

## The Northern Ontario and Manitoba Anishinaabemowin Dictionary (NOMAD)

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The Northern Ontario and Manitoba Anishinaabemowin Dictionary (working acronym NOMAD) project seeks to document Anishinaabemowin, first with a print edition, with the end goal of having an online speaking dictionary with audio files. Anishinaabemowin, including Ojibwe, and often known as Saulteaux in Manitoba, is spoken from Quebec, across much of the Great Lakes region, through Ontario, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Statistics Canada indicates there may be around 26,225 people who can speak Anishinaabemowin in Canada alone (2023).

Anishinaabemowin has a long history of being written and recorded, with missionaries beginning in the 1600s, and with some books, like Baraga's 1878 *A Dictionary of the Ojibway Language*, being still in use today. First and foremost, the NOMAD project is led by Anishinaabeg and is meant for speakers and learners of the language seeking to use more of it in their daily lives.

The project began with the work of long-time language teacher and writer Patricia Ningewance-Nadeau (Lac Seul FN) and the late language teacher and linguist Roger Roulette (MacGregor MB, Sandy Bay FN) when they wrote the *Ojibwe Thesaurus* together in 2020. It was clear from that they were able to make a resource for our unique region. That kind of resource is what is needed by language revitalizers right now, and for future efforts. Existing online dictionaries are: the *Ojibwe People's Dictionary* for Ojibwe in Minnesota, Wisconsin, border communities in Northwestern Ontario; and the *Nishnaabemwin Online Dictionary* for Odawa and Ojibwe around Lake Huron. NOMAD's provisional focus is on Anishinaabemowin spoken from communities in Manitoba and Northern Ontario, as far east as Sault Ste. Marie, where syncopation (systematic vowel reduction) becomes more prevalent.

### DATA COLLECTION

Work then began in 2021 on collecting the low hanging fruits, the words and word forms from Pat and Roger's written resources. As a lan-

*continued on page 4*

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# Interdisciplinary Linguistic Program Faculty

The ILP is anchored at the Department of Anthropology; the core of the Linguistic Faculty resides at that Department, as well as in Modern Languages, English, Rhetoric, and Psychology:

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**Ivan Roksandic** (Anthropology) teaches *Languages of the World*, *Morphology* and *Indo-European Linguistics*. His main research interests are language typology and indigenous languages of South America. His current project focuses on the indigenous toponymy in the Caribbean.

**Eunhee Buettner** (Rhetoric) teaches *Transnational and Intercultural Language and Communication* and *Rhetorics of Identity*. She is specialized in Applied Linguistics. Her research interests include intercultural communication, the impact of language on culture and identity, bi/plurilingualism, and teaching English as an additional language.

**Amy Desroches** (Psychology) uses cognitive and brain imagining methods to examine reading and language development. In particular, her work focuses on the role of phonology in learning to read, and the impact that reading development has on spoken language processing.

**Zbigniew Izydorezyk** teaches at the Department of English. His areas of special interest include Old and Middle English, history of English, history of Latin, and palaeography.

**Kristin Lovrien-Meuwese** (Modern Languages) is interested in language learning in general and second language acquisition in particular, but has most recently worked on a sociolinguistic study of German in Manitoba.

**Jorge Machín-Lucas** (Modern Languages) is a specialist in XXth and XXIst Century Spanish Literature, and teaches courses in Spanish Normative Grammar and History of the Spanish Language.

**Andrew McGillivray** (Rhetoric) teaches *Transnational and Intercultural Language and Communication*. His research interests include Icelandic studies, mythology, and medieval rhetoric. He is currently developing a project about cultural memory and the representation of heritage in Manitoba's Interlake region.

**Aandeg Muldrew** (Anthropology) teaches Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe language) and other classes related to Indigenous language revitalization. His research interests include lexicography, morphology, clause typing, phonetics, language revitalization, sec-

ond language learning pedagogies. His current research is documenting Anishinaabemowin spoken in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario for publication in a print and online dictionary.

**Liliane Rodriguez** (Modern Languages) teaches Linguistics, Comparative Stylistics and Translation. Her main research is in Lexicometry, Geolinguistics and Bilingualism. She is the author of several books and of many articles in Linguistics and Translation Studies.

**Bong-gi Sohn** (Rhetoric) teaches *Transnational and Intercultural Language and Communication* and *Rhetoric of Visual Representation*. Her primary research interests lie within critical applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, focusing on challenging normative discourses in language learning and teaching, particularly regarding plurilingual students who use English as an additional language.

**Heather Souter** (Anthropology) teaches language revitalization, linguistics for Indigenous language educators, and Michif. Her research interests include Michif morphosyntax, Indigenous language technology, MAP and other immersion pedagogies, and Indigenous language revitalization. Her current research focuses on language technologies for Indigenous languages and trauma-informed immersion methodologies.

**Shelley Tulloch** (Anthropology) teaches *Sociolinguistics*. Her research interests include bilingualism, identity, and language revitalization. Her current research focuses on intercultural Inuit education.

