

# Community linguistics for documenting variation and community language practice

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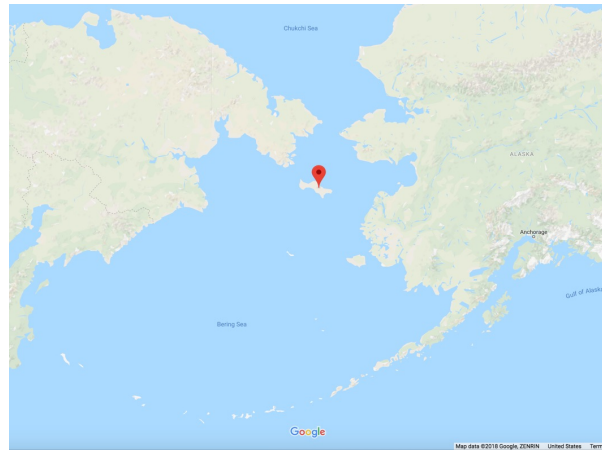
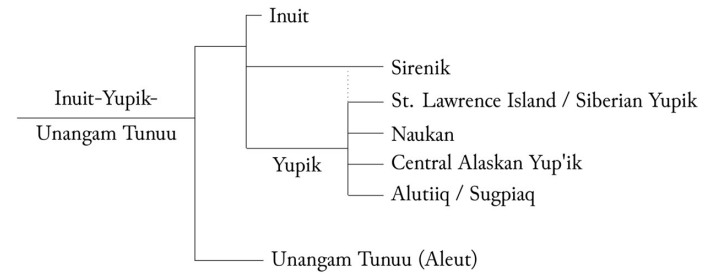
Documenting languages, documenting cultures

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# Background



- Akuzipik/ St. Lawrence Island Yupik
- Polysynthetic, Yupik-Inuit
- 500-1000 fluent speakers: St. Lawrence Island, Alaska and Chukotka peninsula, Russia
- Generational endangerment situation

# Background

angyaghllangllaghyugtuq|

Search

☒ Akuzipik Search

☐ English Search

Parse

angyagh + ghllag + ngllagh + ~<sub>f</sub>yug + [Intr][Ind][3Sg]

