
~ 5000 recordings



outgrowth of more than 50 years of language documentation and development work in Alaska through the Alaska Native Language Center

Coverage

- All 20 Alaska Native languages
- Related languages outside Alaska
- Alaska Russian
- Alaska Saami
- Chinook Jargon



ANLA Timeline

- 1960 Krauss to UAF, begins collecting copies of anything he can find
- 1972 state legislation founds ANLC but doesn't mention archive
- 1980 first catalog (Krauss and McGary)
- 1999 first electronic catalog project (Giulia Oliverio)
- 2000 first digitization project (collaboration with Oral History)
- 2001 join Open Language Archives Community (collaboration w/ ARSC)
- 2002 relocation to Brooks Building
- 2003-5 National Endowment for the Humanities (Anna Berge)
- 2006-7 UA President's Fund (Rose Speranza)
- 2008 first materials available online
- 2009 NSF-funds first full-time employee (Stacey Baldrige)
- 2012 relocation to Rasmuson

Language Workers

- People who work with language come in different styles.
- Some are academically trained in documentation, archiving or theory.
- Some are academically trained in language education.
- Some are self-educated in language study and might know just about anything.

We learn from each other

Don't tell anybody but here's what I think about learning things.

- Everybody has to learn *how to learn* for themselves.
- Education tries to provide an environment that fosters learning (by bringing different kinds of learners together).
- But learning is done everywhere. It's hard to stop it from happening.
- Our job is to learn *how to learn useful things* from each other and from sources of information.

Language Work

We learn about
languages from
people who speak
them



We try to save what we learn



And learn from what was saved



And that's why archival work goes
both directions: in and out



Why work with archival materials?

Efficiency

(Don't reinvent the wheel)

Inspiration and learning

(Collected materials demonstrate the practices of successful researchers)

Authenticity and variety

(Materials collected when a language is spoken by a larger community can give you examples you can't find under conditions of language shift.)

Repatriation

(Collected materials can be reorganized to increase accessibility for their community of origin.)

Added Value

(You can add to what is known about the material.)

Barriers to Language Work (one example – what are yours?)



Spelling – (no)

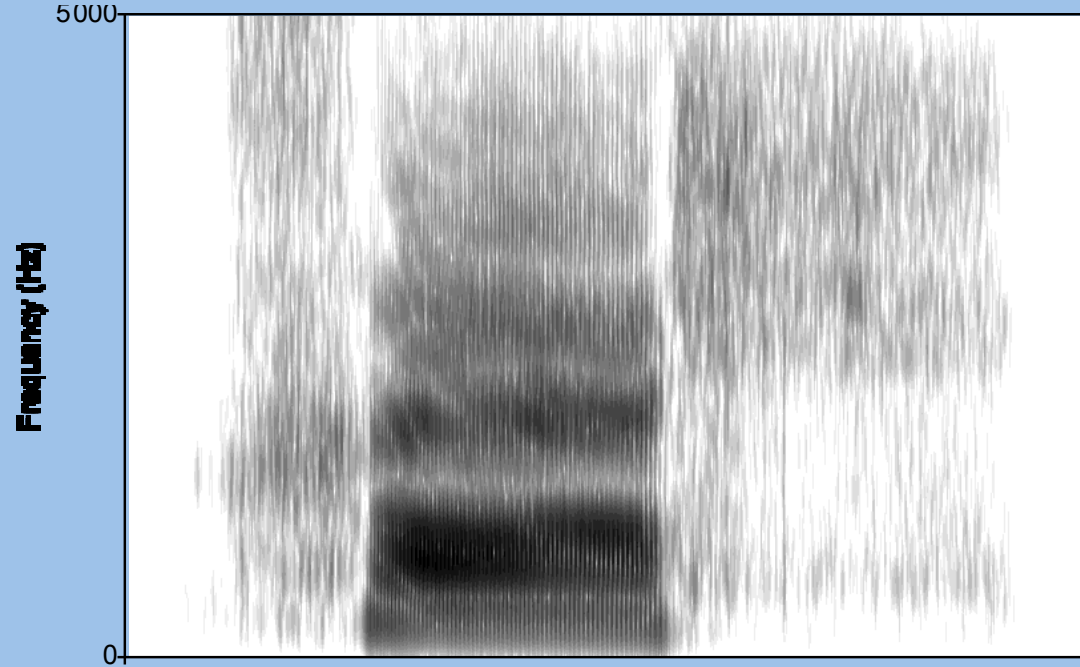
c	- th	“	“	thin	ü	-	“	“	German kühl
d	- d								shape lips to say
e	-	“	“	they					oo, but say ee
ë	-	“	“	then	û	-			as in but
f	- f				v	- v			
g	- g				w	-	“	“	wish
h	-	“	“	he	x	-	a	very deep guttural	like the Arabic ghain
i	-	“	“	pique					
ï	-	“	“	pick	y	-			as in you
j	- z	“	“	azure	z	-	“	“	zone
k	- k				dj	- j	“	“	judge
l	- l	—note, not ël			hw	- wh	“	“	when
m	- m				hy	- hu	“	“	hue
n	- n				lv	- ll	“	“	million