In addition, several courses included in the ILP curriculum are taught at other Departments; UW faculty members from those Departments associated with the ILP include **Jeffrey Newmark** (Religion and Culture), **Tracy Whalen** (Rhetoric), **Bea Castaneda** (Developmental Studies), and **Glenn Moulaïson**, who teaches *History of the French Language*.

## 2025-26 Courses

Students interested in majoring in Linguistics should contact the Coordinator of the ILP.  
For more information visit our website at: [uwinnipeg.ca/interdisciplinary-linguistics](http://uwinnipeg.ca/interdisciplinary-linguistics)

Fall/Winter 2025/2026		
LING-1001-001 Introduction to Linguistics	1:30-2:20 MWF	S. Tulloch
LING-4004-001 Honours Thesis	TBA	TBA
Fall 2025		
LING-2102/ANTH-2400 Method & Theory in Linguistic Anthropology	1:00-2:15 TuTh	I. Roksandic
LING-2104/ANTH-2407/IS-2407 Language Revitalization	4-5:15 MW	H. Souter
CLAS-2850 The Classical Roots of Medical Terminology	8:30-9:45 TuTh	TBA
PSYC-2620 Psycholinguistics	11:30-12:45 TuTh	A. Desroches
LING-3102/LING-4102 Indo-Euro Ling & Myth	10:00-11:15 TuTh	I. Roksandic
LING-3105/DEV-3300 Speech and Language Disorders	5:30-8:30 Th	TBA
ENGL-3812 History of the English Language	11:30-12:45 TuTh	Z. Izydorczyk
LING-4025/HR-4025/IS-4025 Indigenous Languages: Culture, Rights, & Conflict	4-5:15 TuTh	TBA
Winter 2026		
*LING-2001/ANTH-2401/ENGL-2803 Phonetics & Phonology	6-9 PM Th	TBA
LING-2003/ANTH-2403/ENGL-2802 Syntax	4:00-5:15 MW	TBA
LING-2004/ANTH-2405/ENGL-2806 Semantics	2:30-3:45 MW	TBA
LING-2104/ANTH-2407/IS-2407 Language Revitalization	4-5:15 TuTh	H. Souter
LING-2301 Phonetics	2:30-3:45 MW	Rodriguez
CLAS-2850 The Classical Roots of Medical Terminology	8:30 - 9:45 MWF	TBA
LING-3103 Sociolinguistics	6-9 M	TBA
LING-3105-780/DEV-3300-050 Speech and Language Disorders	5:30-8:30 Tu	TBA
LING-3303 Géolinguistique	4-5:15 MW	Rodriguez
PSYC-3480-770 Interpersonal Communications	6-9 Th	TBA

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continued from page 1

guage learner and linguist, I was brought on as the tech help for Pat (my *gookom*, grandmother) and Roger. Their numerous books provided a rich set of materials to be compiled, including their other published glossaries, Pat's *Zagataagan: A Northern Ojibwe Dictionary*, and transcripts of monolingual interviews Roger conducted in Manitoba in the 90s. In this way, the dictionary as it stands now, mainly represents the language of Roger and Pat, with the addition of the people they worked with.

New data collection, while crucial, makes up a small portion of the work done on the project so far. The majority of time has been collecting and fleshing out existing data. By putting all the words in one place, by keeping the presentation consistent, and giving richer context through grammatical information, we are making their language more accessible to learners. That is the first goal of the project, get a print version out with that info in it, then continue working with speakers to do audio recording to get a more detailed documentation of Anishinaabe as it is spoken.

Data management and using technology has been my role with NOMAD. To edit and store the text information, we have been using the free open-source FieldWorks Language Explorer™ (FLEX) program. Much of the work here involves fleshing entries to be more informative, since words are usually written in a specific Anishinaabemowin form, then with a simple English gloss (translation). To a user, it may not be clear what grammatical form the word is, because there are many differences between English and Anishinaabemowin that are too numerous to be mentioned here. One easy example is that Anishinaabemowin has categories of words English does not.

wiisini                      eat

Based on English, a user would think you could then use *wiisini* to talk about eating soup or a chicken. However, that would be incorrect in Anishinaabemowin. To talk about eating soup you would need the verb *omiijin* 'eats it', and for chicken, the verb *odamwaan* 'eats it (animate)'. So, the dictionary has to differentiate at least these three terms. This can be done in a consistent way with the translation and a grammar code (*vta*, *vti*, *vai*, etc). The disadvantage of a grammar code is that one likely needs a university course or detailed explanation for it to make any sense. So, ideally another note or example sentence will be there to further clarify correct or common uses of the Anishinaabemowin word.

wiisini                      *vai* 'eats, has a meal'  
omiijin                      *vti* 'eats it'  
odamwaan                      *vta* 'eats it (animate), eats someone'

The task of the dictionary maker is to make these differences apparent in a concise way. This is made harder in more technical areas, like plant terms, sewing terms etc., where languages have different categories and conceptions which can escape the written word.

