



# *University of Bergen*

*Department of linguistic, literary and aesthetic studies*

LING350

Master's Thesis in Linguistics

Spring 2019

## **Pop culturally motivated lexical borrowing**

*Use of Korean in an English-majority fan forum*

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# Sammendrag

I denne oppgaven ser jeg på bruken av popkulturelt motiverte lånord fra koreansk i et engelskspråklig nettsamfunn for fans av koreansk pop-musikk. Data er hentet fra subredditen /r/kpop og blir analysert kvantitativt og kvalitativt. Frekvensanalyse viser at de mest lånte ordene er slektskapsterminologi, men bruken på koreansk samsvarer ikke med bruken på engelsk.

Låningen foregår på tvers av to skriftsystemer så koreansk skrevet med hangeul romaniseres for å tilpasses det latinske skriftsystemet, men følger ingen etablerte romaniseringssystemer.

De romaniserte lånordene er integrert i den engelskspråklige rammen og brukes produktivt og kreativt til å produsere språklige nydannelser både som lånord og hybridkonstruksjoner.

Bruken av lånord samsvarer kun delvis med bruken på koreansk og denne bruken er i flere tilfeller unik for r/kpop som en markør på gruppetilhørighet. Språklig lek, satire og sarkasme brukes for å distansere brukerne fra andre K-pop fans utenfor r/kpop. Oppgaven er ment som en utforskende studie av et kontemporært fenomen som tidligere ikke har blitt undersøkt i et lingvistisk perspektiv.

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# 1. Introduction

With increasing globalisation, more cultures and languages are in contact than ever before. Especially thanks to technological expansion and the Internet, it is easier than ever to connect with people across the globe. Globalisation also enables the discovery of diverse pop culture phenomena, pop culture that is not from your own culture and not in your own language. These ‘pop cosmopolitans’ (Jenkins, 2006, p. 156) seek culture outside of what is locally accessible to discover something new, exciting and exotic. Hallyu, or The Korean Wave is one such phenomenon. The Korean wave consists of pop cultural exports from South Korea with global reach. Fans of Hallyu have been increasing steadily over the last decade. For K-pop in particular, it is leading the charge for The Korean Wave, in large part after Psy’s viral hit “Gangnam Style” was released in 2012. Its release changed the global cultural landscape and brought Hallyu into the mainstream, to be consumed by new demographics.

With the increasing interest in Korean pop culture, more people are exposed to the Korean language and, inevitably, more people show interest in learning it. While interest in languages was on a decline, enrollment in Korean language studies increased in US universities with 14% between 2013 and 2016 (Pickles, 2018). Hallyu fans seems to have no qualms about the language barrier present when consuming pop culture in a language which not their own. As Lee (2005, p.269) asks, “what linguistic changes can arise as a consequence of being exposed to other country’s pop culture products?”

This paper looks at one such consequence, lexical borrowing due to exposure to pop culture in computer-mediated communication (CMC). The pop culture phenomenon in question is one third of The Korean Wave, Korean pop music (henceforth K-pop). The borrowers are K-pop fans on an English-majority online virtual community, the subreddit r/kpop. This means the borrowing is happening between two languages that do not share the same script. Korean is written in the Hangeul script, a syllabic alphabet, and for borrowing into English to occur, there either has to be a literal switching of codes or romanization, writing another script in the Latin script.

When multiple writing systems interact in CMC, there’s bound to be innovative usage of the available systems. CMC fosters linguistic creativity and language play (Danet, 2001), especially in regards to orthography (Kim, 2012; Yu, 2007; Palfreyman and Khalil, 2007). Those previous studies were based on participants who were clear bilinguals, and many were

often code-switchin. This paper contributes to new fields of research because it looks at borrowing due to a pop cultural phenomenon into English CMC. This is a new phenomenon, and looking at borrowing across languages and scripts when the reason for borrowing is fandom, attitudes toward the source language are already more positive than many other contact situations.

Without globalisation, the Internet and streaming technology, this situation in which K-fans from around the world are exposed to Korean pop culture and the Korean language, would not be possible. Most research done on K-pop so far has taken a qualitative approach (Sung, 2014; Otmazgin and Lyan, 2013; Han 2017) and uses interviews with fans to gauge attitudes and habits. This work is an attempt to contribute to the literature with not only qualitative analysis, but also a quantitative perspective.

## **1.1 Hypotheses and research questions**

Drawing on my own experience as a lurker<sup>1</sup> on r/kpop of their language use, I hypothesise that Korean loanwords are used as markers of group membership. Loans from Korean will consists of terms that reflect the idol-fan relationships in the K-pop industry, and they will be romanized so they can be used playfully in the English-majority CMC.

To explore this hypothesis, I ask the following questions:

1. What Korean elements are borrowed on r/kpop?
2. How are Korean elements integrated into the English-majority CMC on r/kpop?
3. How are romanized Korean used in context on r/kpop?

I will use the quantitative approach of frequency analysis to look at what loanwords are borrowed and in what form. To see how the loans are integrated, I will compare established orthography on r/kpop with romanisation according to established romanization systems for Korean. Then I perform qualitative analyses of the romanized Korean lexemes in the context they are used. This work is intended to be exploratory and give a descriptive look at one instance of pop culturally motivated borrowing across scripts, languages and cultures.

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<sup>1</sup> A user who only reads and never posts

### 1.1.1 A note on Korean examples in this work

Established terms and names like King Sejeong will be written like the established form, disregarding other romanization systems. Examples from Korean will be written in Hangeul and romanization following the Yale system, as is the established system in linguistics. When the example is an English loanword written in Korean, the loan is written in English first. Phonetic or phonemic transcriptions will be included when necessary, marked by [ ] and // respectively. Transcriptions will be based on my own Korean knowledge. I have stronger passive knowledge than active, as a consequence of working with one-way translation of the language, but this should still give me a strong enough basis for transcribing single word or phrase examples from Korean. Other romanization systems will be referred to by comparison in the analyses of each loan group. By including all these ways of writing Korean, I hope to avoid misunderstanding in the examples used, while also underlining that it is problematic to have multiple romanization systems all focusing on different parts of the language, with none being clearly established as a preferred system outside of South Korea or on the Internet.

## 1.2 Structure of paper

To research these questions, an introductory understanding of Korean and K-pop are necessary. Section 2 gives a brief introduction to these fields, focusing on elements relevant to the language use on r/kpop. Section 3 provides theoretical approaches to the study of borrowing and computer-mediated communication, which are the basis for my analyses. In section 4, I present my methodology and statistics about my data, and the subsequent section 5 contains the analyses.

Section 5 consists of two parts where the first one focuses on typology of appearances of Korean. The second part is an analysis of the established romanized loanwords from Korean and how they fit into the English-language frame. This section is the largest analysis, and looks at romanization of Korean, integration into the English-language frame and how each loan is used in context. Section 6 is a discussion of my results and suggestions for further research. Section 7 summarizes and concludes it all.

## 2. Background

To give readers a better understanding of the data used in this paper, the following sections provides an overview of the Korean language and its relationship with English and the Internet. Then I give a brief introduction to the pop culture phenomenon K-pop. K-pop is the topic of discussion in my data, and the source of the loanwords under analysis, so a basic understanding of the phenomenon is important.