Spelling (yes)

E  tɛl	e	G  ge's	g	Gg  ggalaay	gg	Gh gh  t'agbes	H  hax	h	
Hw hw  hwtsilf	hw	l  tikaani	li	ii	K  kentsils	k	L  lax	l	
L  lic'ae	l	M  dembah	m	N  nuuni	n	Ng ng  xonahang	O  ghal'ot	o	
S 	s	T 	t	T' 	t'	TI 	ti	TI' 	ti'

Kh / kh [x]

kh aɫ
‘backpack’

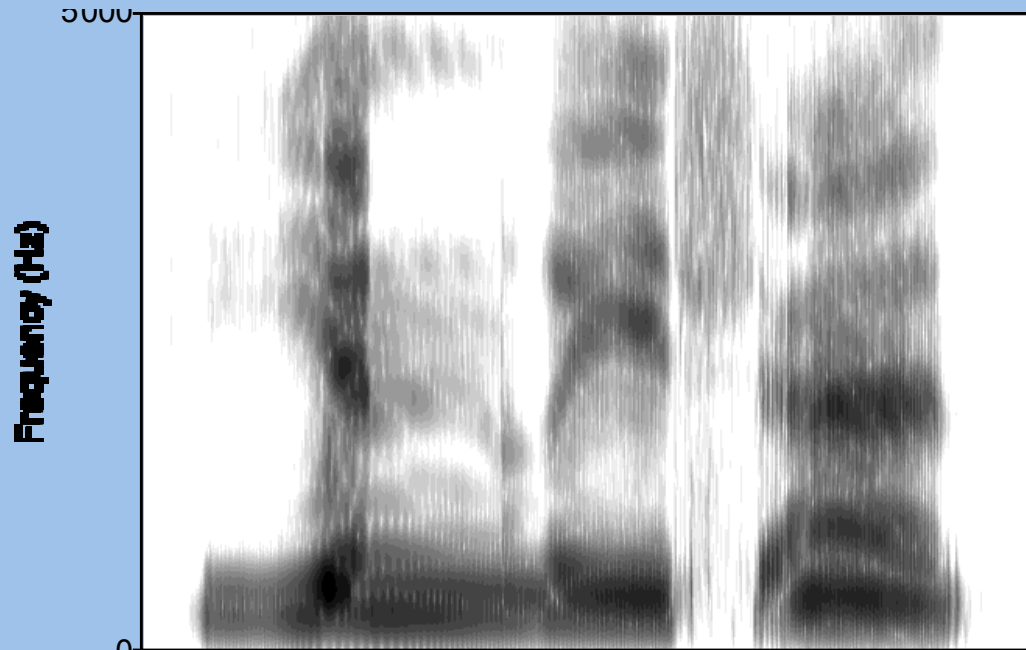


t / t̥

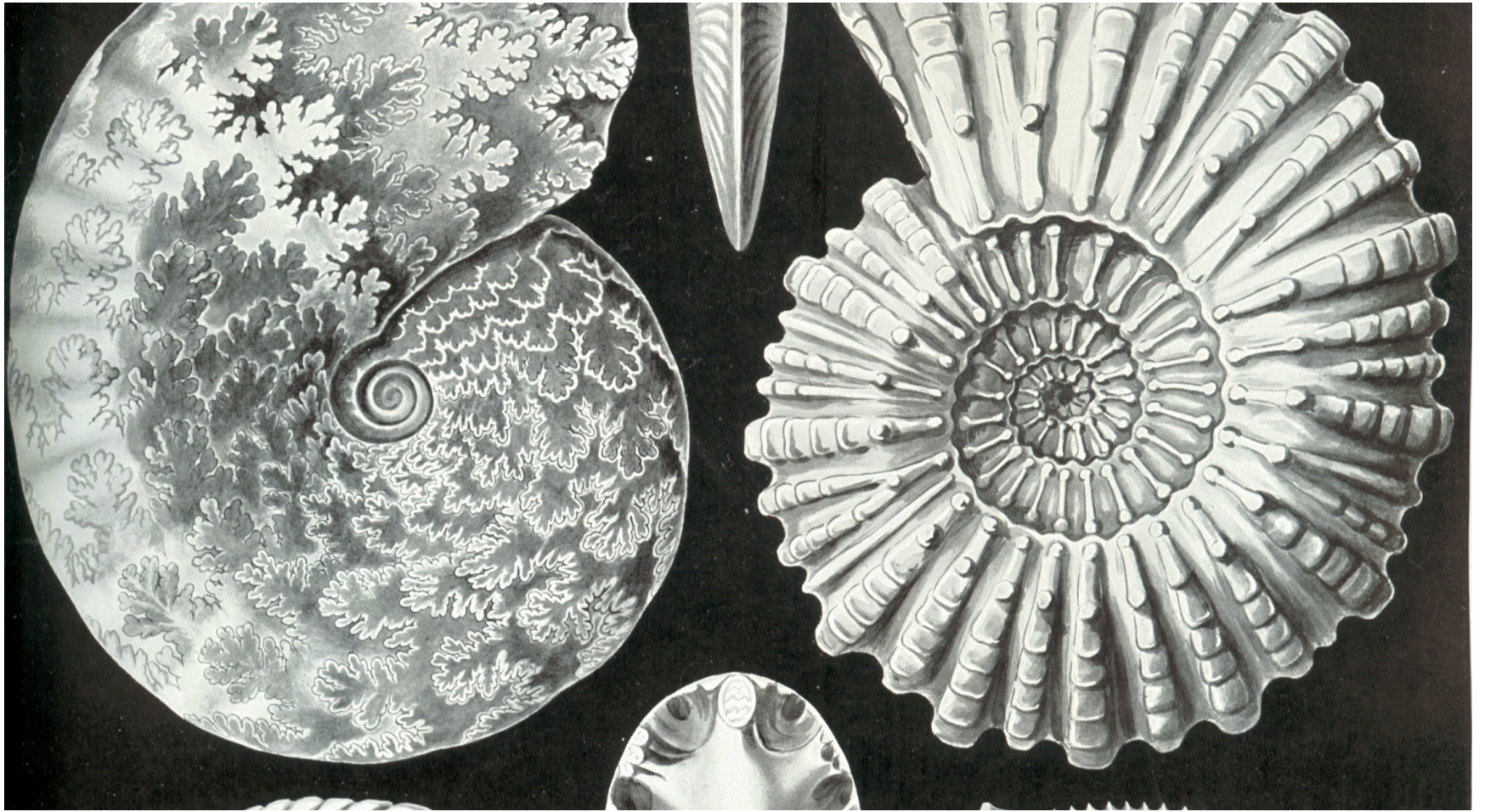
[t̥]

yenghi^{t̥}an'

'he/she looked at him/her/it'



Cycle of preservation



When language material comes in to ANLA

- Everything that applies in Oral History also applies here
- Except that the step of transcription and interpretation can take a lot longer.
- There can be another, internal set of cycles that sometimes involve more people:
 - Original recording
 - Transcription and translation with those who know the language
 - Homework to look stuff up and prepare fair copy
 - Checking the manuscript again with people who know

Who can add value to archived data?

