New perspectives on archiving practices in language documentation

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Who am I?

- I work currently as a visiting researcher in LATTICE laboratory, Paris
- I'm a linguist working with Uralic languages (minority languages in Russia)
- I'm one of the PI's in the project <u>Language Documentation meets Language</u>

 <u>Technology: The Next Step in the Description of Komi</u>
- I've been working with language documentation materials for last five years
- Other important collaborators are Michael Rießler (Freiburg), Rogier Blokland (Uppsala) and Marina Fedina (Syktyvkar)
- We try to adhere to field's best practices, but also foster more informal collaboration between different research projects

Talk structure

- Few words on language documentation and general context
- Research projects
- Our data
- Archive interaction
- "Ideal workflow"

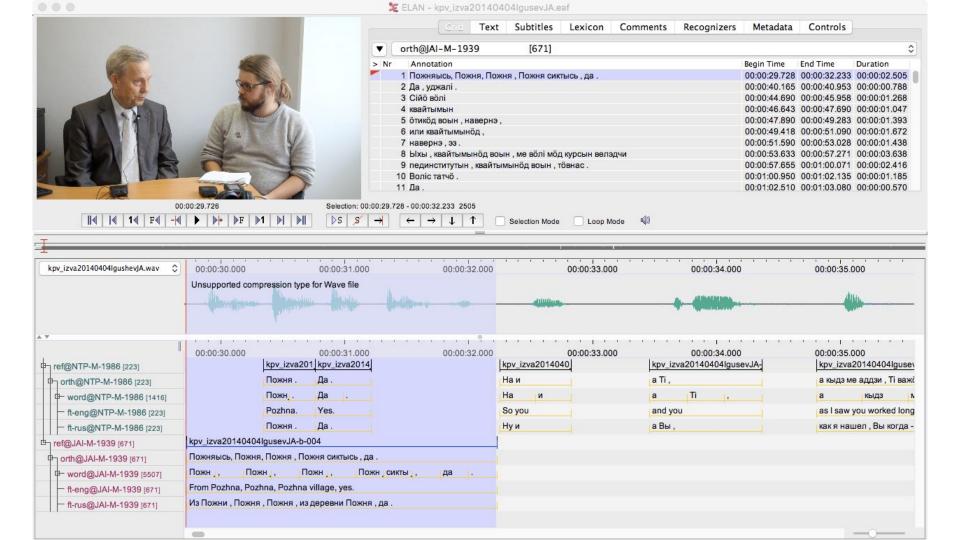
Slides available at: nikopartanen.github.io/IASA2017

Language documentation

- Language documentation ... concerned with the methods, tools, and theoretical underpinnings for compiling a representative and lasting multipurpose record of a language or one of its varieties (<u>Himmelmann 1998</u>; <u>Himmelmann 2012</u>)
- Usually focus on endangered languages
- Produces large amounts of linguistically annotated multimedia
- Traditionally a great deal of focus on metadata
 - Essential for linguistic research as well
 - The cultural context of recorded activities