### 2.1 Korean

Korean is the language spoken in North and South Korea and abroad diaspora by an estimated 77 million people (Eberhard et. al., 2019). It is an old language with a young script. The writing system Hangeul was created in 1443 by order of King Sejong and was created to be easy to learn and promote literacy in the country. Consonant signs are based on phonetics and how the mouth is shaped as it produces the sounds, and the vowels are based on vowel harmony (Song, 2005). Before Hangeul, Korean was written in classical Chinese, so writing was only done by the educated few.

Due to its extended contact with Chinese and Japanese, there has been extensive borrowing from these languages, and it is difficult to ascertain which language family Korean belongs to. While there is a lot of uncertainty around Korean being part of the Japonic family, the genetic link between Korean and Japanese is present. Some theories classify it as belonging to the Uralic-Altaic family alongside Mongolian, Turkic and Tungusic, with Korean being more closely related to Tungusic than the others. Similarities to Proto-Altaic are strong, but not strong enough to be definite (Song, 2005, p.15). Other theories point to the Austronesian family, but there is uncertainty surrounding every theory. These days Korean is classified as a language isolate, of the Koreanic language family, encompassing language varieties on the Korean mainland and the island Jeju (Eberhard et. al., 2019).

#### 2.1.1 Language structure

Korean is an agglutinative language. The sound system is comprised of 19 consonants, 10 vowels, 2 semi-vowels (Song, 2005, p.24). Orthographically, characters are combined into syllabic blocks of 2-4 characters. Korean has an SOV sentence structure, but the verb-final position is the strictest rule of the three. Subject and object is not mandatory, and the order can be moved around for focal or emphatic effect. Since Korean uses postpositions or particles as

case markers, the word order can be varied as long as everything is marked with the correct particle. Korean marks for 6 cases using particles, and it does not have articles.

Showing respect is a big part of the Korean language. While different sources disagree on how many, at most there are seven speech levels, or verb paradigms, which are used to differentiate between levels of politeness to use when speaking. Ihm et al. (2001, p.202) names 5 speech levels, ordered according to formality. Song (2005, p.123) names 6 levels, but narrows them down to 4 main ones that learners need to be concerned with. Neither of them mention the seventh, which is the highest speech level used with the royal family. This has become archaic in Korean since they no longer have a royal family, but the speech level is still in use in historical TV dramas. The different levels are named after the ending they require to be added to the verb ‘to do’ or 하다 *hada*, with the addition of 체 *che* meaning ‘style’. The 6 speech levels are listed in Table 1.

Korean name	English name	Description
하소서체 Hasosu-che	Very formal polite	Archaic style used to refer to the royal family. Can still be found in religious texts and is used in historical TV dramas.
합쇼체 Habsyo-che	Deferential	Very respectful, polite, formal speech. Often referred to as deferential speech. Used to talk to stranger, elders and to customers in the service industry.
하오체 Hao-che	Formal neutral	Outdated formal style for referring to people of the same rank while still being polite. Has been revived in online speech.
하게체 Hage-che	Familiar	Formal speech used to refer to someone of the same or lower rank. The level used when a boss talks to employees.
해라체 Haera-che	Plain	Formal speech with same rank or lower, but with no added respect. Used to quote other people, and is often called ‘plain form’.
해요체 Haeyo-che	Polite	Informal, but polite speech. Can be used regardless of rank.

해체 Hae-che	Intimate	Informal, causal speech with no added level of respect. Used between close friends or when talking to children.
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**FIGURE 2.1: SPEECH LEVELS IN KOREAN**

Their usage vary according to formality of the situation and amount of deference to be shown towards the addressee. Speaking at the right level is very important, and it is often better to err on the side of caution. If one does not speak at the appropriate level, one can be accused of ‘speaking down’ to the addressee and be told to ‘heighten’ speech. Koreans can intentionally lower speech levels to show indignation or anger. The different speech levels are arranged according to formality and deference like this:

	Informal	Semi-formal	Formal
High deference	Polite		Deferential
Neutral deference		Familiar	Formal neutral
Low deference	Intimate		Plain

**FIGURE 2.2: SPEECH LEVELS ACCORDING TO FORMALITY AND DEFERENCE**

Along with the speech levels come honorifics. Honorifics in Korean are titles used to refer to people depending on the speaker’s relation to them, socially, familiarly or hierarchically. Age always comes first, and anyone younger uses titles with someone older, while someone older can use given names to someone younger. This also counts for older people. A grandmother would still call an older woman ‘older sister’ by using 언니 *enni* out of respect, while the *enni* could use the grandmothers given name, and add the vocative particle *-ya*. Titles in working environments are also important. Employees in a higher position are referred to by their title, while employees in lower positions are referred to by their family name and the added politeness-marker 씨 *-ssi*. Navigating these systems requires a lot of cultural knowledge and work, so foreigners who clearly look non-Korean are forgiven for mistakes. However, if one looks Asian or Korean, there is an increased expectancy of cultural knowledge when it comes to language use, deference and politeness.

## 2.1.2 Borrowing in Korean

Korean is estimated to have borrowed nearly 50% of its vocabulary from Chinese, called Sino-Korean, due to extensive contact between the nations during most of the Korea's history. For example, counting in Korean is done with both Sino-Korean words, for hours, and native Korean words, for minutes Sino-Korean vocabulary is deeply ingrained in the language, in a similar way to how Latin and Greek stems in English are not always recognisable to a native speaker<sup>2</sup>. Since many words are derived from Chinese loanwords, there are often native Korean and Sino-Korean words available which mean the same thing. Speakers choose between them to adjust for register or style necessary for the situation. Younger Koreans also choose from English loans as signifiers of modernity (Lee, 2005).

During Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945), Korea underwent forced bilingualism of Japanese in addition to Korean, and Korean was banned in schools (Song, 2005, p. 8). This resulted in a lot of words being borrowed from Japanese. The relationship between Korea and Japan is still strained to this day, and some vocabulary carry connotations of imperialist Japan and is rarely used anymore, like the honorific marker *각하* *kakha* (used for presidents, archbishops and other high-standing officials). Many of the Japanese loans have since been attempted removed from the language as much as possible because of the animosity felt toward Japan. Along with the borrowing from Japanese came English words by proxy, like Japanese hybrid creations using English (e.g. 'skinship' *스킨십* *sukhinsip*, which I will expand more on in the analysis section). "Japanified" (Hoffer, 2002) English loans were also borrowed, and even if most of these have since been attempted removed, some Japanese versions prevail. For example, English 'cutlet' was borrowed into Japanese as 'katsu(retsu)' and from there to Korean as 'kka(s)sü(ressü)', and is still used today (Tranter, 1997).