Since 2021, Pat and I have been going out and doing field work with language experts

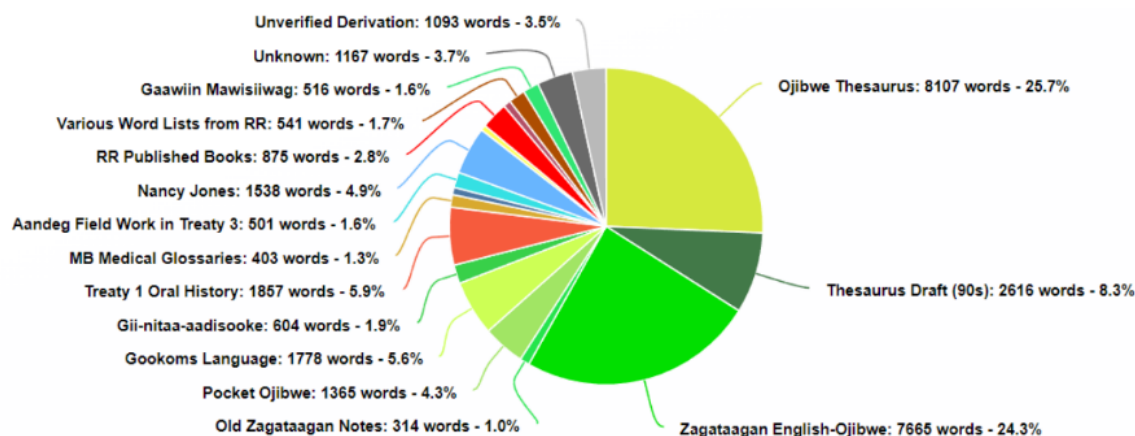


Fig. 1: Breakdown of entry sources

when time allows in between our teaching schedules, drawing on her decades of translation and interview experience. In our work we have put *Anishinaabe-izhichigewin* (practices) first and honoured language speakers as experts in their fields. We began work with the late Ron Indian-Mandamin, when we asked him to feast the language and its spirit-guardians for the project. When we have worked with language experts we have paid \$100-\$175 an hour, depending on the kind of work being done. Additional gifts and tobacco are also given when appropriate.

Those sessions are then transcribed using Elan, checked for new words, and useful example sentences. The funds that have been used come from Pat's company Mazinaate Inc. and her research funds as a professor at the University of Manitoba. A lot of time has also been volunteered by myself when I was not teaching contract courses. All this is quiet time and money intensive, so relatively little has been done compared with work drawn from existing written sources.

Currently we have ~30,000 unique entries in the dictionary. The entries are sourced from various places that have been affected by the collection process (Fig. 1). There are an additional ~7000 duplicate entries that were imported and are difficult to delete on FLEx. During the initial creation stage I merged a number of entries. So, for ~1,157 entries the sources were lost (however they are easy to replace). Pat's books (*Gookom's Language*, *Pocket Ojibwe*, *Zagataagan*, *unpublished Thesaurus Draft*) are over represented here since they were imported first. So, those words were not imported from other sources later. Then there are another ~1,093 entries that I added that are not attested yet, and need to be verified. They are either part of number patterns I filled out, or dependent noun patterns that need to be filled out. To not make any assumptions on my part, I need to check those forms with the experts.

bezhigwaabik 'one dollar'	*niizhwaabik 'two dollars'	niswaabik 'three dollars'
nindede 'my dad'	*gidede 'your dad'	odeden 'one's dad'

## Basic Features of FLEx Entry

command form for transitives

3sg. ind. for head word

comm. name (also used in whole region)

speaker and/or written source

for reference if something else is changed

Lexeme Form	Wes <b>ishpaa'</b>
Citation Form	Wes <u>odishpaa'aan</u>
Note	Eng
<b>Sense 1</b>	
Gloss	Eng <b>scolds someone</b>
Grammatical Info.	vta
Dialect Labels (Sense	Sandy Bay
Example	
General Note	Eng
Semantics Note	Eng
Source	<u>Ojibwe Thesaurus</u>
Thesaurus	talk
Original Word	<u>odishpaa'aan</u>

Fig. 2: Basic Features of FLEx Entry

## REGIONAL VARIATION

As the project began, it was clear that there is lots of variety in the Anishinaabemowin spoken in our region. Pat and Roger would have words the other was not familiar with. Other times they would mention different forms they had ran into in other places. Because we are using the Double Vowel system of writing (adopted at a 1996 conference), we could easily communicate and pronounce each other's words, yet this variation is crucial to document and convey. The whole goal of the Anishinaabemowin revitalization movement is to bridge generational gaps and speak in ways authentic to our families.

There are variations on all levels of the language: sound, grammar, words, and phrases. The double vowel system can account for variations and consistent sound correspondences. Yet, there are some unique sounds unique to certain communities or areas that should be displayed to users that need special attention. Variants include shortenings or clippings used in fast speech in some communities. Other changes can affect word forms used in the dictionary. Here it becomes trickier to decide which form should be the main form, or whether they should be separate entries entirely. One example is with vowels that are affected by a 'w', often causing them to merge into a new vowel sound, like a 'o'. This matters especially at the starts of words, since other word parts attach differently to a vowel or a consonant like a w.

wakewaji 'gets cold easy'	okewaji
wadikwan 'branch'	odikwan
waniike 'forgets'	oniike
wagidaandawe 'climbs on top'	ogidaandawe

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This system of changes is not found with every word in someone's vocabulary, but instead is a matter of degrees. Some individuals will have more 'o's in their speech than the 'w' forms. This means both forms are needed in the dictionary, then more detail can be added showing who prefers which forms.

