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Workshop for  
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# OLAC: Open Language Archives Community

## An Infrastructure for Indexing Endangered Language Documentation

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NSF Documenting Endangered Languages Workshop,  
Durham, New Hampshire, October 2007



# What is OLAC?

[www.language-archives.org](http://www.language-archives.org)

- ▶ OLAC is an international partnership of institutions and individuals who are creating a world-wide virtual library of language resources by:
  - Developing consensus on best current practice for the digital archiving of language resources
  - Developing a network of interoperating repositories and services for housing and accessing such resources
- ▶ Founded in December 2000
  - Now has 34 participating archives



# Who's involved?

- ▶ Aboriginal Studies Electronic Data Archive
- ▶ Academia Sinica
- ▶ Alaska Native Language Center
- ▶ Archive of Indigenous Languages of Latin America
- ▶ ATILF\_Resources
- ▶ Berkeley Language Center
- ▶ Centre de Ressources pour la Description de l'Oral
- ▶ CHILDES\_Data Repository
- ▶ Comparative Corpus of Spoken Portuguese
- ▶ Cornell Language Acquisition Laboratory
- ▶ Dictionnaire Universel Boiste 1812
- ▶ DOBES catalogue (MPI, Nijmegen)
- ▶ Ethnologue: Languages of the World
- ▶ European Language Resources Association
- ▶ Laboratoire Parole et Langage
- ▶ Linguistic Data Consortium Corpus Catalog
- ▶ LINGUIST List Language Resources
- ▶ Natural Language Software Registry
- ▶ Online Database of Interlinear Text (ODIN)
- ▶ Oxford Text Archive
- ▶ PARADISEC
- ▶ Perseus Digital Library
- ▶ Research Papers in Computational Linguistics
- ▶ Rosetta Project 1000 Language Archive
- ▶ SIL Language and Culture Archives
- ▶ Surrey Morphology Group Databases
- ▶ Survey for California and Other Indian Languages
- ▶ TalkBank
- ▶ Tibetan and Himalayan Digital Library
- ▶ TRACTOR
- ▶ Typological Database Project
- ▶ University of Bielefeld Language Archive
- ▶ University of Queensland Flint Archive
- ▶ Virtual Kayardild Archive (Melbourne)