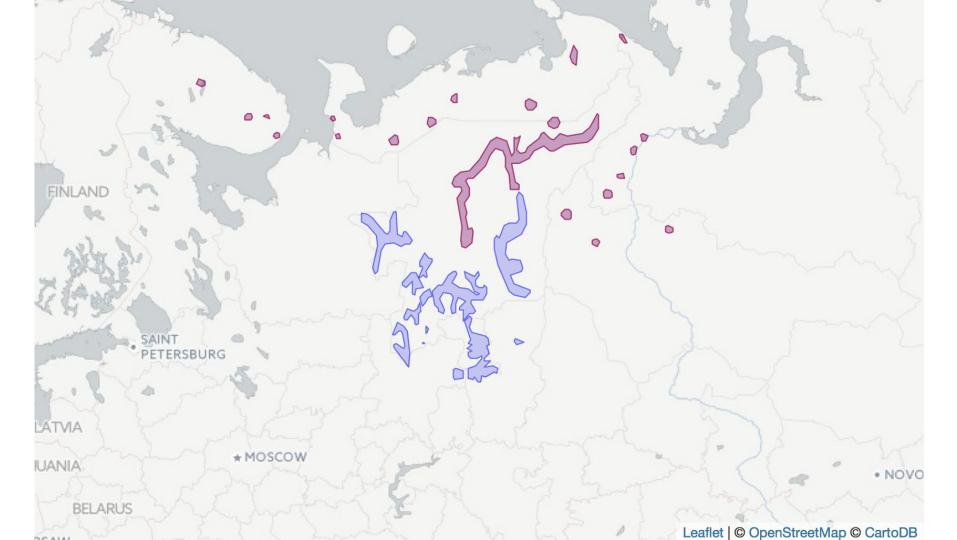




Iźva Komi Documentation Project (1 & 2)

- Funded by Kone Foundation
- Collaborators in Uppsala, Freiburg, Syktyvkar and Paris
- <u>First project</u> in 2014-2016, <u>current</u> in 2017-2019
- Data archived (mostly) in <u>TLA in Nijmegen</u>

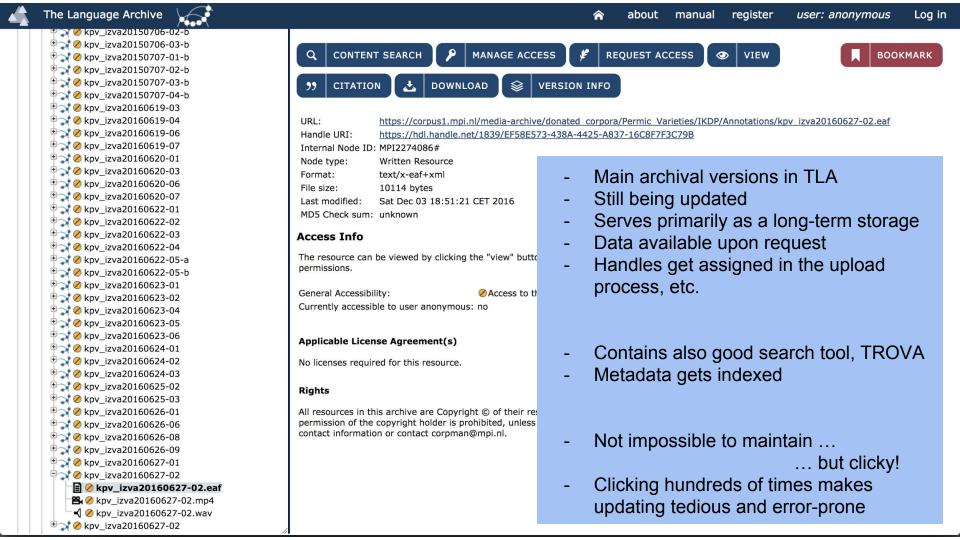
- Initial focus in data collection and building the corpus
- Now we are working with language technology, corpus maintenance and improving the accessibility of the data, also conducting research on the data