Other differences are easier to identify on a map. Overall, differences seem greater going from north to south than east to west from Ontario to Manitoba, similar to Rand Valentine's 1994 *Ojibwe Dialect Relationships* survey. Northern regions east of Lake Winnipeg and through the Winnipeg and English River system to Lac Seul, seem to have clusters of features different than to the south. Overall, though, there are many overlapping differences throughout that make generalizations hard.

## PUBLICATION

With the three years of part time work, we are nearing a place where the preliminary print version can be envisioned. Pat is working on a handy concise dictionary of Lac Seul Ojibwe for use by students to be out this winter. It will be more portable and contain less detailed information. Then a more detailed print dictionary based on the collected data will be put out for Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario Anishinaabemowin soon afterwards. Currently the main features are: (1) having a few grammatical forms of words, so users know which conjugation pattern to use (singular and plural for nouns, command forms and independent forms for transitive verbs etc.); (2) English translations (gloss); (3) usage notes are included as needed, including dialect info; then (4) we have a source leading back to the author or speaker where this word is attested.

(Fig.2) To complete the preliminary NOMAD dictionary, the main task for Pat and I is to complete ~6000 glosses which need writing or editing. There are also certain other typos and certain conventions need to be tweaked. Then terms outside of our knowledge need to be double checked with our experts from communities in Manitoba and Ontario before publication.

With a concrete resource out, we can then continue to add to it, and make it more comprehensive with more outreach and feedback. An online talking dictionary is the way to go for accessibility. It is clear that audio resources are crucial for language learners to develop their listening skills and provide guidance for pronunciation. The technical challenge there is to record quality audio and create a lasting useful platform for the words and audio. This all needs funding for workers collecting the audio and maintaining the platform. Going forward, this project hopes to provide a strong base for language revitalizers to study and strengthen Anishinaabemowin in our communities for future generations.

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Since human language is both a biological phenomenon (the language faculty is innate) and a sociocultural one (language is the main carrier of all human culture), linguistics is necessarily an interdisciplinary field, spanning the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences.

The ILP at UW provides a vibrant environment for teaching, study, and research. It offers 3-year BA, 4-year BA, and Honours BA degrees in Interdisciplinary Linguistics through a variety of courses across several departments. Linguistics is defined as the branch of knowledge whose subject matter includes both language as a general property of the human species and particular languages.

## Award

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The Angela Mattiacci Memorial Scholarship in Interdisciplinary Linguistics is awarded every October to a student majoring in linguistics with a distinguished performance in ILP courses. We invite you to join us in this magic adventure that is the study of human language in all its protean forms, from conventional to quirky.



## Colloquium

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Every year in April, after the exam period, the Annual Student Colloquium is held, offering students an opportunity to present the results of their research to the audience of their colleagues.

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# EXPLORING SILENT BEHAVIOUR IN JAPANESE STUDENTS IN ESL AND EMI UNIVERSITY COURSES

NICOLE FRUEHAUF, *Major in Linguistics*

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The focus of this paper is on Japanese students in English-medium instruction (EMI) courses or English as a second language (ESL) courses in university for whom English is not their native language, specifically their oral participation in class and the implications thereof.

It is found that many Japanese students taking EMI courses only spoke for up to one percent of the class time even though participation marks and expectation from teachers required more speaking (Albertson, 2020). This lack of participation or silence seems to be a prevalent behaviour of Japanese students in EMI and ESL contexts and this paper seeks to define key causes for it and the implications so as to understand the student's experiences. Key reasons for their reticent behaviour can be explained by differences in pedagogical styles and communicative styles between Japanese and English university courses, as well as silence being used as a face-saving technique. In what follows, using eight various studies that explore Japanese student's silence in the classroom, I discuss the plausible reasons for Japanese student's silence in the classroom, the consequences of these behaviours, and possible strategies professors can use in the classroom to support these students.

A pertinent contrast between western culture and Japanese culture within their universities is their pedagogical style in their expectations of student participation. In the west, it is encouraged for students to share

their thoughts, opinions, and to critique or question others in educational settings while it is not in Japan (Mendoza & Teo, 2023). Kota (pseudonym), a Japanese student attending his first year of a Canadian university noted that student roles in Japan were centered around learning from the "powerful and knowledgeable" professors, while in Canada it was more student-centered and conventional for students to share their ideas and seek feedback from peers and professors (Morita, 2009, p.450). Another student, Otoya, who was a Japanese exchange student at an American university, alleged that it was not "allowed" for students to share personal views with their professors in class, especially to express opposite perspectives to that of the professor (Sato & Hodge, 2015, pp.218-9). This is supported by Albertson's (2020) findings in his review of a variety of studies, where he stated that silence in the classroom is valued and fosters harmony within Japanese culture and that the instruction in Japan is teacher-centered where students learn passively. This difference in student participation expectation does not necessarily imply that Japanese students cannot adapt to the pedagogical styles of English university classes, but it does mean they will have to overcome it with reasonable difficulty.