### 2.1.2.1 Contact-relationship between Korean and English

After the end of World War II and the separation of the two Koreas, English became the main source of borrowing into Korean in the South, and an estimated 90% of current loanwords in Korean are from English, directly or indirectly (Song, 2005, p. 42). English loanwords in the South are related to military, technology and western pop culture, due to the influx of new

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<sup>2</sup> When I pointed out to a Korean acquaintance that they count hours using Sino-Korean and minutes using native Korean, she was surprised. It had never crossed her mind.

cultural items, ideas and concepts when the US established a strong military presence in the southern part of the peninsula. North Korea limits additions of loanwords into the language to maintain ‘purity’, and when they do accept loanwords, they usually enter the language in the form of loan translations. For example, in South Korea, ice cream 아이스 크림 *aisu khulim* is a direct loanword imported from English. In North Korea, it is the loan translation 얼은 우유 *elun wuyu*. 얼은 *elun* means ‘frozen’ and 우유 *wuyu* means ‘milk’, i.e. iced cream.

As shown in Tyson (1993), most of the loanwords into Korean from English are cultural borrowings, and were borrowed to fill gaps in the Korean vocabulary. Core borrowings usually include a semantic narrowing or extension of both the loanword in question and the core vocabulary it was interfering with. For example, members of K-pop girl groups and boy groups are not called singers or artist, they are called idols, 아이돌 *aitol*. The word for singer, 가수 *kaswu*, has been narrowed and is not used to describe idols even if they fill a singing role in the group. *Kaswu* is used for recording artists and singers who are not a part of K-pop girl or boy groups. Korean also creates hybrid constructions based on English like Japanese does. For example, ‘gagman’ 개그맨 *kaykumayn* is Korean word for ‘comedian’. The word for cell phone is ‘hand phone’ 핸드폰 *hayntuphon*, even though in recent times ‘smart phone’ 스마트폰 ‘sumathuphon’ is also in use. ‘Hand phone’ 핸드폰 *hayntuphon* is also clipped further in colloquial usage to be 핸드폰 *haynphon*.

The pronunciation of English loanwords in Korean is based on both North American English and British English, which is somewhat surprising since the connection with the U.S. could be assumed as the main source of English loans. For example, hot chocolate in Korean, 핫 초콜릿 has chokhollis, /hat.cho.khol.lit/, approximates North American pronunciation in hot and British in chocolate (Song, 2005, p. 42). Since Korean does not allow consonant clusters to the same extent as English, clusters are separated and a mandatory vowel is added to each consonant, e.g. to strike (in baseball) is 스트라이크 *suthulaikhu* (Tyson, 1993).

English holds a prestigious position in Korea, as it does in globally, and understanding and speaking English is seen as an obligatory part of business life if one wants to work for a prominent company. Korean students spend immense amounts of money and time on private classes at ‘hagwons’, private academies that teach advanced courses. It is estimated that 73% of the domestic cost of English education come from these extra-curricular classes (Lawrence,

2012, p. 71). It is believed that learning English provides one with more opportunities, and it is usually a prerequisite to be considered for a position in one of the giant Korean conglomerates like Hyundai or Samsung. If language choice is a marker of identity, Koreans choosing to use English mark themselves as a global citizen with high ambitions, and enhance the sense of prestige that comes with English.

### 2.1.3 Korean on the Internet

South-Korea boasts one of the best internet connections in the world. It has the fastest internet on average with over 28 megabytes a second according to Akamai (2017). In 2011, Crystal reported that Korean users accounted for 2.1% of all internet users, but with 52.7% internet penetration (percentage of Korean people on the internet) (p. 79). According to Internet Live Stats in 2014, the numbers had reached 84.3% of the population, and Statista in 2017 set the percentage at 95.1%. This means that millions of Koreans are online, but Korean is rarely seen outside of the local sites. South Korea has its own search engine, Naver, as the closest equivalent to China's Weibo and the Western world's Google. Since Koreans use Naver, sites like Google, who rely on activity to make translation-, subtitling- and speech-to-text-tools work, do not get enough activity to provide accurate translations between English and Korean.

Communication online in Korean has brought a resurgence of the speech level “Hao-che”, the formal neutral style. This fits in with the context of online communication following the politeness- and deference-arrangements in figure 2. As online interactions occur between strangers, a high level of politeness is required, but since social status and signifiers of age and rank are not made explicit online, deference levels are kept neutral.

#### 2.1.3.1 Romanization of Korean

In order to use Korean in English CMC, either a Korean keyboard has to be activated in order to write in the Hangeul script, or romanized Korean has to be used. Romanization is the process of converting writing from a different script into the Latin script. It can be done by transliteration or transcription, depending on purpose and context. There have been multiple romanization systems for Korean, but today there are three main systems in use.

The most widely used is the Revised Romanization of Korean system (RR-system) which was put into place in 2000 by the South Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism (now the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism or MCST). The RR-system is used for both

transcription and transliteration and focuses on replicating the structure of Hangeul. It is the most widely used system in Korea, and is also the system most often used in newer textbooks and learning material for Hangeul and Korean.

The McCune-Reischauer system (MR-system) was the official system in South Korea until 2000, and a version of it is still used in North Korea. This system is now mostly seen outside of South Korea, like a modified version used by the Library of Congress in the US. The MR-system is also used for both transliteration and transcription, but was created as an attempt to represent the phonetic properties of spoken Korean and not to replicate the structure of Hangeul, as the RR-system was. The MR-system has been widely adopted in libraries, academia and government. A reader can more easily be able to replicate the pronunciation of Korean with MR romanization in such a way that a Korean might understand it, moreso than the other systems (Kim-Renaud, 1997). However, the MR-system has not had the same application as the RR-system on the internet due to its use of diacritical marks and apostrophes which makes it more difficult to replicate on a standard keyboard. This issue was also one of the reasons cited by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for why a change of system was needed (Korea.net, 2000) before implementing the RR-system.

The standard romanization system in linguistics is the Yale system. It is used for both transcription and transliteration with the goal of representing each morphophonemic element the same way regardless of context. Its focus is representing spelling of Hangeul, but unlike the RR-system, it also takes morphological boundaries into consideration, and is reversible to keep the Hangeul spelling intact. The Yale system has the same advantage as the RR-system over the MR-system in that they need no special diacritics and can be replicated on a standard keyboard. However, representations of vowel sounds are less intuitive to speakers with knowledge of both English and Korean. To look at an example using all three systems, these are the ways of romanizing the Korean word for ‘how’ 어떻게 *ettehkey*, [ʌ̃t̚ʌkʰe]

RR-system	MR-system	Yale system
eotteoke	öttök'e	ettehkey

**FIGURE 2.3: ROMANIZATION EXAMPLE**

This brings to light some of the specific issues encountered when romanizing Korean. First, the opening sound, the open-mid back vowel ㅓ /ʌ/, is romanized differently in all three systems. And if we were to focus on American English pronunciation, it would be more akin

to the ‘u’-sound in ‘up’, but in all systems the ‘u’-character is already taken for other characters, in RR and MR for  $\text{ㅜ}$  /u/, and in Yale for  $\text{u}$  /u/. Second, the tensed consonant  $\text{ㅈ}$  /t͡ʃ/ is an unfamiliar feature in English. All three systems romanize tensed consonants to double consonants. Since this affects surrounding vowel in English, the tensed consonant feature is not represented in romanization, not even in the MR-system which focuses more on pronunciation. Third, when  $\text{ㅎ}$  /h/ precedes a consonant, the consonant is aspirated. This is only represented in the system focused on pronunciation, MR, with an apostrophe. This can be confused for a syllable boundary if one is not familiar with the system.