angyagh- VERB



**Cyrillic:** (аңьяҕ-)

**Pronunciation:** /aŋjaʁ/

**Etymology:** PY a&yuaq

1. *to use a boat*
2. *to travel by boat*
3. *to hunt with a boat*



angwaagh-

VERB

angwaaghta

NOUN

angwaaghun

NOUN

angyaataghqe-

VERB

angyaataq

NOUN

angyagh-

VERB

angyaghllug-

VERB

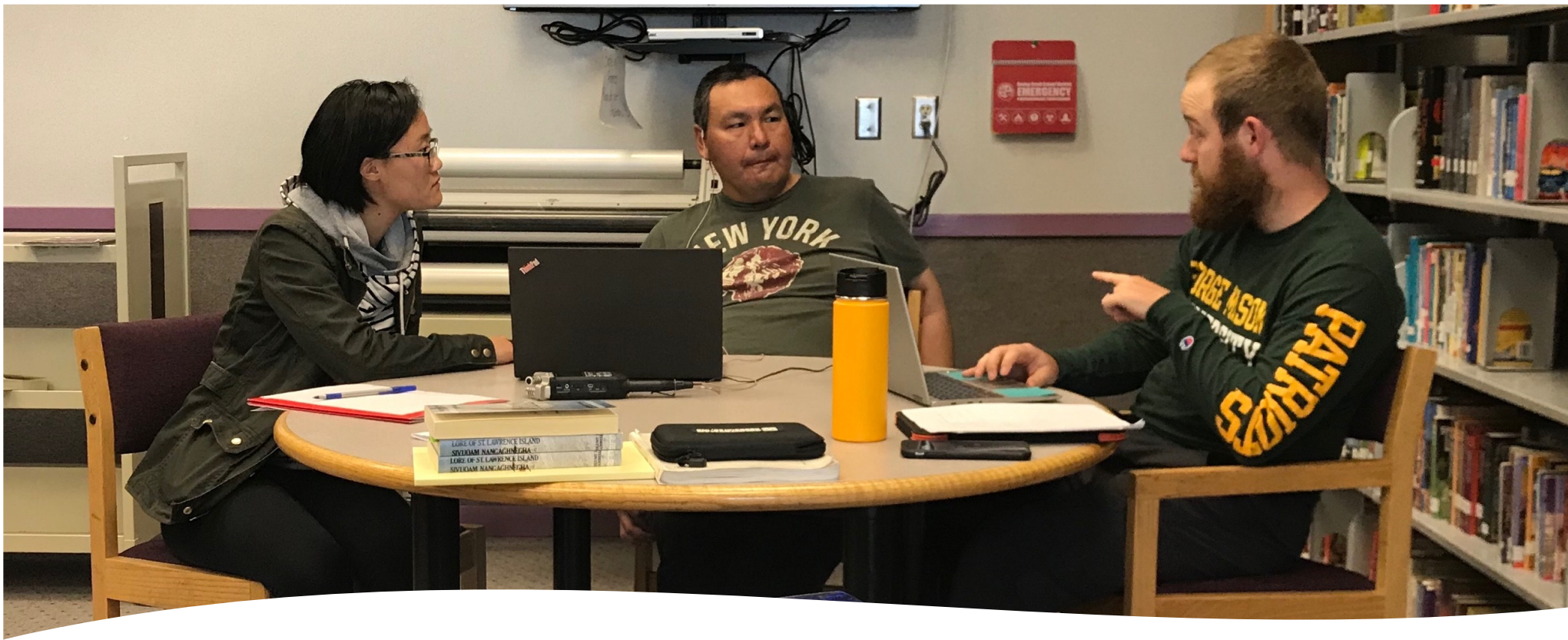
# Variation and community practice

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- Russia vs. St. Lawrence Island; between villages
- Age/generation
- Clan, family
- High levels of interspeaker variation (as also noted for Central Alaskan Yup'ik (Miyaoka 2012))







## Variation and community practice

- Patterns of English vs. Akuzipik use
  - Older vs. younger generations
    - To young children
    - To elders
  - Family-to-family differences
  - By fluency level
    - Hesitant by lower-fluency speakers

