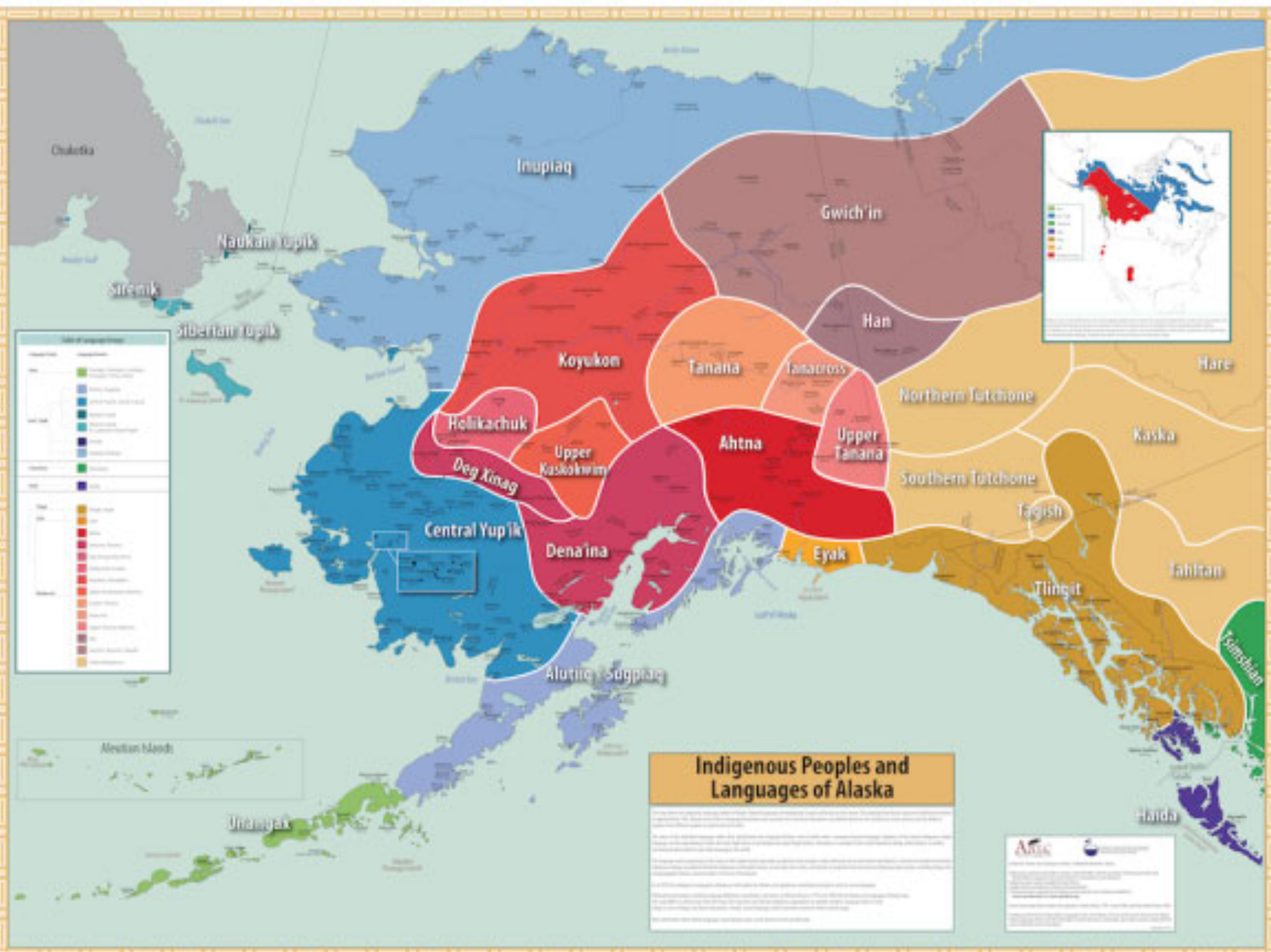


Re-centering the Alaska Native Language Center

Challenges and opportunities for language centers in a new linguistic era



Lawrence Kaplan and Gary Holton
University of Alaska Fairbanks



What we're up against

- “It is the purpose of the government in establishing schools in Alaska to train up English speaking American citizens. You will therefore teach in English and give **special prominence to instruction in the English language.**”

Letter to newly hired teachers
Sheldon Jackson (1887)