There are multiple ways of romanizing Korean for different purposes, and while the RR-system is the more established system in use on the Internet by official channels, that is not always the case for users on CMC. Using these systems requires learning them, and having an available option for learning them. If that is not accessible, users will rather romanize as they see fit. For example, in Kim (2012), participants state that they are guessing when it comes to spelling of Korean words in Latin script. They seem to choose spelling in an attempt to approximate Korean pronunciation. This is why looking at how users are actually romanizing Korean in CMC is important, to see where the difficulties and issues arise, and how users affect and spread romanized Korean when a system is not established.

## 2.2 K-pop

South Korean pop music (K-pop) refers to mass-marketed commercial pop music in South Korea. It is one third of what is called the Korean Wave or Hallyu - a mass export of pop cultural aspects from South Korea, the other two parts being K-Drama and Korean film or cinema. Hallyu is often split into Hallyu 1.0 and 2.0, with Hallyu 1.0 being defined by cultural flows across Asia. This first stage of Hallyu is said to consist of three types of entertainment, Korean cinema, K-drama and K-pop. Hallyu 1.0 is timed between the early 90s to 2007 (Jin, 2016, p. 4). Its centered around 2002 when the drama *Winter Sonata* was broadcast in Japan and became massively popular (Dubbeldam, 2016, p. 2). The following year, the movie *Oldboy* won the Grand Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, and sparked European interest in Korean cinema. Hallyu 2.0 has a switched focus to transnational flows out of Asia, defined by the use of and impact by social media. The clear distinction between the two eras, is that after 2008, both Youtube and smartphones existed (Jin, 2016, p.6). Before the

appearance of both and the vast technological expansion ensuing, Hallyu could not have spread in the way it has. Korean dramas were the driving force of Hallyu 1.0 across Asia, and Korean film in Europe, but the main driving force has since been taken over by K-pop in Hallyu 2.0.

In 2012 Psy released his viral hit *Gangnam Style*. It became an Internet sensation as the first video to hit 1 billion views on YouTube, and changed the global cultural landscape. Since then, K-pop artists have proven themselves (and their vocal fans) as strong competitors to American pop music by breaking records left and right. The boy group BTS has been voted top social artist on Billboard Music Awards 3 years in a row, and in 2019 they also won ‘Best Duo/Group’, making it the first time a non-Western group has won. The category ‘Top Social Artist’ is voted on by fans, showing the massive fan engagement the group garners, and ‘Best Duo/Group’ is decided by cumulative statistics on sales, streaming and more. This shows that the fan engagement actually translates to sales and profits as well.

In 2016, a government survey stated that the amount of Hallyu fans worldwide had increased to 35 million (Yonhap News Agency, 2016). While the number of fans is a decent gauge of impact, the explosive growth in profits provide support. Profits from the export of Korean TV dramas alone already saw decent numbers of 5 million USD at the time of the asian financial crisis in 1997. Subsidies were given from the government to entertainment companies following the financial crisis. After *Winter Sonata* got picked up in Japan in 2002, profits were at 268 million USD in 2005 and continued a massive increase in just five years to 637 million USD in 2010 (Kim, 2012). There is little reason to assume this growth has slowed down until now. Dubbeldam (2016, p. 8) states that “through the dissemination of the Korean Wave, South Korea has not only bought itself political and social soft power, but also a positive growth of the economy.” By pushing Korean cultural exports, South Korea are proving themselves a high quality producer of global pop culture. With the change in image, South Korea is establishing its position as a global economic success, distinct from its political issues with North Korea (Sung, 2014).

K-pop as a music genre is said to have originated in the 1990s, with Seo Taiji and Boys usually named as the first K-pop group who introduced South Korea to hip hop and pop music (see Lie (2012) for a thorough introduction to Korean music and Howard (2002) for its status at the time when Seo Taiji and Boys drastically changed the scene). Since the 90s, K-

pop has continually taken inspiration from Western pop music, most notably the US music industry, and streamlined it into producing idol groups in flashy costumes doing intricate synchronized choreography to streamlined pop songs. Dubbeldam (2016, p. 54-55) says that while American hip-hop and English both in artist names and songs was used to accentuate K-pop in the early days, it is now used with more intention to increase profits and appeal to a global audience. In the last decade, K-pop has kept interspersing lyrics with not only English, but also Spanish and French, and one instance of a Hindi folk song.

K-pop idols work for entertainment companies. There are The Big Three, SM entertainment, JYP entertainment and YG entertainment, and a range of smaller companies. These companies scout idols from a young age, train them in various entertainment-related fields, and debut them in idol groups when deemed ready. Idols often live in housing provided by the company along with other group mates. Costs for training and housing are an investment by the company which accumulate into debt for the idol which they work off after debut. Every new album release start off a new promotional cycle in which the idols perform on weekly music broadcasts on TV, get invited on variety shows, or get commercial contracts. The cycle starts with a 'comeback stage' on a music show, the first performance of a new song, and ends with a 'goodbye stage'. Between promotional cycles, idols train and practice, prepare for the next 'comeback', and some also act. Many idols use their idol career to get a foot in the door to pursue an acting career later.

### 2.2.1 Fandom culture and language

Idol groups in South Korea have official fanclubs which are created by the entertainment companies, and provide invitations to events and perks for fans. Fandoms are organized in fan cafes, i.e. social networking sites (SNS) usually located on Naver, the Korean internet hub which is similar to Weibo for China and Google for the Western world. These fandoms have official names, and sometimes official colors and symbols. There are also the previously mentioned fanchants which differ for each new release. For example, the fanclub of the popular girl group TWICE is called Once, and fans of the boy group BTS is called ARMY.

Language use in Korean fandoms include the use of kinship terms and honorific titles. The relationships between a fan club and their favorite group or idol is closer than strangers, but in a more formal setting than with intimate friends, which is reflected in language use. Following speech levels in Korean, fandom interactions with idols stay at the polite level,

which is informal but deferential. Using given names with idols is too intimate, so fans use kinship terms instead. In turn, idols use the fanclub name to refer to their fans.

Figure 4 shows a list of kinship terms used:

	Male	Female
Said by younger female	오빠 oppa	언니 enni
Said by younger male	형 hyeng	누나 nwuna

**FIGURE 2.4: IDOL KINSHIP TERMS**

International fans also use titles and kinship terms they have learned from Korean fandoms. Subtitled material is often translated by Korean fans, so-called fansubbers. The subtitled material is spread to the international fandoms, be it variety shows, filmed fan meetings or short personal videos from social media profiles. Many Hallyu fans rely on these translations, as exemplified in Jin and Yoon and their interviews with North American Hallyu fans: “Most respondents who could not speak Korean sought the prompt translation of the Korean content; therefore, the peer production of subtitles and translations played a crucial role in the rapid circulation of the Korean wave.” (2016, p. 1285)

Fansubbers have been around for a long time, and they are also credited with the spread of Japanese pop cultural phenomena like anime in the West from the early 90s (Jenkins, 2006, p. 165). When these Korean fansubbers have to translate words with no equivalent in the target language, like kinship terms or idioms and folk tales that are talked about on variety shows, they romanize the terms and usually add a footnote explaining what it means. These fansubbers are becoming translators for their own subculture. Professional subtitlers who translate Korean movies or dramas for official outlets translate kinship terms and titles with the given names of the characters instead. These professional subtitlers have to consider their demographic, the general public of whatever culture the content is going to be broadcast to, while fansubbers’ demographic are fans of K-pop. Thus, more of the Korean culture is shared instead of translated in fansubbed material and is providing more cultural knowledge for K-fans around the world. This can be the only source of translated material for many K-pop fans in countries where there are no official outlets broadcasting K-pop and related material, or access is limited. For example, Palestinian K-fans relied on fan communities in the wider Arab world and Arabic websites for material, and fans actively create and share new content (Otmazgin and Lyan, 2013).

