

Русский язык Аляски

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Юбилейная конференция в честь Ю.Д. Апресяна
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History: important dates



- 1740s – first visits of Russians to Alaska
- 1792 – St. Paul's Harbor (presently: **Kodiak**) was established as the capital of Russian America
- 1799 – establishment of Russian American Company, a mixed governmental-entrepreneurial formation
- 1847 – **Ninilchik** settlement for RAC retirees is established
- 1867 – Alaska sold to the US
- 1920s – beginning of massive Americanization of Alaska

Alaskan Russian (AR)



- Variety of Russian that developed in Alaska at the time of Russian America
- Different from any variety of “Continental Russian”
- Locations:
 - Ninilchik Russian (NR)
 - Kodiak Russian
 - Pribilof Russian
 -
- NR = variant of AR that has been preserved in the speech of descendants of the Ninilchik village (Kenai peninsula)

Alaskan Russian: places



Ninilchik Russian



- Less than 10 speakers left (all over 80)
- Influence of native Alaskan languages
 - especially the Eskimo language Alutiiq
- Lexicon
 - 80% – same as in modern standard Russian
 - 20% – archaic words, dialectal words, 20th century innovations, modified words, borrowings
- Grammar
 - basically as in standard Russian
 - some categories are modified (simplified): gender, case, aspect...



DICTIONARY

of Ninilchik Russian

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Ninilchik_March 2017 - Lexique Pro

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Back Forward Home Pronounce Edit More Info

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English Part of Speech

Ninilchik_March 2017

WZ

á é í ó ú Á É

í Ó Ú

wótka - n.
 wrák'i - n.
 wral' - n.
 wrat' - v ipfv.
 wrém'a - n.
 wulkán - n.
 wunútrinast' - n.
 wz'at' - v pfv.
 w'i - pro.
 w'ibrásawat' - v ip
 w'íbras'it' - v pfv.
 w'íchist'it' - v pfv.
 w'idát' - v ipfv.
 w'idra - n.
 w'idró - n.
 W'idr'inay túndra -

wz'at'

v pfv.
 • take

variant: z'at'

Ya' étu waz'mú.
 'I'll take it.'

Ya hachú étu wz'at'.
 'I want to take that.'

On yiwó wz'al
 'He took him'

Pazhálasta waz'mí m'in'á s sabóy na láydu
 'Please take me with you to the beach'

See: pr'in'imát'

Category: move

Ninilchik_March 2017: 2493 word

Selma (Oskolkoff) Leman

- Born (1931) and raised in Ninilchik
- Definitely the best consultant among the remaining speakers of Ninilchik Russian
- Inexhaustible source of information
- Puzzles from the domain: “original creolization of NR vs. incomplete language acquisition vs. language attrition”

01/08/2019

Grammar: comitative and instrumental



- Preposition
 - comitative: *sas* ~ *s(a)*
 - instrumental: *sas* ~ *s(a)* ~ NONE
 - *sas igólkay* ~ *s igólkay* ~ *igólkay*
- Sg, \emptyset -declension: *sas at'étsam, tapóram, sas mát'am*
- Sg, a-declension: *sas mámay, sas igólkay, sas bát'ushkay*
- Pl: *s rukám'í*
 - Partial expansion of the \emptyset -declension: *sa s'istróm, pálkam*
 - Partial decay of declension: *sas at'éc*
- Aspect:
 - Pf vs Impf: *w'izála* vs. *sw'izála*
 - semelfactive *st'igála* vs. *st'ignúla*

Vassily (Bill) Hartman – the town of Kodiak



- Born (1930) and raised in Kodiak
- His mother only spoke Russian to him
- Did not know English before school
- The last speaker of Kodiak Russian
- Remarkable person and talented consultant