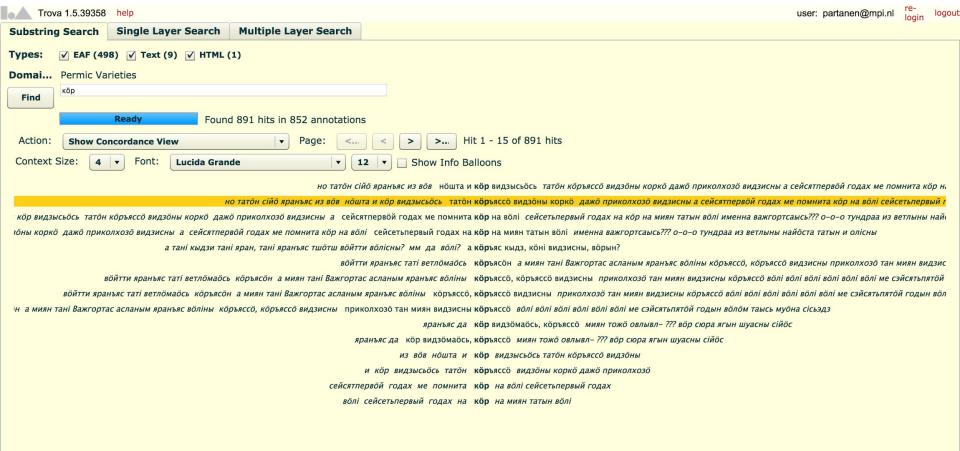


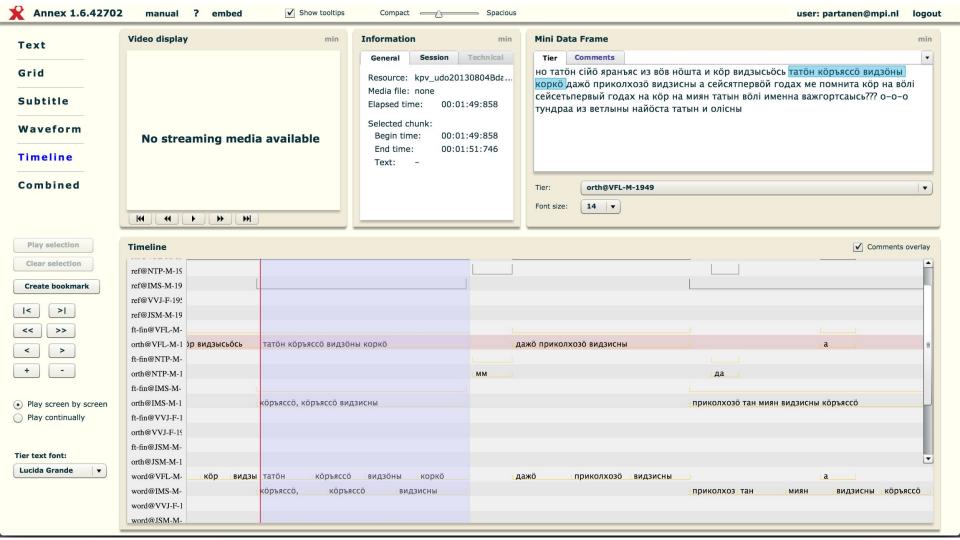


Data availability

- Close collaboration with local institutions and speakers in Russia
- Emphasis on easily shared, rather neutral, still generally interesting topics
 - Biographies, local history, experiences on language use and learning, narratives, etc.
 - Central point has been to produce data that, in principle, can be shared
 - However, when dealing with personal data the situation is never that simple
- Different users have different needs
 - One interface cannot satisfy all, but some combination probably goes far
 - Raw data access essential so people can do what they want with it
- Archive is the most important component in the infrastructure we use
 - Nothing else comes even close in terms of long-term data preservation











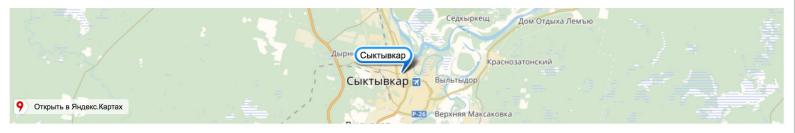
KOMI MEDIA COLLECTION

ABOUT THE PROJECT SEARCH WHOLE MEDIA COLLECTION OUR TEAM MAP INSTRUCTIONS CONTACTS

- Trilingual website
- Especially designed for the speakers
- Individuals on the video have also received their own copies
- Take-down policy if requested

- Data stored on a server in Syktyvkar
- Matches closely the files in TLA
- Has to be manually updated
 - We are working with automatization
- Currently no explicit links to the archive

Александр Юрьевич Терентьев





AJT-M-1992(00:07:10 - 00:07:14)

KPV: И сыа тшöтш сетэ тэныд вын водзе сідз мунны, мый

RUS: И это тоже дает тебе силы двигаться дальше, что

ENG: And it also gives you strenghts to go further, that

AJT-M-1992(00:07:14 - 00:07:17)