When it comes to subtitles and translations of song releases, it varies among the different entertainment companies. JYP entertainment releases songs on YouTube with subtitles in multiple languages. At the time of writing, the newest release from the girl group TWICE has subtitles in English, Chinese, Japanese, Hindi, Spanish and Vietnamese. For SM entertainment and YG entertainment subtitling varies, but they are not as diligent with translated subtitles as JYP. The music distributor 1TheK who distributes a lot of smaller agencies' releases usually include English subtitles on YouTube. This makes song releases more accessible to a wider international audience, and underlines the intentionality of marketing K-pop transnationally for some companies.

### 2.2.2 Previous research on K-pop and pop culture

Early research on the pop culture phenomenon focused on the content of K-pop as part of Hallyu 1.0, which wasn't the social phenomenon Hallyu 2.0 has come to be. K-pop has since 2012 become one of the most visible and global non-Western cultural movements of the 21st century. Dubbeldam reasons part of it results from accessibility since "the English language, as well as Western references, are used to make the art form as accessible to Western audiences as possible in order to attract more consumers." (2016, p. 3).

This more globally focused attitude would not be possible without previously establishing English-usage in songs and appropriating foreign styles. Howard explains that "the appropriated styles of the nineties K-Pop were foreign in origin but the process of acculturation turned the foreign into a vernacular expression" (2002, p. 90). While this is a positive outlook on appropriation of American elements, some see the use of English and Western elements as americanization of a non-Western pop culture phenomenon. Jung (2010) refers to Hallyu as made *mugukjeok* "nationless" or having "no particular national trait" to attain global appeal. This sentiment is echoed by Lie (2012) who argues that K-pop lacks traditional Korean features in general, and is losing more and more for the purpose of global appeal. He reasons that there are little traditionally Korean to K-pop at all, besides the language, and that K-pop becomes attractive to global audiences precisely due to this distinct lack of Korean-ness.

He further says that the short answer for the global popularity of K-pop is that there was an available gap amongst the American and European performers for "clean, well-crafted

performers” (p. 355). The appeal of K-pop lied in part in that the K-pop artists are presented as polite, respectful and humble performers singing about innocent love. This attitude is reflected in studies from other areas of the world, like in the Middle-East where (Otmazgin and Lyan, 2013).

Research on Hallyu fans around the globe has in large part focused on consumption and attitudes. Benjamin Han (2017) looked at K-pop in Latin American countries where fan activism contributes heavily to pushing K-pop out of a subcultural status and into the mass media, despite the mass media’s reluctance. Marinescu (2014) presents a collection of works where the impact of Hallyu is presented from different parts of the world, grouped by Asia, Europa and America.

The use of English in K-pop lyrics has been prominent from Hallyu 1.0, and it has been compared to English use in J-pop. Moody (2006) found in researching English in J-pop that it was used as musical fillers and in general did not disrupt the native Japanese. Lee (2005), however, found that English in K-pop was used “as discourse of self-assertion and identity negotiation to deal with the tension between global and local dialogues“ by youth (Lee, 2005, p. 430). By using English, they could express attitudes which were not easily expressed in Korean, or risked getting censored. This earlier research mainly focused on Hallyu 1.0, and the impact on Asia, and not so much global impact. The focus was also on the language use internally in the K-pop material itself, but little has been done on language use by fans, at least not with international fans. Jin and Yoon (2016, p. 1286) found that their North American Hallyu fan interviewees didn’t mind the mixing of English and Korean, and to the contrary, felt that it helped them remember song lyrics so they could sing along. Oh (2017) found gendered differences among Youtubers who make K-pop reaction videos. Women were vocal about their sexual attraction toward idols, and were often positioning themselves in relation to the idols. Linguistically, women also showed more interest in learning and using Korean. When language is mentioned, its related to the language of the content in K-pop and the perceived language barrier. Rarely is the fans’ actual language use as impacted by K-pop discussed.

Of the few studies that do look at language use, there are Chun (2017) who looked at K-pop fan discourse on YouTube regarding pronunciation of idols’ names by non-Koreans. She found that by showing expertise about pronunciation, fans were positioned as ‘true’ K-pop fans and not just casual fans, which implies that more knowledge about Korean gives fans

a higher status. Kim (2012) looked at an online forum of fans of K-dramas where participants used both Latin and Hangeul. She found that participants use the different semiotic systems at their disposal for language play, and that ‘code meshing’ supported developing multilingual identities with memberships in many different groups (p. 268-269). Participants also struggled with romanizing Korean, and Kim gives examples where participants apologize for spelling errors and say they are all guessing (p. 264).

Few studies have looked language use, and none, to the best of my knowledge, has specifically looked at borrowing of Korean as a consequence of being exposed to Korean pop culture.

## **2.3 Summary**

In this section I have given a basic introduction to Korean and K-pop. I established that the contact relationship between English and Korean is present, but complex, and made more complicated by the two languages’ linguistic differences. I also present romanization systems for Korean, and some issues faced when learners and non-native Koreans wish to use Korean in CMC and either do not have access to a Hangeul keyboard or chooses not to use it. Non-Korean K-pop fans do use the Korean language, and they use Korean to establish status as fans rather than casual listeners. If language is the most Korean thing about K-pop, and that which establishes status amongst fans, it is certainly worth a look.

## 3. Theory

### 3.1 CMC

Few of us can say that we do not use the Internet in some way every single day, and if not on a computer, then on mobile. Many of us, especially younger generations, use the Internet to communicate with each other constantly. Communication by computers, or mediated by, is most commonly known as computer-mediated communication or CMC. The term emerged along with the Internet in the 1990s. Other terms have been suggested to put a closer focus on language and linguistic elements, like Internet Language, Netspeak (Crystal 2006), electronically-mediated communication (EMC) or digitally-mediated communication (DMC) (Crystal, 2011). The term CMC has been critiqued for being too vague on the one hand, and not covering enough on the other. Still, the term has prevailed, in large part thanks to the early establishment of the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication.

Early research on CMC focused on classification: is it speech or writing, both or neither? Crystal (2011) summarizes that it acts a bit like both and a bit like neither. CMC is very adaptive, and it changes selectively depending on function and need. However, as Androutsopoulos (2013) points out, while CMC might have a speech-like style, written CMC will always be in a written medium.