History of Alaska Native language efforts

- 1960 Michael Krauss arrives in Alaska
- 1961 First Native language class at UAF
- 1961 NSF grant to document Alaska Native languages
- 1970 First Yup'ik language programs in K-12 schools
- 1972 Bilingual Education Act / Founding of ANLC
- 1973+ Widespread Native language programs in schools
- 1974 Native Peoples and Languages of Alaska map
- 1977 Alaska Native Language Dictionary Project
- 1984 Yup'ik Eskimo Dictionary (Jacobson)
- 1990 Ahtna Athabaskan Dictionary (Kari)
- 2000 Koyukon Athabaskan Dictionary (Jones & Jetté)
- 2001 Athabaskan Language Development Institute



Development of ANLC

- Changing political climate
- Challenging linguistic climate



Founding legislation (1972)

1. study languages native to Alaska
2. develop literacy materials
3. assist in the translation of important documents
4. provide for the development and dissemination of Alaska Native literature
5. train Alaska Native language speakers to work as teachers and aides in bilingual classrooms to teach and support Alaska's twenty indigenous languages



People

- Oscar Alexie, Asst Prof of Yup'ik
- Sophie Alexie, Instructor of Yup'ik
- Anna Berge, Assoc Prof of Linguistics
- Ron Brower, Sr., Instructor of Inupiaq
- Walkie Charles, Asst Prof of Yup'ik
- Gary Holton, Prof of Linguistics
- Lawrence Kaplan, Prof of Linguistics and Director
- Patrick Marlow, Assoc Prof of Linguistics and Education
- Hishinlai Kathy Sikorski, Instructor of Gwich'in
- Siri Tuttle, Assoc Prof of Linguistics
- Michelle Strickland, Administrative Assistant
- Leon Unruh, Editor

Degree programs

- A.A.S. / Certificate in Native Language Education
 - (Athabaskan, Inupiaq, Central Yup'ik)
- A.A.S. / Certificate in Yup'ik Language Proficiency
- B.A. in Central Yup'ik / Inupiaq
- M.A. in Applied Linguistics
 - (with focus on Native language teaching)

Yupiit Nakmiin Qaneryaraat Piciryaraat-Ilu

- Redesigned B.A. program in Yup'ik Language and Culture
 - ESK 130 – Beginning Yup'ik Grammar
 - ESK 131 – Beginning Yup'ik Grammar II
 - ESK 203 -- Conversational Central Yup'ik III
 - ESK 204—Conversational Central Yup'ik IV
 - ESK 301 – Advanced Central Yup'ik Eskimo
 - ESK 305 – Regaining Fluency in Yup'ik I
 - ESK 306 -- Regaining Fluency in Yup'ik II
 - ESK 375O – Yup'ik Philosophy and Spirituality (Umyuarteqaraq)
 - ESK 330W – Central Yup'ik Literature (Yupiit Quliraitnek Igayaraq)
 - ESK 488W -- Documenting Cultural and Oral Traditions
 - ANS 401 – Cultural Knowledge of Native Elders
OR ANS 461 – Native Ways of Knowing

Partnerships with schools

- Began early with workshops
- Evolved to “career ladder” programs which led to new degree / certificate programs
- Teacher training
- Building long-term relationships
- Cohort models bring groups of students together in culturally-appropriate supportive relationships
- These relationships continue to be relevant

Capacity-building

- Train Native language teachers
- Train professionals (M.Ed., Ph.D.) capable of developing and implementing local language programs
- Extra-curricular mentorship (non-degree)



ANLC Publications program

- Reference materials: dictionaries, grammars, texts
 - Applied focus with direct relevance to language programs
- Language learning materials
 - Phrasebooks
 - Curriculum
 - Textbooks
 - Literacy materials
- Research papers
- Maps
- Information about language use



Language documentation



Priorities for documentation

- Documentation must be balanced against competing considerations
- Still much work to be done
 - 9 of 20 ANL have comprehensive lexical coverage
- Documentation can have lasting value in ways that immediate revitalization projects may not
- Documentation may serve as source for future revitalization projects
 - Eyak Language Project



ANLC Archive

- Not in original legislation but serves as a repository for ANLC documentation and curriculum materials
- Grown to include nearly everything written in or about Alaska Native Languages
- Recently re-organized as part of university library as the *Michael E. Krauss Alaska Native Language Archive*



**Elmer E. Rasmuson
& BioSciences Libraries**



Language Planning

- Helping to set priorities in collaboration with:
 - Individual communities
 - Regional Native organizations
 - School districts
 - Statewide Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council
 - Alaska Federation of Natives
- Providing advice on:
 - Language status
 - Status of documentation
 - Place names – *Troth Yeddha'*
 - Language revitalization methodology
 - Curriculum development and language teaching
 - Language documentation strategies

www.uaf.edu/anlc