Everybody who is interested:

- The person who made the recording
- The person or people speaking or singing on the recording
- Somebody who has done work on the same language or similar material
- Somebody who wants to use the material for a new purpose, say, creation of class materials or academic study

An example

- Coming back to texts recorded in 1961 by Michael Krauss in Minto
- Worked on, in different versions, by Mary Jane McGary and James Kari
- But never published.
- For several stories, the audio was lost.
- Fall 2015, Krauss and I visited Sarah and Bergman Silas in the Eagles Wings home in North Pole and went over the stories without audio. Mike and I read them to Sarah from his and Jim's notes, and we recorded her explanations.

Owl Story: Process

11.

(VIII) pp 167-169 [4b2]

ex Ts'udzeghi Koxt'ana Ghila'de

eng When Horned Owl was a Person

owl.mct

tape lost

checked with notebook

Owl Story: Process

packings roast on spit
netse h'á ye kú be yó nó yeni t'it t'eh w' ye'el kú
put meat
yege traxá k'á xá tr'án'ík on t'ie d'ó (ye y'v) ye t'ó x' n'è x'
reached for meagre distant of
(wash)
nikon d'óni k'ól yel ni 'ó dé y'ól yé'ól k'w' "lé ví dá"
set it cut this! eat all the way thru
ni d'é x'a'á l'w' "í'ól yel ni t'ie ye'oya' ye y'v" da ná dá l'yo t'ie
marketplace his snowbird film brought in
ye e- dá t'ien dé y'í'lok t'ie xé ye t'et'í'w' d'í'ót k'v
she did something she tries her best
ye ó' n'ó ye dé neh k'v 'ó dé' ye ó' n'ó ye dé neh t'ó'el w'
she went (by road) in the morning

Owl Story: Process

ode' yedhonoyedenek ts'e k'u bebet' ~~de~~ghedool ts'e k'u
his stomach swelled up and then

benagha' benagha' kha'ał k'u ch'edeltthuts (?) ts'e
his eyes his eyes turned yellow and

degheneel deenot k'u ode yech'eł'ol yech'eł'ol.
while

Owl story: process

00:03:29.000 00:03:30.000 00:03:31.000 00:03:32.000 00:03:33.000 00:03:34.000 00:03:35.000 00:03:36.000 00:03:37.000

TNMN961K1961a-02_OWL_030

Ts'e k'w bebet' gheduł ts'e k'w benagha' kha'ał k'w ch'edelttukh ts'e degheñił dinot k'w ode yech'ei'ot, yech'ei'ot.

Ts'e k'w bebet' gheduł ts'e k'w benagha' kha'ał k'w ch'edelttukh ts'e degheñił dinot k'w ode yech'ei'ot, yech'ei'ot.

Ts'e k'w bebet' ghed ts'e k'w bena kha'ał k'w ch'ed ts'e deghe dinot k'w ode yech' yech'.

and and his.be it.swe and also his.ey? also beca and it.hap while contin she.m she.m.

Owl Story: Process

41. Òde yedho noyedenek ts'e k'w bebèt igheduł ts'e
She poured it all down his mouth and his stomach began to bloat and

42. k'w benagha', benagha' xa'ał k'w ch'edeltthwx ts'e degheñł dino k'w
òde yech'eł'oł, yech'eł'oł.
and his eyes, his eyes began to turn yellow while the fed him and fed
him.

about those spellings

- You might notice that none of these Owl pages are spelled in the same way.
- Does this matter?
- Sometimes this seems like a barrier to participation.
- I want to encourage people to engage with materials that seem to be spelled funny
- Because the main thing is to recognize the words
- You can always write it in a new way for a new purpose

In my opinion

An archive should be a backup and a workroom.

A place to return to to work with what's been saved, and improve it.

To *have* intellectual or cultural material means to work with it and make it part of your knowledge.

And then save your work where someone else can find it.

Because no matter how brilliant one person's work is, another can add something to it: explanation, illustration, application.

Or, if we are lucky, one more version.





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