In addition to pedagogical style differences in English university courses, Japanese students have to overcome communication style differences. Albertson (2020) found that Japanese conversation styles consist of "patiently

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waiting for one's turn" while English speakers allow for interruptions and consist of more "spontaneous turn exchanges" (p.48). As well, Albertson (2020) noted that the length of silences and pauses socially acceptable in conversation are longer in Japanese styles of communication. Morita (2009) affirms this in her study, as Kota, the Japanese student, expressed that discussions were "free-flowing" and student-centered and he had difficulty to interject his thoughts into class discussions (p.450).

Japanese L2 English students already encounter the challenge of understanding and using the English language, but now they have to do that while simultaneously adapting to the rhythm of typical English discussions in the classroom. Nakane (2005) conducted a case study of 3 Japanese students taking Australian university classes who had previously already resided in Australia for two to eight years and had some experience studying at Australian institutions. Nakane (2005) found that two of those Japanese students exhibited prevalent use of silence in the classroom whether in their responses to questions when prompted to answer or via lack of general participation. The consequence of their silence was that their silence was filled either by interjections from the other students or the professor, and thus their turns to speak were terminated. All three participants exhibited marked differences in their voluntary participation compared to their Australian counterparts: They relied a lot more on being directed to speak via a peer or the professor rather than interjecting comments themselves (Nakane, 2005). Evidently, Nakane's (2005) study reflects the difficulty Japanese students experience to interject comments spontaneously due to their cultural commu-

nication style tendencies.

A motive for Japanese students to employ silence in ESL or EMI university classes may be to save face. A major reason for Japanese students' reticent behaviour in English academic settings is that they do not understand the lecture material or have difficulty expressing themselves, so they would rather be silent than construct themselves as students who lack either knowledge or language ability. In Morita's (2004) study, Nanako (pseudonym), a Japanese student, explained her difficulties of participating in English-speaking university courses in an interview; Nanako stated that she abstained from speaking due to being the youngest and seemingly least experienced student in the class (Morita, 2004). Another participant in Morita's (2004) study avoided speaking in class because she was afraid of making language mistakes in front of the class and for her classmates to hear her poor English skills. In another study done by Morita (2009), Kota, the male Japanese student, earnestly tried to participate in class discussions, but he had many barriers to doing so which included experiencing difficulty using English proficiently, having limited comprehension, and the fast pace of the discussions. In an interview, Kota clearly expressed that his goal was not just to participate more, but implied that his speech should be at a high academic level and without error (Morita, 2009), thus trying to construct his identity as a competent student at his own standard. Mendoza and Teo (2023) analyzed interviews of student participation in Japanese university courses and concluded that Japanese students who employed silence in the classroom did so as a face-saving strategy that protected them from embarrassment of revealing ignorance to their peers. Although the study

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conducted by Mendoza and Teo (2023) is focused within the context of a Japanese classroom in Japan, Japanese students would likely employ the strategy of using silence to protect one's image of competency in ESL or EMI classrooms as well.

The consequences of reticence or silence in the classroom can be negative, and can lead to students feeling isolated, lonely, and frustrated. In an interview where both British and Japanese informants interpreted student silences in an English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, the British informants perceived silence more negatively than the Japanese informants (Harumi, 2010); The British considered silence a sign of boredom, lack of interest, or laziness, and in doing so, highlight the difference in the value of silence between British and Japanese cultures. Maher and King (2020) discussed the cycle of anxiety in Japanese students in a EFL classroom in Japan and found that the students were silent due to language anxiety and negative thoughts about their abilities, in which their silence then worried them and created negative thoughts in return.

This proves that Japanese students themselves may perceive their lack of participa-

tion negatively if they know participation is required. All eight participants in Sato and Hodge's (2015) study of Japanese exchange students in an American university felt disappointed and isolated when there were group discussions in the classroom. Many of the Japanese participants felt that they could not contribute mutual thoughts or ideas to discussions they felt they had little contextual knowledge of (Sato & Hodge). Even when paired with an American student, one of the Japanese participants shared an experience where the conversation would not last long and the American student became bored and began talking to other students (Sato & Hodge). Congruently, in Moritas (2009) study, Kota expressed that he often felt frustrated with his studies and especially his class participation.