In contrast to face-to-face communication (FtF), CMC does not provide instant feedback. When interacting FtF, the interlocutors can gauge response by facial expression, body language and instant response if something offensive is said. In CMC, the entire utterance is finished and delivered before feedback is provided, and impact can thus be more severe. With the lack of emotional signals in written CMC, emoticons have taken the place of facial expressions. While they started as smileys in English CMC, kaomoji in Japanese CMC and other variants in other scripts, today most CMC using smart phones use emojis.

CMC also differs from FtF conversations in that it is possible to hold more than one at the same time, especially in synchronous chatrooms (Crystal, 2011, p. 24). This also creates challenges with referring to different users and turn-taking, which has been explored.

When it comes to written CMC, what separates CMC from traditional written forms are mainly the style and accessibility. While traditional forms had very specific audiences, CMC can potentially reach anyone if made public, and there are no longer restrictions on who can

write for a public forum. Written CMC has also been found to encourage playfulness. Danet in her book *Cyberpl@y* (2001, p. 17) identifies 9 common features of what she calls Digital Writing:

1. Multiple punctuation
2. Eccentric spelling
3. Capital Letters
4. Asterisk for emphasis
5. Written out laughter
6. Descriptions of actions
7. “Smiley” icons
8. Abbreviations
9. All lower case

Numbers 1-4 are for us to experience writing as if it was spoken, for example by writing multiple characters to signify a long sound, or using capital to signal shouting. Numbers 5-7 stand in for speech features and 8-9 is specific for writing as it increases typing speed. This list makes it clear that early research focused on English CMC. Numbers 3 and 9 are specific for scripts that actually capitalize, and is not inclusive of multilingual CMC.

### 3.1.1 Multilingual CMC

Herring and Danet (2007) writes “language choice and language use are the primary means of signaling cultural identity in text-based CMC, which transcends geographical boundaries and in which physical and social cues are reduced”. In that case, accessibility across languages and writing systems should be paramount on the Internet.

Computer-mediated communication is a relatively new research field as its existence relies on the existence of computers, and even more so on networks like the Internet. Since the technology giving rise to computers and the Internet in large part was invented or centralized in the US, it has always been more facilitated towards English. For example, programming languages are based on English, so to create web pages one had to know English, and even now there are only four programming languages with multilingual support (McCulloch, 2019). ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) script of the early days only used the Latin alphabet, made clear by the ‘American’ part of ASCII. Not

even diacritics used by other languages which also used the Latin alphabet were accounted for. Other scripts had to be installed in separate language packages, and users could not be sure other users had the same packages installed and thus understand the language (Danet and Herring, 2007, p. 9). Not until Unicode came about could you be sure that the script you chose would be visible on someone else's screen. Unicode is still not complete, and there are more scripts to encode, but the biggest languages in the world are available. In 2009, it supported as many as 90 scripts (Crystal, 2011, p. 85). As of Unicode 11.0, it covers 146 writing systems. A lot has been encoded in a short amount of time, but many scripts which are in use today, especially in Africa and South Asia, are not encoded (Bergerhausen, 2019). For example, syllables containing uniquely North Korean characters are not supported<sup>3</sup>.

Since many Internet users were disadvantaged due to lack of encoding for their language varieties' writing system, many users took to converting their native language into the Latin script by romanization. Danet and Herring (2007) reports that John Paolillo was one of the first to document romanization in CMC. In 1996 he studied a Usenet newsgroup where Punjabi, which is usually written in Indic or Arabic, was written in Latin script. While using English was the unmarked choice, Punjabi was used for greetings and jokes. However, its use might have been lessened due to the difficulty of romanizing (p. 10). Palfreyman and Khalil (2007) show how female users chatting in Arabic were romanizing and adding numerals to signify sounds that do not exist in English. People are creative, and will use any tools they have at hand to communicate. The use of multiple writing systems in one CMC mode has also been shown to encourage playful orthography, like in Kim (2012) where users play with the available languages, English and Korean and Yu (2007) where creative use of four writing systems in Taiwanese BBSs showed a strong tendency of playfulness. Romanization has also been problematized because of lack of transliteration systems cause inconsistent spelling among CMC users (Danet and Herring, 2007, p. 10).

### 3.1.2 Reddit

Reddit.com is the self-described front page of the internet. The user-generated link-aggregation site appeared online in 2005 and has kept up a steady growth since. Alexa.com ranks it as the 7th most visited site in the world with 57% percent of traffic coming from the

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<sup>3</sup> Given the limited Internet access in North Korea, it is not in high demand yet

US (Alexa, n.d.). The first thing to be said about Reddit is that it is not one single site per se. It consists of multiple different subreddits, separate communities devoted to different subjects, which all together make up the entirety of Reddit. Subreddits are autonomous and anyone can create a new one on whatever subject they so choose, and they are in turn subscribed to by users.

Links and posts are submitted to different subreddits and all contributions are voted on by the users based on if it contributes good content or not by way of upvotes and downvotes. The votes grant the users 'karma', points for posting content. Logically, upvotes give positive karma and downvotes give negative karma. This voting system applies both to posts themselves and to comments made within said posts, and so karma becomes the in-house system for quality control, left in the hands of the users. By having this type of voting system, it affects how users interact on the platform. Voting is based on if the comment contributes something useful to the conversation, at least in theory, and not whether one agrees or disagrees with the statement. This means that users already have a different way of giving feedback to the person making the original comment than a written reply. Replies are instead used for discussion, to ask for further information or clarification, and in general contribute more to creating conversation. This also means that is one has nothing contesting to reply to a comment, one is more likely to only vote instead of replying, which discourages positive written feedback simply for the sake of it.

The nature of a Reddit-account is semi-anonymous and all you need to sign up is an email account. Because of this, it is difficult to ascertain information about the users, but also does not give away any socially significant cues unless made explicit in usernames, like gender or ethnicity, so those factors will affect behavior less. It also provides room for the usual consequence of anonymous Internet activity - bad, mean, harassing language, and uninhibited language, for better and for worse. However, many users keep their Reddit-accounts for years and collect large amounts of karma, making them quite attached to their accounts, which lessens the risk of an established account having a user who frequently turns to harassing. As such, a long membership and many karma-points often signifies a prominent Reddit-user.

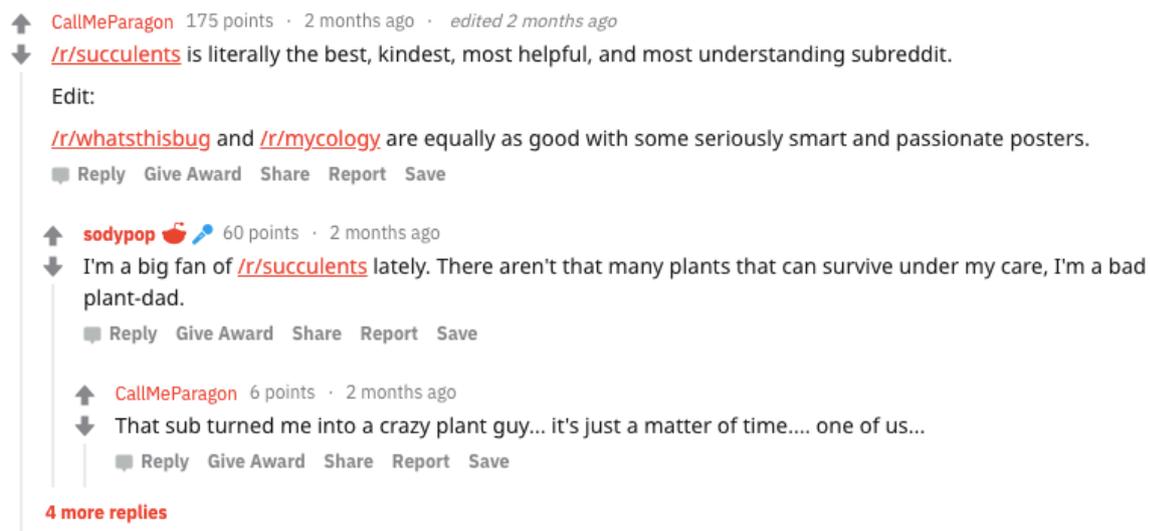
Following Herring's (2007) faceted classification scheme for CMC modes, the technological facets of Reddit are as such:

