

AILLA

The Archive of the Indigenous Languages of Latin America

AILLA is a digital repository of multimedia resources in and about the indigenous languages of Latin America. The collection includes recordings with transcriptions and translations in Spanish and English. The recordings include narratives, songs, conversations, ceremonies, and interviews. We hope soon to include textbooks and teaching materials for bilingual education and for language reclamation programs, and also original literary works in indigenous languages, such as poetry, short stories, and essays.

The archive is available on the Internet through an easy-to-use interface at www.ailla.org. There are parallel versions in Spanish and English. If you are a speaker of an indigenous language and are interested in creating an interface in your language, please write to us at ailla@ailla.org.

Languages

The collection is growing rapidly. We presently have resources for the following languages:

- Achuar
- Bocotas
- Bribri
- Chorti
- Emberá
- Inga
- Kalapalo
- Kamsá
- Kekchi'
- Kuna
- Nahuatl
- Nanti
- Otomí
- Pastaza Quechua
- Shokleng
- Tehuelche
- Toba
- Warao
- Zoque de Oaxaca
- Zoque de Soteapan
- Zoque de Texistepec

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Dept. of Anthropology
EPS 1.130
The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, Texas 78712

(512) 495-4604
ailla@ailla.org www.ailla.org

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About AILLA

AILLA's mission

The primary mission of AILLA is the preservation of the wealth of recordings of natural discourse in the indigenous languages of Latin America made by speakers working with linguists and anthropologists during the past fifty years. All of these languages are endangered. In fact, some of them, like Tehuelche, have ceased to exist since the recordings housed in the archive were made.

Our second mission is to make these resources available to a global audience through the World Wide Web. Resources that were once kept in private offices can now be shared with speakers of the languages, scholars, and others.

We also want to support indigenous efforts to reclaim their languages and develop literatures. The archive makes it easy to publish indigenous works to a wide audience. It also serves as a medium of collaboration and communication, in addition to providing a repository for resources.

Security

AILLA's resources are permanently housed in computers that are maintained by the Digital Library Services Division at the University of Texas at Austin. AILLA also offers a flexible security protocol that allows depositors to decide who can have access to their materials.

Types of Materials

AILLA accepts any material that was written or spoken in one of the indigenous languages of Latin America by native speakers of that language. This includes audio and video recordings, and writings on any topic in any style. The archive also collects materials of cultural and academic interest that are written about the indigenous languages of Latin America, including grammars, lexicons, and ethnographies. We are especially interested in housing resources that are of interest to indigenous communities, like teaching materials and literary works.

History

AILLA was founded in 2000 at the University of Texas at Austin by Dr. Joel Sherzer, Professor of Anthropology, in collaboration with Dr. Anthony Woodbury, Professor of Linguistics, and Mark McFarland, Director of the Digital Library Services Division and a group of their graduate students.

The archive was started with seed money from the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas at Austin. The archive is currently funded by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Science Foundation.

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