There are different strategies professors can employ to increase participation within Japanese students and in turn create positive learning experiences. Firstly, Professors can create an environment where students feel like valued members. This is reiterated by Mendoza and Teo (2023) who state that a safe and comfortable environment is needed for students to interact and engage in class activ-



ities (p. 57). One method of creating this environment can be via the suggestion offered by Albertson (2020) in which professors in EFL classes can focus on topics that are relevant to student's countries so that students might be more invested if they are able to express their own cultural identity and history through language (p. 51). The effects of creating an inclusive environment can be seen in Morita's (2009) study, in which Kota could tangibly feel the effort of a professor who endeavored to incorporate the perspectives of international students and treated those students as having valuable insight and experiences to share with the class (p. 451). Another suggestion is for professors to increase time given to students to respond to topics, especially since Japanese communication styles tolerate longer lengths of silence. This is supported from evidence found by Rowe (1974), that increasing waiting time from one second to three or five seconds improves the quality of student class participation (as cited in Nakane, 2005, p. 96).

Ultimately, though employing silence may be valued in certain Japanese university contexts, it is not perceived the same in ESL and EMI university courses due to cultural differences. In addition, the pedagogical and communication style differences between Japanese and more western societies contribute to the difficulty Japanese students experience to interject their own thoughts and comments in ESL and EMI university courses. Although Japanese students may use silence as a face-saving strategy in response to their difficulty to understand or speak, they still lose face by negative perceptions of silence from other peers as well as themselves. To support Japanese students in ESL and EMI university courses, professors can contribute to more

positive experiences by creating classroom environments in which every student feels as though they have a sense of agency, and by adapting their expectations in student response times.

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# “Cultured Language”: The Reflection of Power Structure in North Korean Language in Comparison to South Korean Language

JUSCENTA HALIGOWSKI, *Major in Rhetoric*

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Since the establishment of North Korea by Kim Il-Sung in 1948 after division from South Korea at the 38th parallel, language has seemingly been one of the primary ways that the regime has consolidated its power and expressed its political views. Kim Il-Sung and his government quickly began to shape and standardize language even before creation of their national ideology (*Juche*), which demonstrates exactly how much importance was placed on language as “a powerful weapon for revolutionary strife and construction” (Song, 2015, p.483). *Juche* itself is a quasi-religious, uniquely North Korean ideology that places emphasis on self-sufficiency in relation to politics, military and economy (Breton, 2014, p.14; Lee, 2005, p.1; *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2024). Analysis of the carefully planned out differences which sets North Korean language apart from South Korean language reveals not only aspects of *Juche* state ideology, but also the impacts of political control on national identity. This includes the designation of North Korean language as “cultured” (*munhwaeo*, 문화어) language, purification of language by replacing foreign loanwords with government-sanctioned vocabulary, and creation of reserved titles/honorifics, text formatting, and rules around the tone of voice when referring to members of the Kim family. Therefore, it can be argued that the control of the North Korean dictatorship regime, along with the complex political

relationship between North and South Korea, has been reflected in every aspect of the North Korean language, especially in comparison to the South Korean language.

## NORTH KOREAN LANGUAGE AS “CULTURED” LANGUAGE

Within his 1966 talk with linguists, Kim Il-Sung designated North Korean language as “cultured language”, or *munhwaeo* (문화어) to differentiate it from South Korean as “standard language”, or *pyojuneo* (표준어) (Kim, 1966, p.295). Such a designation immediately demonstrates political motivation on behalf of Kim Il-Sung to not only separate the two languages but also to impart the importance of self-sufficiency present within *Juche* onto North Korean language specifically. Aside from applying *Juche* to North Korean language, Spencer Jentsch (2010) argues that this designation was a strategic case of re-branding to establish both the language and country of North Korea as superior (p.3). The word choice itself of “cultured” aligns with this establishment of superiority, as it implies that the language holds cultural significance in contrast to the word “standard”. The ease by which North Korean language was labeled as well demonstrates the control that the government has in shaping the national identity of a country, with this label often reflecting how the leader presents both the language and country as well to the rest of the world. In her work identifying the “rhetorical turn”

which accompanied the name switch, Roy (2024) highlights that “[the switch] illuminates...how the question of language became deeply tied to the question of the political legitimacy of the leadership and the state” (Roy, 2024, p.203). In this sense, it can be said that the language name is a way by which power is both reflected and consolidated.

#### “PURIFICATION” AND PRESERVATION OF NORTH KOREAN LANGUAGE

Along with designating North Korean language as “cultured”, another way that Kim Il-Sung initially attempted to “purify” North Korean language from South Korean was by purging and replacing various loanwords from Chinese (including *hanja*), English, and Japanese with Korean words (Song, 2015,

pp.485-486). He argued that “[North Koreans] should not copy from the language of any other country-much less take the Seoul dialect, corrupted as it is by English and Japanese, as the standard.” (1964, p.23). Once again, within this statement and his intent to banish all foreign words, there is presence of the same ideal of self-sufficiency also found within *Juche*. However, use of the word “corrupted” is indicative of the political relationship between North and South Korea, along with political views towards the relationships that South Korea has with America and Japan. This view still exists within North Korean government in the modern day, as in 2023, they passed the “Pyongyang Cultural Language Protection Act” which bans all use of “puppet language” and warrants a death sentence for anyone caught speaking it (Jieun Kim, 2023). The fact that such strong attitudes towards foreign words still exists more than half a century after Kim Il-Sung’s initial talk with linguists is evidence that language has the potential to reflect impacts of political viewpoints over a large span of time.