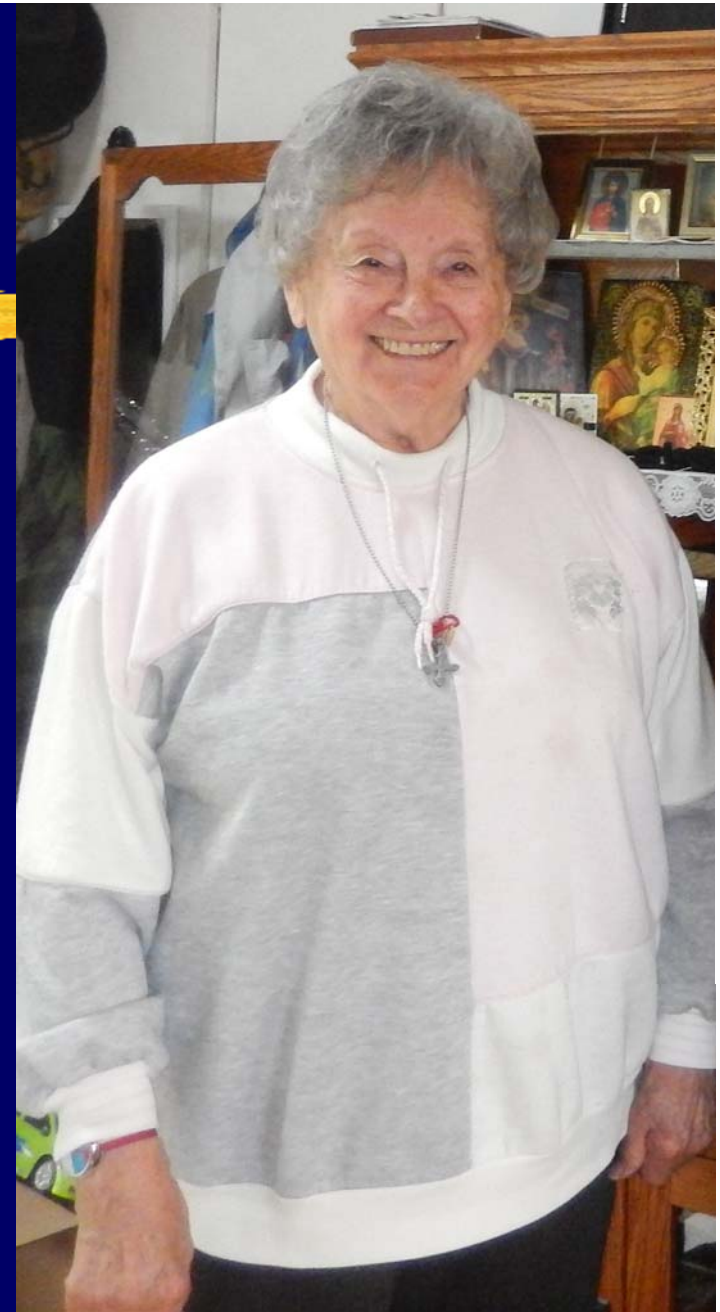
Kodiak Russian



- Minor differences from NR
- New lexical items
 - *sól'its*, cf. *сольца*
 - *l'it'éts* – clear 20th century neologism
 - *chayknút'* – rare dialectal relict
- Polite 2PI forms are preserved

Raisa Baldwin

- Born (1931) and raised in Kodiak
- Rememberer of Kodiak Russian
- Enlightened person with interest in language



Raisa Baldwin



- surprisingly exact and specific knowledge of preserved formulaic expressions
- *a pusháy*
- *s bógam*

- semantic “localization”: *chúchila* ‘monument’

Agafon Krukoff Jr.



- Born (1944) and raised in Saint Paul (Pribilof islands)
- The local native language is **Aleut**
- Rememberer of Pribilof Russian
- Analytic mind, natural sociolinguist

Agafon Krukoff Jr.



- “It was a bad word, too. When I was a bad boy, I was *sabák*. Don’t be *sabák*. Behave yourself.”

Conclusions



- AR is a unique postcolonial variety of Russian
 - In fact, several varieties with minor differences
- Lexicon and grammar are basically Russian, but with partial modification and simplification
- Puzzles from the domain: “original creolization of NR vs. incomplete language acquisition vs. language attrition”
 - Variation across speakers and even within one speaker
- Fragmentary retention in rememberers, with remarkable semantic precision
- Russian as a foreign, unwritten language, explored by field methods
 - English as a mediating language

**С днем рождения,
Юрий Дереникович!**

