

Agenda

1. Extending Lazy Literature to a First Nations context
2. Learn - More about Babine—Witsuwit'en
3. Tasks - Play with Babine—Witsuwit'en using Lazy Literature

Download the Starter Files!

If you want to complete these tasks on your IDE, be sure to download the starter files [here!](#)

Note that there's no starter code for this sub-module; you should be using your own Lazy Literature code on these text documents.

Lazy, First Nations Literature - An Introduction

In Lazy Literature, our data ("corpus") only consists of English stories.

Though this allows us to generate random **English** sentences in the style of our literature, we can use our program for other languages as well.

Let's explore this idea using another language spoken by the First Nations peoples: Babine—Witsuwit'en!

Learn - More about Babine–Witsuwit'en

Babine–Witsuwit'en is a language primarily spoken by the First Nations people residing in the British Columbia Interior. The language consists of two dialects:

1. Babine/Nedut'en, spoken by the Babine people
2. Witsuwit'en, spoken by the Wet'suwet'en people

Notably, Babine–Witsuwit'en is an **endangered** language, with the number of speakers for each dialect being in the hundreds.

Learn - More about Babine–Witsuwit'en

For this module, let's work with the **Babine** dialect of Babine–Witsuwit'en. We'll be using FirstVoices' Babine word translations, found [here](#), as well as excerpts from the following FirstVoices' Babine stories:

- [Cheryl Bibalhats \(Cheryl's Potlatch\)](#)
- [Niwh Hik'iy Niwis Ilhekh \(Our Auntie Makes Indian Ice Cream\)](#)
- [Summer at Old Fort](#)
- [Needo 'Ats Talok Hatec'azdle \(Salmon Fishing at Old Fort\)](#)

Learn - Examples

Let's try to familiarize ourselves with Babine!

You're given a data folder consisting of four stories, both in English and Babine. Let's take a closer look at one of the stories, which uses `egl_eng.txt` and `egl_bab.txt`.

The first line of the file `egl_eng.txt` is

```
1 Dineeze ' is here.
```

Translated to Babine, this same line, shown in `egl_bab.txt`, can be expressed as

```
1 Dineeze ' 'eet sde.
```

What differences or similarities do you notice between these lines?

Learn - Examples

Let's consider the entirety of these files to study these languages further.

Here's what `egl_eng.txt` looks like:

```
1      Dineeze ' is here.  
2      He tells me not to worry.  
3      The people are not late.  We  
4      are early.
```

In comparison, here's what `egl_bab.txt` looks like:

```
1      Dineeze ' 'eet sde.  
2      Dineeze ' 'idnee ' windzeewendeedeyh.  
3      'Aweet ts' iyewh wihadadilh.  
4      'Inu 'agh witsats ' endeel.
```

Learn - Examples

Currently, our observations are only based on two versions of an excerpt from a single short story. For longer stories, comparing these languages can be difficult to do purely by eye.

To make things easier, we can lazily rely on Lazy Literature!

Task

1 Confirm your observations by playing around with the English and Babine literature we've provided. Using your Lazy Literature code, generate some English and Babine sentences (1-gram) and compare them.

What similarities and differences do you notice between the two languages? After generating some sentences, illustrate their similarities and/or differences using a direct example from your literature.

Hint: Consider the number of words in an English sentence compared to a Babine sentence.

Hint 2: What patterns do you notice in a Babine word? How do these patterns relate to an English word?

Task 2

This task is **very open-ended** and, thus, there is not a single answer we're looking for.

Consider the short story "**Salmon Fishing at Old Fort**", which is provided in both English and Babine (`salmon_fishing_eng.txt` and `salmon_fishing_bab.txt` respectively).

Randomly generate a piece of **Babine** text (1-gram) using this short story. What do you think your piece of text is **generally** about? Show your understanding by translating **some** of its words using the language's dictionary found [here](#).

Note: You do not have to translate your text word by word.

Task 2 Example

Suppose our Babine sentence is

C'en t'ah wits'ik, Jilh Ts'e Yu tl'a C'idim T'en deed'ah Nu-co k'it lhok 'alh'ah.

which is the first line of `eg3_bab.txt`.

Although we may not be able to translate most of the Babine sentence, the language's dictionary shows that "lhok" translates to "Fish". Therefore, our sentence seems to somehow be related to fish.

Extra Questions

These questions are not necessary, but they can help you gain more insight into the preservation of First Nations languages and the intricacies of Babine!

1. Let's revisit Task 2, where you are tasked to translate a randomly generated Babine sentence.

How difficult was it to translate your Babine piece of text? Why might this be the case? Use a direct example from the "Salmon Fishing at Old Fort" story to justify your reasoning.

Extra Questions

2. Recall, from lecture, that you were tasked with modifying your 3-gram Lazy Literature code to remove all punctuation. Why might this not be a good idea for a language like Babine?

With your answer, do you have to modify your 3-gram Lazy Literature code to accommodate the Babine language?

— Hint: you may find it useful to look at the alphabet of Babine, found [here](#).

References

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References

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