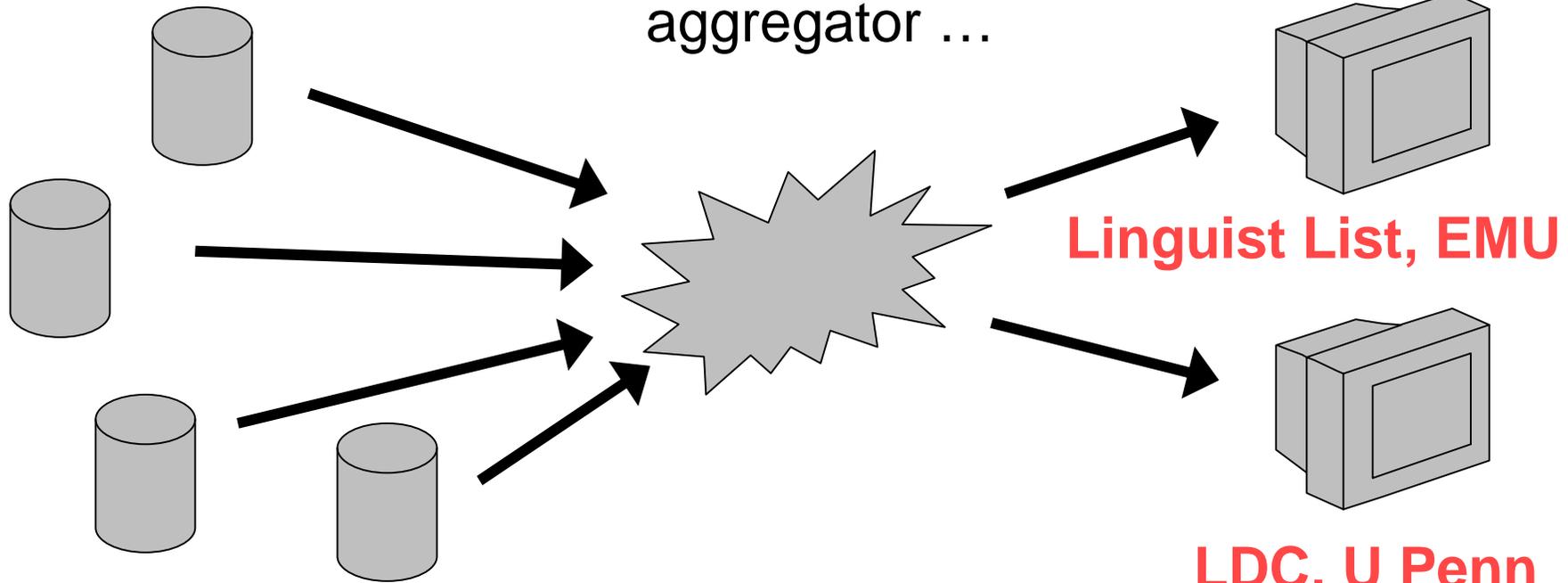


# How does it work?

▶ The 34 archives submit catalogs in a standard form ...

▶ to the OLAC aggregator ...

▶ which supplies information to search services.



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Search

OLAC: potawatomi

Find

-- All archives --

Search results for "potawatomi" in all OLAC archives

9 results from 4 archive(s)

### Results from "[ethnologue.com](http://ethnologue.com)"

1. ★★★★★ [oai:ethnologue.com:POT](http://oai:ethnologue.com:POT) Similar records by: [score](#) [date](#)  
**title:** *POTAWATOMI*: a language of USA  
**description:** A page from the Web edition of Ethnologue: Languages of the World (14th edition) giving basic facts about the language and where it is spoken.

### Results from "[linguistlist.org](http://linguistlist.org)"

1. ★★★★★ [oai:linguistlist.org:lang POT](http://oai:linguistlist.org:lang_POT) Similar records by: [score](#) [date](#)  
**title:** LINGUIST List Resources for *Potawatomi*  
**description:** A page listing all resources ...

### Results from "[sil.org](http://sil.org)" [List all results from this archive \(2 matches\)](#)

1. ★★ [oai:sil.org:11119](http://oai:sil.org:11119) Similar records by: [score](#) [date](#) [subject](#)  
**title:** Patterns of person-number reference in *Potawatomi*  
**description:** [http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_work.asp?id=11119](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_work.asp?id=11119)  
**subject:** Reference

### Results from "[perseus.tufts.edu](http://perseus.tufts.edu)" [List all results from this archive \(5 matches\)](#)

1. ★ [oai:perseus.tufts.edu:Perseus:text:2000.03.0068](http://oai:perseus.tufts.edu:Perseus:text:2000.03.0068) Similar records by: [score](#) [language](#) [type](#)  
**description:** Descriptions of the *Potawatomi*, Miami, Sauk, Menomone [Menominee], Winnebago, and Dakota [Sioux] provide insights about the observers as well as the peoples observed.  
**title:** Narrative of an expedition to the source of St. Peter's River, Lake Winnepeck, Lake of the Woods, &c. &c. performed in the year 1823, by order of the Hon. J.C. Calhoun, Secretary of war, under the command of Stephen H.



# What is the current coverage?

	All archives	Excluding <i>Ethnologue</i>
Items in catalog	30,591	23,292
ISO 639-3 languages included	7,299	3,134
Items that are online	16,018 (52%)	8,719 (37%)



# OLAC coverage in relation to language size

<i>Population range</i>	<i>Languages</i>	<i>In OLAC</i>		<i>Items</i>
10,000,000 or more	83	81	98%	2,533
1,000,000 to 9,999,999	264	209	79%	1,281
100,000 to 999,999	892	507	57%	2,097
1,000 to 99,999	3,746	1,593	43%	8,131
100 to 999	1,071	356	33%	1,866
1 to 99	548	237	43%	704
Unknown	308	56	18%	167
<i>All living languages</i>	6,912	3,039	44%	16,779
<i>Extinct languages</i>		95		231



# Online resources in relation to language size

<i>Population range</i>	<i>Languages</i>	<i>In OLAC</i>		<i>Items</i>
10,000,000 or more	83	75	90%	410
1,000,000 to 9,999,999	264	170	64%	297
100,000 to 999,999	892	326	37%	467
1,000 to 99,999	3,746	859	23%	1,054
100 to 999	1,071	130	12%	179
1 to 99	548	95	17%	146
Unknown	308	22	7%	28
<i>All living languages</i>	6,912	1,677	24%	2,581
<i>Extinct languages</i>		33		42



# Conclusion

- ▶ OLAC has a functioning infrastructure that allows our community to index and discover endangered language documentation.
- ▶ We need to encourage every institution with endangered language resources to participate so that the catalog can be complete.
- ▶ We could enhance standards for resource description to support metrics for summarizing the extent of documentation for a language.