KPV: модъяс велодоны, а мыля ми асьнум асьнумес ог велодо,

RUS: другие изучают, а почему мы сами себя не изучаем,

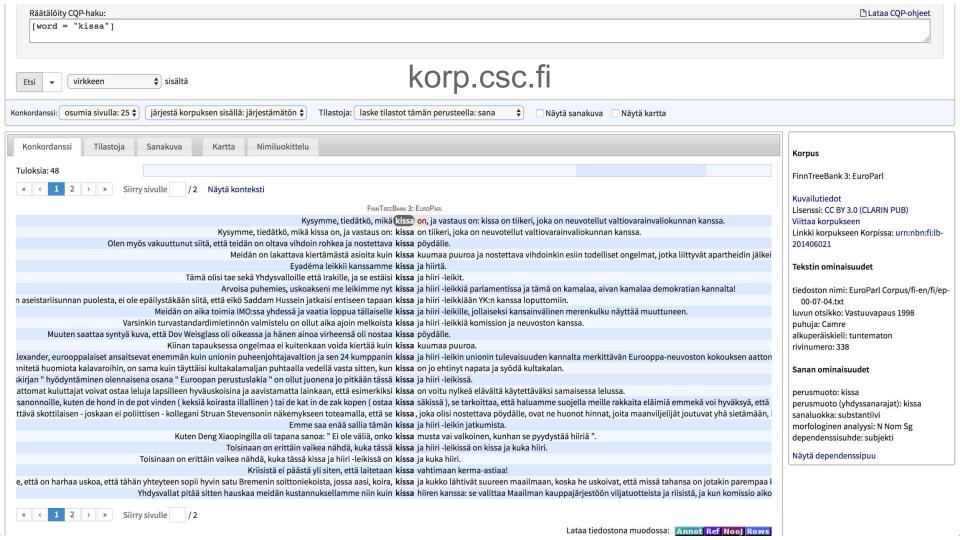
ENG: others study, and why we ourselves don't study ourselves,

AJT-M-1992(00:07:17 - 00:07:19)

KPV: колэ тшöтш сiе вöчны. RUS: это тоже надо делать.

Show Timeline

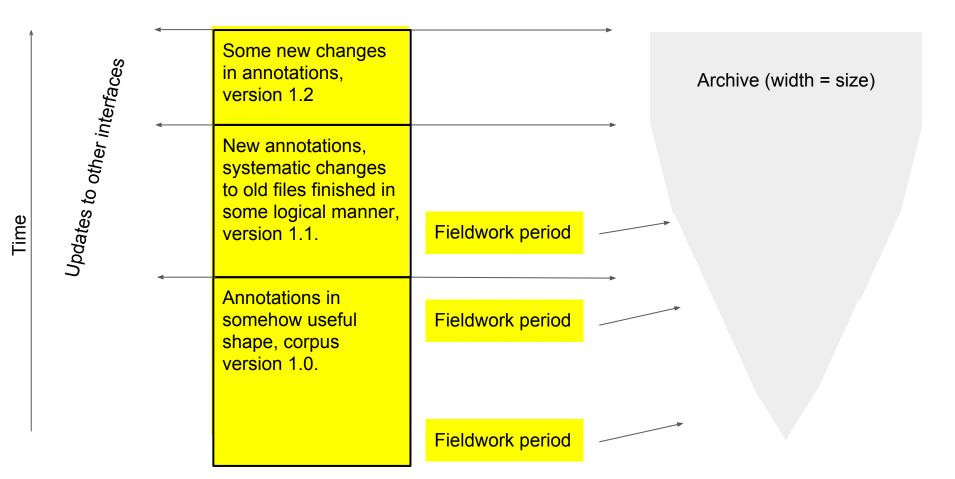




Archive interaction (in an ideal world)

- New audio and video files added roughly once a year
- Once audio and video are archived, changes to those are exceptional
- There is continuous work going on with annotations
- We use version control (Git) to keep them organized
 - Changes every few days
 - There are usually several larger changes being done
- Ideally the new changed files would be updated in the archive regularly
 - Every half a year?
 - Would correspond to a change in corpus version number

Workflow scheme



Dreaming of API

- At the moment we mainly interact with the archive through specific software
 - Arbil, LAMUS2, etc.
- Works, but is built around the idea that user want to manually do every edit
- We know exactly which files have to be changed and their location in the tree
 - So why do we have to select manually these things again in the interface?
- Are archives generally even interested about offering APIs to their data?
- The tasks we need to do are rather modest:
 - Add a file, update a file
 - Change the access level
 - Get information about the files
 - Handles, date of change, MD5, information about number of times accessed, etc.
- Data in different interfaces has to be the same!

Thank you!



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