AILLA: The Archive of the Indigenous Languages of Latin America

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AILLA is a joint project of:

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- Linguistics: Anthony C. Woodbury
- Digital Library Services: Mark McFarland
Acknowledgements

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www.ailla.utexas.org

- Pilot site launched March 2001.
- Parallel sites in English and Spanish.
- 49 languages from 12 countries.
- Recordings in a variety of genres, most accompanied by texts.
AILLA's Mission

Preservation: irreplaceable recordings in endangered languages made on fragile analog media are digitized and permanently housed in our database.

Access: valuable resources can be made available to everyone, especially indigenous people, over the Internet.
Preservation

- Archive housed on library computers, maintained by UT digital librarians.
- Secure computers, bottomless memory.
- Standard formats will be migrated forward as technologies evolve.
- Analog media sent to the Indiana Archive of Traditional Music (http://www.indiana.edu/~libarchm/)
What we preserve

Multi-media resources:
- Audio/video recordings
- Texts, digital and manuscript
- Photos, drawings, etc.

Types of resources
- Recordings of discourse in any genre
- Transcriptions, translations, annotations, etc.
- Literature, oral or written
- Analyses, lexicons, notes, sketches, etc.
Formats

Archival formats:
- audio: PCM wav, 44.1 KHz, 16/24 bits
- digital text: original format
- manuscript, images: tiff
- video: mp2 (not done yet)

Presentation formats, free readers & players:
- audio: mp3 (128 kbps)
- text & images: pdf
- video: not yet determined
Access I

- Bilingual interfaces are conformant with portability standards
- Add a Portuguese interface when funds permit.
- Multiple formats w/free readers/players:
  - Mp3: compressed, easy to download
  - Wav: uncompressed (huge!)
  - PDF: platform-independent text
Access II

- Internet cafes are springing up all over Latin America.
- Easier to get to and into than libraries and universities.
- AILLA will soon be able to ship CDs/DVDs with selected resources.
- Long range goal: a network of related archives throughout the region.
Why access is important

- Indigenous communities need these resources for language maintenance and revitalization programs.
- Speakers can use analyses of all kinds in documenting their own languages.
- Share data in collaborative projects, e.g. comparative study of Quechuan languages.
Metadata - catalog information

Resource = a bundle of files, e.g. recording + annotations, in multiple formats

Information about:

- The depositor: contact info
- Project, sponsor, contact info.
- Participants: role, demographic data
- Resources: provenance, formats, etc.
- Content: context, genre, description
- References: publications
Security: the graded access system

- Provides speakers and depositors finely-grained control over resources.

- Four levels:
  1. Free public access
  2. Automatic controls: password, time limit, conditions
  3. Depositor control: users ask depositor for permission
  4. Indigenous control: AILLA contacts indigenous person or group on user's behalf
Security II

- Access levels assigned to individual files.
- Depositors can change settings at any time.
- Depositor/indigenous control allows owner to know who is using their resources.
- Passwords allow fine or coarse control.
- Time limits: we recommend 5 years for student work
Future plans

- Package AILLA's software (database, search interfaces) for sharing.
- Organize offline distribution (CDs).
- Foster a multi-faceted network of archives, from "jukebox" to institutional.
- We welcome your suggestions!
Useful addresses

- AILLA: http://www.ailla.utexas.org
- Comments to ailla@ailla.org
- DELAMAN: http://www.delaman.org/
- IMDI: http://www.mpi.nl/ISLE
- OLAC: http://www.language_archives.org
- EMELD: http://emeld/.org
www.ailla.utexas.org

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