The remnants of Kim Il-Sung’s decisions around language can also be seen within the writing system. In contrast to the elimination of foreign loanwords and *hanja*, Kim Il-Sung showed reluctance to reform the *hangul* writing system as he stated:

If Koreans in the north and south used different alphabets, it would be impossible for them to read the letters they wrote to each other...This would bring about the serious consequence of erasing some of the common national characteristics of the Korean people and, in the end, of splitting the nation...We communists can never accept any reform of our alphabet which would divide our nation. (p.14)



Commemorative Stamp Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of Hangul: 1946 (Public Domain)

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This sentiment itself demonstrates the complex connection and turbulent relationship between the two countries. Whilst the differences between North and South Korean language are symbolic of the divide between the two countries, it seems that the similarities often reflect shared history and hopeful attitudes towards the potential of reunification.

#### LINGUISTIC ELEMENTS RESERVED FOR THE KIM FAMILY

In addition to being a primary identifier of the control and political motivations stemming from the North Korean regime, language is also reflective of societal expectations around reverence toward members of the Kim family. This is mainly through reserved use for the Kim family of titles such as “Supreme Leader”, honorifics (께서 instead of 이/가) and even tone of voice. Tone is specifically highlighted by Sonia Ryang (2021) in her work *Language and Truth in North Korea*, where she states that when paraphrasing Kim Il-Sung, one must “select an appropriate *soribitgal* (literally, “color of voice”), as depending on the content of Kim Il Sung’s quoted words, one needs to use a “low but bright” voice, a “thick voice,” or a “deep voice” (Li 1975, as cited in Ryang, 2021, pp. 78-79 ). While South Koreans do use honorifics such as “께서”, they are not specifically used for members of a certain family or political leaders (“께서,” 2025). The fact that rules around these linguistic elements are built around respecting the Kim family shows that their political status is both embedded within and reinforced through North Korean language.

Formatting is another aspect of language which is not untouched by ideology and the cult of personality surrounding the Kim family. In all North Korean newspapers and on

their websites, the names of Kim Il-Sung, Kim Jong-Il, and Kim Jong-Un are often bolded and/or made a larger font than the surrounding text (조선의 소리, 2025; 조선중앙통신, 2025; 청년전위, 2025; *Pyongyang Times*, 2025). While subtle, such a detail subconsciously draws the reader’s attention to the names and offsets them, implying a higher level of importance than the rest of the text. This differs from South Korean newspapers, where certain government officials may have special titles based on their roles, but no bolding and difference in size from the rest of the text and the names of other politicians (김, 2025). From analysis of this example, it is evident that even through the basic formatting of text, one can view how different the power structures are between North and South Korea.

#### CONCLUSION

To conclude, it is evident that various aspects within the initial standardization of North Korean language reflect not only the political power structure and ideology of *Juche* in North Korea but also the complex relationship and division between the two countries of North and South Korea. These aspects are reflected in every part of the language and remain in some form today, including its designation as “cultured” language, purification of foreign loan words and reserved titles, honorifics, and even tone of voice relating to members of the Kim family. The reflection of power structure and politics is only amplified when comparing the similarities and differences between North Korean language and South Korean language, especially in reference to Kim Il-Sung’s hesitancy to change the *hangul* writing system due to the potential of reunification. Ultimately, the nuances between North and South Korean language are

just as complex and multifaceted as the history and relationship in and around the border of North and South Korea.

#### FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to the controlled nature of North Korean media and language, I acknowledge that it is difficult to expand the scope of research beyond analyzing what has already been released by the North Korean government. However, I believe that future research should focus on updating resources produced by the North Korean government on language to determine how the language has developed and if this development reflects current political motivations. I had incredible difficulty searching for updated dictionaries and vocabulary handbooks, with almost all of the ones I could find being from the 1990s and prior.

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# Ukrainians in Manitoba: History and Modern Issues

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Ukrainians have been migrating to Canada in large numbers for over a century. Beginning in 1891, Ukrainians have moved across the Atlantic to settle across the country in waves, largely due to the various conflicts that have enveloped the region over the years (Stick & Hou, 2022). As a result, about 4% of Canadians report at least partial Ukrainian heritage. Canada has long offered ideal conditions for migrants due to its vast and diverse landscapes, creating many opportunities for migrants to find work and make new lives for themselves. The Canadian government has also incentivized immigration on many occasions, and did so in the late 19th century in the hopes of making use of the vast agricultural land of the prairie provinces. For the last two years, though, the Ukrainian community has faced immense challenges, both in Canada and globally. The large-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia that began in 2022 has led to the displacement of many Ukrainians, and a significant number have arrived in Canada, including many who have moved to Manitoba. This means that the history of Ukrainians in Manitoba is more important than ever, as it can inform us of what issues Ukrainians have encountered in the past, and what has made Manitoba such an important place for Ukrainians moving abroad.

