The online Dialect Atlas of Newfoundland and Labrador English (DANL) has as its goal the preservation of a crucial component of this province’s intangible cultural heritage: its unique varieties of spoken English, as manifested in lexical, pronunciation and grammatical features. The Dictionary of Newfoundland English, which constitutes an outstanding repository of the province’s vocabulary, did not document regional lexical differences within the province, and only scratches the surface of the considerable degree of phonological and grammatical diversity within the province. The DANL project is designed to fill these gaps, and – with an interactive web display – make the information available to a worldwide audience, including scholars, students and the general public.

For scholarly researchers – among them folklorists, linguists, historians and historical geographers – DANL will offer invaluable data for comparison with other regions of the English-speaking world, in particular the source areas of Newfoundland speech varieties, Britain and Ireland. The multi-media component of the project, which will allow both visual images of feature distribution, and the playing of actual field-recorded "sound bites," will also make the linguistic data accessible to interested members of the public.

DANL will bring to completion a research project that was initiated in the 1970s by Harold Paddock, a now-retired member of the Linguistic department, though in a technological and multimedia online format which could not have been envisaged thirty years ago. The interdisciplinary research team for DANL consists of four core members – Sandra Clarke (Professor Emerita, Linguistics), Philip Hiscock (Folklore), Robert Hollett (English) and Alvin Simms (Geography) – along with Harold Paddock, who serves in an advisory capacity.

The work for the project has largely been accomplished and this ISER funding will help integrate the sound-bite component with the structural elements components.