Technological facets	
Synchronicity	Asynchronous
Granularity	Comment
Persistence	Permanent until deletion by user or moderator
Length	10 000 characters
Channels	Text, links
Identity	Semi-anonymous
Audience	Public
Adaptation	Complex filtering system, quoting and editing possible
Format	Levels of indentation represents turns in conversation

**FIGURE 3.1: TECHNOLOGICAL FACETS OF REDDIT**

It is in the asynchronous mode, which contrasts with synchronous, or in real time chatting. This affects the material posted since it gives users time for planning what they wish to say, and they can edit before posting without worrying about a time-constraint. However, Reddit has a different time-constraint than other forums because of complex algorithms constantly changing the material on the front page based on time since posting and score. In a subreddit with moderate or higher activity, posts older than a day or two rarely show up on the front page anymore. Conversations and comments happen during the first few days after posting while the content is still on the subreddit's front page. The earliest comments are more likely to receive a higher score, and this encourages the user to continually check back for fresh content, or post their own.

As internet linguistics output (Crystal, 2011), Reddit behaves very similar to forums in general, but has some unique elements. Turn-taking and conversations are created in indented threads within comments on the same posts, creating mother-nodes and daughter-nodes, indented more and more with each reply. Multiple replies on the same level create new conversations with new indentations.



**FIGURE 3.2: AN EXAMPLE OF CONVERSATION WITH INDENTATION. TAKEN FROM REDDIT.COM/R/BLOG, THE SUBREDDIT FOR OFFICIAL UPDATES FROM THE REDDIT TEAM.**

The arrows on the left side are upvote- and downvote-buttons. The first comment is written by the user ‘CallMeParagon’ with the name in color, then follows the score of the comment. As seen in this example, a higher mother-node often has more points and more interaction than daughter-nodes. This is due to timing, since a mother-node is an earlier posting, and that many users do not see the daughter-nodes unless they choose to look for them. They can be showed by clicking the link on the bottom that says “4 more replies”. People who like to accumulate karma-points, might focus on posting mother-nodes instead of engaging with other comments, and that influences behavior and content on Reddit.

The next indentation is the highest scoring reply to the top comment. The username ‘sodypop’ is in bold because the user is a moderator on the subreddit, it is marked with a small alien-head icon because the user works for Reddit, and it is marked with a microphone icon to show that this user is the original poster, the one who posted the content being discussed. A more detailed time of posting can be seen by hovering over ‘2 months ago’. Whether the comment has been edited is also included. Since edits are marked next to the time of posting, users usually include a way of showing what has been edited so as not to be accused of trying to sneak edits past other users unnoticed. Transparency is highly valued on Reddit. Under the comment there are buttons for interacting with the comment. ‘Give award’ means that you can give the user ‘gold’ or ‘silver’ which grants the user receiving it special privileges. It is Reddit currency and is part of how Reddit makes money.

Comments are by default sorted by score. There are other sorting options available, but the default view shows the comment with the highest score as the first one under the post, and subsequent replies to that comment in daughter-nodes. Other choices of sorting are the self-explanatory ‘old’ and ‘new’, but there’s also ‘controversial’ sorting which show comments where there are many upvotes and downvotes. The ‘hot’ option sorts by the most upvoted comments recently, and the ‘best’ option takes sample size into account when sorting.

### 3.1.2.1 r/kpop

reddit.com/r/kpop is a subreddit devoted to sharing and discussing news and information about Korean pop music. While it was created in 2009, the Reddit API does not retrieve any comments before 2011. It was steadily growing in subscribers until May 2016, when Reddit launched a new way to sign up where you got subscribed to subreddits within your chosen interests and not just the previous default 50, a set of subreddits managed officially based on the biggest and most popular subreddits on the site. New users who signed up through the official Reddit app on mobile and chose music as one of their interests, would automatically be subscribed to the r/kpop subreddit. This sent sent many new subscribers to the subreddit, and brought along a change to the activity at r/kpop. In May 2017 there was a surge of new subscribers due to a couple of viral posts on other areas of Reddit and the subreddit gained 30 000 new subscribers in a matter of days.

Other than that, the subreddit growth has always been steady. According to redditmetrics.com, the subscriber count was at 10 000 at the time the site started tracking metrics late 2012, and hit 10 000 more every year, with fewer and fewer months between each milestone. Any official demographic data for the subreddit does not exist, but the subreddit has carried out annual surveys of its users for some years which also seem to follow similar growth trends and provides some more information on its users, at least the most active ones willing to answer surveys. I will return to the survey material when I present the subreddit demographic in section 4.1.2.

R/kpop can be classified according Herring’s (2007) social facets as such:

<b>Social facets</b>	
Participation structure	30-40 000 potential audience (at time of writing 332 000). Public interaction, daily activity of 700 posts by 350 users on average for 2015.
Participant characteristics	See section 4.1.2
Purpose	Information-sharing, community-building
Activities	Text, links
Topic	South Korean pop music
Tone	Informative, jocular, discussions
Norms of organization	Moderated
Norms of social appropriateness	Subreddit rules, reddiquette
Norms of language	Use of insider jokes, korean loanwords
Code	English, Korean (Hangeul and Latin)

**FIGURE 3.3: SOCIAL FACETS OF R/KPOP**

There is a large potential audience, and the subreddit is public, so this can affect what users write and how they choose to write it. Well-written English is generally encouraged on Reddit, so this could limit how willing users are to use Korean in discussions.

The purpose of the subreddit is to share news about K-pop, as in song releases, new records, or news that will impact the industry or groups in any ways. It is also a sense of community building for the users as many of them express attitudes of not having friends or acquaintances in real life who cares about or likes K-pop as well. Many fans come online to find like-minded individuals, so the community-building aspect is always relevant when discussing fandom online. Because of this sense of community, there are established in-jokes and linguistic norms which will mark a user as part of the community or an outsider.

