

Alaska Native Language Center



Alaska Native Languages

Population and Speaker Statistics

The following table gives estimates of the population of speakers of Alaska Native languages in reference to the relevant community population. Numbers such as these should be interpreted with caution. As Krauss notes:

Arriving at statistics of number of speakers of indigenous languages out of total relevant population is complicated by two types of major factors. The first type is of course in the determination of who is a speaker, and the second is in counting who is a member of the indigenous community. (2007:409)

More relevant to those wishing to understand the status of Alaska Native languages are the current and recent efforts at language documentation and revitalization.

Language Family	Language Name	Population	Speakers
Eskimo-Aleut	Aleut	2,300	150
	(*Russia)	200	5
	Sugpiaq (Alutiiq)	3,500	200
	Central Yup'ik	25,000	10,400
	Siberian Yupik	1,400	1,000
	(*Russia)	900	300
	Inupiaq (Inuit)	15,700	2,144
	(*Canada)	30,500	24,500
	(Greenland)	47,000	47,000
Tsimshianic	Coast Tsimshian	1,400	30
	(Canada)	3,200	<400
	Nisga-Gitksan	<100	0?
	(Canada)	5,400	<1,000
Haida	Northern Haida	650	10

Athabascan- Eyak- Tlingit	(Canada)	1,100	30
	Tlingit	10,000	300
	(Canada)	1,000	75
	Eyak		0
	Ahtna	650	25
	Dena'ina	1,000	50
	Deg Xinag	250	14
	Holikachuk	180	5
	Koyukon	2,300	150
	Upper Kuskokwim	100	25
	(Lower) Tanana	400	25
	Tanacross	200	50
	Upper Tanana	300	55
	Han	60	12
	(Canada)	250	7
	Gwich'in	1,000	150
	(Canada)	1,900	400

Source: Krauss, Michael E. 2007. Native languages of Alaska. In: *The Vanishing Voices of the Pacific Rim*, ed. by Osahito Miyaoko, Osamu Sakiyama, and Michael E. Krauss. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Table 21.1, page 408)

*The non-Alaskan numbers in the table come from the earlier work of [Krauss 1997](#).

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