

Andrea Berez
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Digital Tools Summit in Linguistics
Biography

I am currently finishing my M.A. in Linguistics at Wayne State University in Detroit, where I have been an employee of the LINGUIST List for nearly three years. I have spent most of this time working as a graduate researcher for the Dena'ina Archiving, Training & Access (DATA) project, a joint venture between the LINGUIST List and the Alaska Native Language Center (ANLC) in Fairbanks (NSF-OPP 0326805). The goals of the DATA project are threefold. First, we designed and implemented a digital archive of the Dena'ina (Athabaskan) language materials housed at the ANLC, using an Oracle database and a ColdFusion web interface. Second, we designed and implemented the Qenaga.org website (<http://qenaga.org>), a "web portal" for Dena'ina language revitalization and various goings-on in the Dena'ina community. Third, the DATA project incorporates a training component: we have been training Dena'ina community members in the use of computers so that they may assume control of Qenaga.org and the digital archive at the end of the grant period; additionally, I have received training in both fieldwork and language technology. My involvement with DATA has allowed me to spend nearly twelve months in Alaska, and I have developed a professional interest in Athabaskan languages and computer-assisted linguistics. In the fall of 2006 I will start to work toward the PhD at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

I do not consider myself to be particularly expert in computer science; rather, I am the product of fortuitous training. Before working at LINGUIST, I had very little experience with computers, and therefore I am familiar with the struggles of gaining knowledge in the quickly-moving field of digital tool development. I solidly believe in the importance of keeping lines of communication between linguists and computer scientists wide open, so that each party may better understand the goals of the other.

A note about funding: as a resident of Michigan, and an organizer of the EMELD conference, I will not need funding assistance for transportation. Please use these funds to help a fellow graduate student attend the Summit.