Around 13.2% of Ukrainians who live in Canada reside in Manitoba (Stick and Hou, 2022). While this is not the highest number of Ukrainians in any one province, it is the highest number per capita, with around 14.5% of Manitobans overall reporting at least partial

Ukrainian heritage (Statistics Canada, 2016). Understanding these numbers makes clear the significant cultural impact that Ukrainians have had on the province. This contribution has been both passive and active. With such a significant portion of the population being Ukrainian, there is a natural cultural dissemination of food, religion, language, and more. However, Ukrainians have also made active efforts to share their culture with the rest of the province, and they have participated in Folklorama every year since its inception, being one of the founding pavilions in 1970 (Ukrainian Canadian Congress, 2020).

The migration of Ukrainians to Manitoba began in 1891, when they began arriving in large numbers to Canada (Stick and Hou, 2022). Between 1891 and 1914, an estimated 150000 Ukrainians arrived on the east coast of Canada. These migrants were heavily encouraged by the Canadian government and Canadian corporations, who advertised the prairies and their agricultural potential in order to bring in more workers (Canadian Pacific Railway Company, 1891). From there, most moved west and settled in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Manitoba in particular was very attractive to Ukrainian migrants, at least relative to its population. This was partially because Winnipeg was the first major stop on the journey by train through the prairies that many Ukrainian immigrants embarked on (Ukrainian Canadian Congress, 2020).

At this point in their journey, many chose to stay in Manitoba, dispersing throughout

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the province and forming communities in and around Winnipeg. As a result, Winnipeg has become an important city in the history of Ukrainians in Canada, being referred to by some as the “gateway to the West” (Yuzyk, 1956). Ukrainian immigration did not end with this wave, though. Another wave of migrants arrived in the aftermath of the First World War, when Ukraine was conquered by the Soviet Union after a brief and chaotic independence in the wake of the Russian Empire’s collapse (Stick and Hou, 2022). Another wave arrived after the Second World War, and even as early as 1956 around one in eight Manitobans had Ukrainian ancestry (Yuzyk, 1956). Another wave came in the 1990s, as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. This leads us to today, in 2024, as for the last two years Ukraine has been once again fighting for its independence against Russia. This conflict has, as with the many fought in the region in the past, led to a mass displacement of Ukrainians around the world, many of whom have travelled to Canada as refugees.

As of February 2024, almost 250000 Ukrainians have arrived as refugees in Canada (CTV News, 2024). Of these migrants,

almost 29000, or over 10%, have arrived in Manitoba, though how many have remained is not entirely clear (Woelk, 2024). This leads to some important questions that we, as Canadians and more specifically Manitobans, must answer. For one, what challenges do recent Ukrainian arrivals face when they attempt to start anew? One of the most significant problems, of course, is the language barrier. Many new arrivals do not speak much English, which in turn presents difficulties with all other aspects of life in Canada – finding and maintaining work, acquiring housing, and even fundamental activities like grocery shopping are all made far more challenging when one does not speak the local language. The language barrier is not a topic that is unique to Ukrainians, though, as many recent migrants to Canada face similar challenges. We must ask what circumstances might exist to make the experience of Ukrainian migrants different from the experiences of those from other backgrounds.

Another question that we must face is whether Manitoba is doing enough, both at a governance level and an individual level, to make Ukrainian refugees feel welcome



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and help them find their footing. One factor that certainly effects the experiences that Ukrainian refugees have in Canada and Manitoba is the large pre-existing Ukrainian culture that has established itself. This certainly aids somewhat with the issue of the language barrier, as there remains a notable number of Ukrainian speakers in Manitoba. The Ukrainian community has also come together in numerous ways to aid those who find themselves as new arrivals in the province. For one, many groups have put on fundraisers to help Ukrainians escape the conflict in their home country and put down roots in Manitoba. These include tourism organizations, like Cobblestone Freeway, which has hosted events to raise money for Ukrainian families settling in Canada. Other local groups have made efforts to fundraise for Ukrainians, both in Canada and abroad. The Winnipeg-based Troyanda Ukrainian Dance Ensemble is one such group. Shortly after the invasion of Ukraine began, Troyanda, alongside many other Ukrainian dance and choir groups from in and around Winnipeg, put together the Stand with Ukraine concert, which raised money towards humanitarian aid for Ukraine (DePatie, 2022). These organizations represent the Ukrainian community in Manitoba, and their contributions have made it easier for Ukrainians settling both in the province and around the world.

Manitoba has a significant Ukrainian community which has existed since shortly after the province's inception. Its agricultural potential and its place as the first prairie province that migrants arrive to on their journey westward through Canada has resulting in the province having the highest per capita number of Ukrainians in the country. By encouraging Ukrainian migrants to move to the

province in the late 19th century, and continuing to accept those who have moved or been displaced by the instability and various conflicts that have overtaken their homeland, Manitoba has fostered a strong relationship with Ukrainians locally. This has manifested in vibrant and longstanding expressions of Ukrainian culture such as Folklorama, as well as created greater opportunities for migrants from Ukraine in the modern era. The well-established Ukrainian community that exists in Manitoba has resulted in strong fundraising efforts for humanitarian aid, and allowed for easier experiences for Ukrainian refugees fleeing the most recent conflict.

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