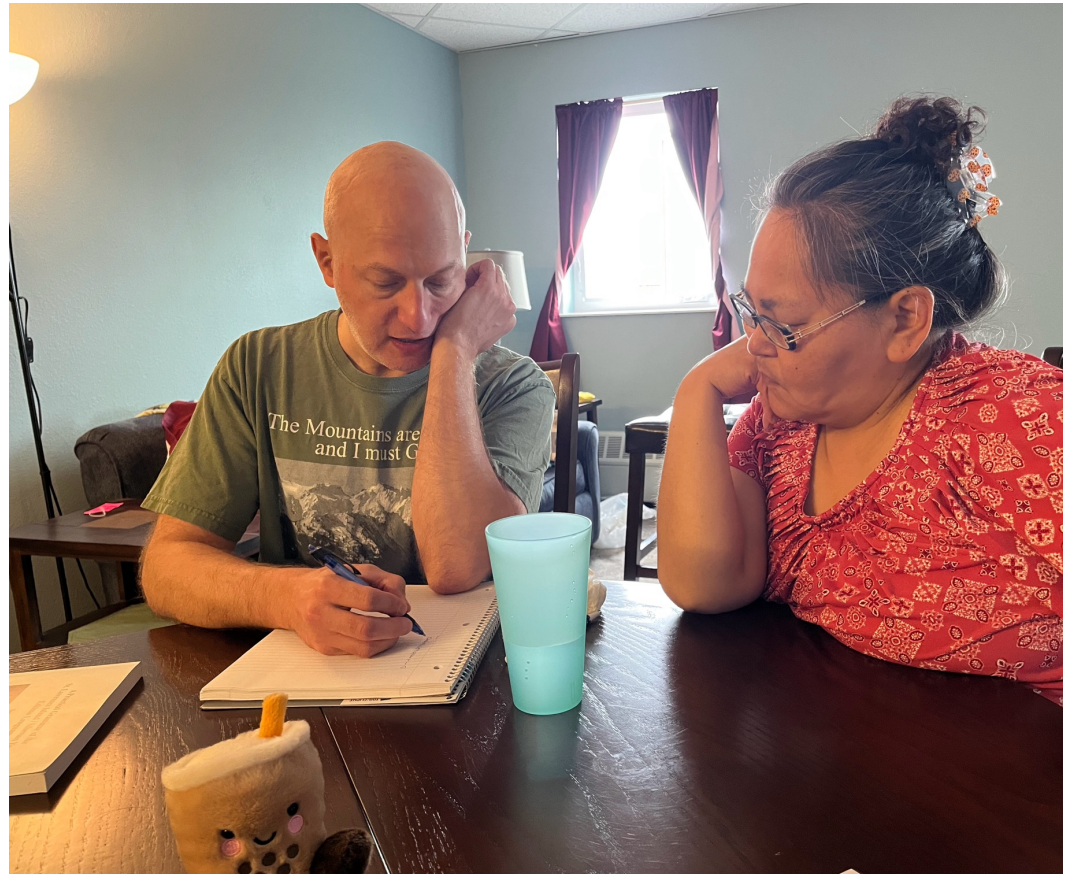
# Community linguists

- Documenting variation: challenges
  - Elders, Akuzipik-only preferences
  - Interactions among various community members
  - Preference for speaking with community members over researchers
  - Attitudes towards variation and change



# Community linguists: Training

- Community members learn basics of
  - descriptive linguistics;
  - sociolinguistics, language variation and change;
  - language documentation and revitalization
    - Including technical skills
- Reciprocal training: speakers share ways of knowing
  - Conventional duals: river, vehicles, but also bottle, etc.



# Community linguists: Training

- Phonology (phoneme vs. allophone--Piitesiihaq)
- Morphology (morphemes, study by parts)
- Pragmatics (goodbye vs. see you later; can you pass the salt, levels of directness)
- Language variation
  - Village English 'go store'
  - 'That's all the further we got' (cf. that's as far as we got)
- Language change ('igamsi')



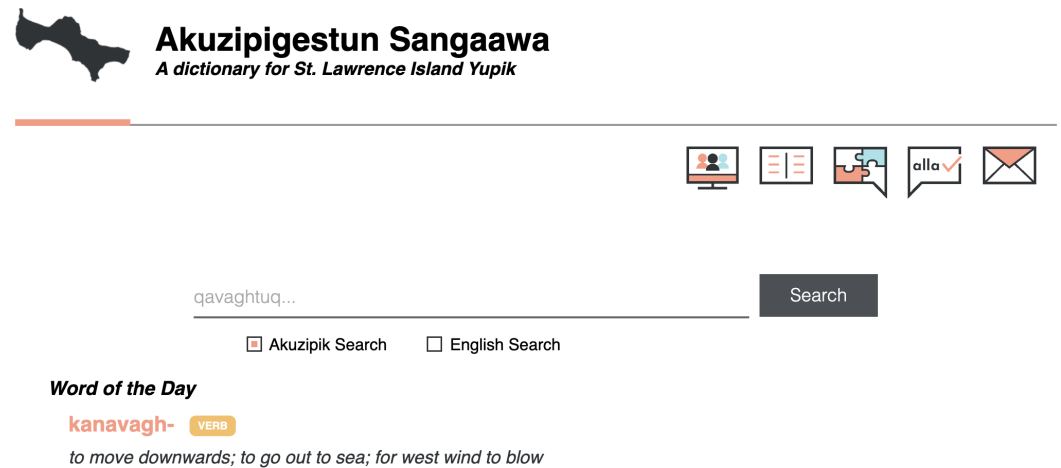


## Community linguists: Training

- Empowering community members to participate in, then lead, documentation → better documentation that is more valuable to the community
- Thursday evening group: grammar → immersion
- Teaching tools, etc.: power to them

# Community linguists: Technology

- Online dictionary
  - Word of the day
  - Community input capabilities (variation)
- Morphological parser
- Corpus materials access and use







# Looking forward

- Language and culture website
- Language app (learning + access to materials)
- Preschool immersion
- Automatic speech recognition
- Community linguists train others



# Acknowledgments

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For more...



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[www.idl.linguistics.gmu.edu](http://www.idl.linguistics.gmu.edu)

