



# Comparative Analysis of Kim Family Discourse

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# DPRK Leader Corpus

- Coded Kim Il-sung (1930-1993), Kim Jong-il (1970-2009), Kim Jong-un (2012-2018) with same codebook (133 documents)
- Divided each leader's corpus into historical periods
- Identified themes for each period that occurred statistically (.01 level and .05 level) most densely
- Compared themes and changes in themes for each leader/time period
- Key metric – **Density** - #themes/#words normalizes for comparisons

Leader	Dates	Significance	N documents
Kim Il-sung	1930-48	Revolution/Resistance	8
	1950-53	Korean War	16
	1955-78	Nation Building (most docs 68-78)	11
	1980-93	Transition to Kim Jong-il	24
Kim Jong-il	1970-93	Transition to Kim Jong-il	23
	1994-09	Economic crisis/famine (most docs 94-02)	10
Kim Jong-un	2012-18	The New Kim	41



# Kim Family Discourse Findings

- Political ideology, the Masses, Revolution fairly constant themes, especially since 1950s
  - DPRK anachronistic, unique – beware of mirror-imaging
- Deep concern with DPRK's ability, especially for Kim Jong-un
- Kim Jong-un is rigid so far, but moving away from Juche & Communism, toward abstract religion and economy
  - Ethereal themes (eternity, sacred, immortality) resonate with him, but does not mean he is truthful
  - His rigidity indicates **little room for successful negotiation, but indicators of change open a door of possibility** – probably a long and very uncertain road
- Kim Jong-un expresses more interest in economy and development than his father, but less than most world leaders
- Kim Jong-il and Kim Jong-un have a myopic focus on the Peninsula – reinforces restricted worldview and low cognitive complexity?
- Kim Il-sung was more pragmatic and adaptable
- Kim Jong-il was absolutely rigid – no wonder he never responded to the 90s crises effectively
  - Caveat: We do not have a good sample for the post-crisis (post 2002) years – fill in gap in the future?