### 3.1.3 Group membership and communication accommodation

R/kpop is a virtual community. While traditionally a community was related to a shared physical space, a geographical location, virtual communities share an online space. Herring (2004, p. 14) identifies 6 criteria for virtual communities:

1. Participation - active, self-sustaining, regular participants

2. Culture - a shared history, purpose, norms and values
3. Support - solidarity, reciprocity
4. Conflict - criticism, means of conflict resolution
5. Group identity - self-awareness of distinctness from other groups
6. Hierarchy - roles, governance, rituals

I want to focus on especially 5., self-awareness as a group. Herring refers to this as manifestations of references to the group itself as a group, and using “us versus them”- language (2004, p. 19). This is also called ingroup and outgroup language practices. Giles and Giles (2012, p. 142) describe ‘ingroup’ as a group an individual identifies with and ‘outgroup’ as a group the individual does not identify with. Speakers then accommodate towards or away from others language practices to mark belonging. This is similar to Gumperz’ (1982) distinction of “we-code” and “they-code”, where language acts as a marker of group membership. Liang and Walther (2015) say this about user’s group belonging in CMC: “if they identify themselves with a salient social group, they will likely follow the behaviors of that social group.” (p. 506).

## **3.2 Language contact**

Language contact is the affect different languages have on each other due to close proximity, cultural, technological, familial sharing. Some form of language contact phenomena is inevitable when two different language varieties are connected. In this section, I present the process of borrowing, the products of the process, loanwords, and code-switching.

### **3.2.1 The process of borrowing**

Borrowing is a process which happens as part of contact-induced language change. Hoffer describes it as “the process of importing linguistic items from one linguistic system into another, a process that occurs any time two cultures are in contact over a period of time.” (2002, p.1). This definition includes borrowing between dialects and even registers since it refers to ‘linguistic systems’ instead of ‘languages’. With a narrower definition, such as from Thomason and Kaufman (1988, p. 37) where they define borrowing as “the incorporation of foreign features into a group’s native language by speakers of that language”, the inclusion of ‘native language’ is limiting. For example, in the case of English, which has

become a global lingua franca, borrowing can still occur despite speakers not having native level fluency.

The process of borrowing requires bilingual innovators, who introduce new concepts, and centrally placed open-minded adopters (Myers-Scotton, 2006, p. 212) who use the new innovations. If a large part of the population is bilingual, there are more innovators, and the extent of lexical borrowing increases. Depending on the degree of contact, different features are more likely to be borrowed. Thomason and Kaufman (1988, p. 74) describes a borrowing scale where contact levels from 1 to 5 affect what can be borrowed, from lexical borrowing of only content words on the most casual level, to heavy structural borrowing inciting significant typological disruption on the level of strongest cultural pressure. Borrowability is also affected by the structural similarities between the languages involved. Two Germanic languages have more structural similarity, and borrowing is easier, while in a situation involving languages like English and Korean, the differences between a Germanic, fusional SVO-language and a Koreanic, agglutinative SOV-language are large.

The contact situation is never symmetrical and one party involved always borrows more than the other. The receiving party of the process is referred to as the recipient, replicant or superstrate language. The giving party of the process is referred to as donor, source or substrate language. The terms superstrate and substrate imply the asymmetrical relationship as the substrate often has a minority or less prestigious status. However, since that is not always the case, I will use the neutral terminology source language (henceforth SL) and recipient language (henceforth RL). The direction of the borrowing process is always from the SL to the RL.

Winford (2010), following van Coetsem, separates borrowing into two types, but distinguishes the process by the agency of the performer of the borrowing, as adoption and imposition. The distinction between the two relies on language dominance. In adoption the agent is a RL-speaker adopting elements from the SL into their own dominant language. In imposition the agent is a SL-speaker imposing elements onto the RL. Imposition is often associated with language shift because a speaker with SL-dominance is imposing features onto the RL, in which the SL-speaker is more proficient, or non-dominant (Winford, 2010, p. 171). According to Winford, conforming to the morphological and semantic rules of the RL is the cornerstone of borrowing by an RL-agent.

Thomason (2001, p. 68) also gives a distinction of borrowing which relies on the actor, and describes borrowing as a type of interference that occurs when imperfect learning is not part of the interference process. This means the actors, the people who introduce the interfering feature into the RL, are fluent in the RL and are not learners. They do not have to be fluent in the SL, but must know the relevant features of said language. After all, you cannot borrow what you do not know.

The metaphor implied by the term borrowing is understandable - something that belongs to one entity gets used by another - but there are certain aspects of it which has warranted discussion. Borrowing in itself implies something is given away and returned, but that does not happen. The source language never loses anything, and the recipient language is not required to return whatever it has borrowed. However, borrowing is an established term in linguistics, and not easily misunderstood after such prolonged usage. Nominalization of the word as “a borrowing” is also used to refer to the borrowed object in question, but I will use borrowing to refer to the process and loan to refer to the resulting products of the process.

### 3.2.2 Types of borrowing

Myers-Scotton separates borrowings into two types: cultural and core borrowing (2006, p. 214). Cultural borrowing refers to new concepts and ideas, and are also called necessary borrowing. Core borrowing refers to borrowing of words that already have an equivalent in the RL, and is also called unnecessary borrowing. These two categories roughly coincide with motivations for borrowing in general: borrowing for need, necessary, and borrowing for prestige, unnecessary. The two distinctions are also associated with the status of the languages involved. Borrowing for need often happens where the SL is the dominant language, and borrowing for prestige where the SL is the more prestigious language, but a thing to keep in mind is that a language can be a minority language and still be in the more prestigious position. Reverse core borrowing happens when speakers of the dominant language borrow core lexemes or phrases from the less prestigious language. This is a regular occurrence for expatriates or temporary residents in cultures other than their own. Speakers can choose to do this to show understanding of the local culture, or because words from other cultures tend to feel exotic (Myers-Scotton, 2006, p. 217).

Cultural borrowing often means introducing names for new ideas, items and concepts from one culture into another. Logically, this implies that nouns are of the more frequently borrowed parts of speech, since nouns are the carriers of referents. ...

Myers-Scotton (2006, p. 226) references Virtaranta (1971, cited in Karttunen, 1977) on loanwords POS categories. In this instance, nouns and adjectives make up 78% of 378 vocabulary items borrowed by Finnish immigrants in the United States. In Korean, however, adjectives cannot always be differentiated from verbs as they share the same stem in the dictionary and POS-category is not always obvious.

### 3.2.2 Loanwords

The resulting products of the process of borrowing are referred to as loanwords as a general term, loans or borrowings. More specifically, they can be sorted into different categories depending on their structural and morphological properties.

In his seminal work, Haugen (1950, p. 212-215) separates loans into three types. These types are based on the degree of morphemic substitution from only importation to complete morphemic substitution. Importation describes the reproduction of a model from the SL so similar a native speaker would understand it, like how many other languages have borrowed 'taxi' from English. Substitution describes a modified reproduction of a model which would not necessarily be recognized by a native speaker.

The three types are:

1. **Loanwords.** These show no morphemic substitutions, only importation.

For example: Italian ' paparazzi' borrowed into English.

2. **Loanblends** show partial morphemic substitution. This would include hybrids.

For example: Japanese 'karaoke' is a hybrid construction where Japanese 'kara' means empty/without and 'oke' is the first syllables in the borrowing from English 'o-ke-seu-teu-ra' orchestra.

3. **Loanshifts** show complete morphemic substitution. This includes loan translations or calques (which in itself is a loan translation) and semantic loans.

For example: the English 'superman' which is a loan translation of German

'Übermensch'. An example of a semantic shift is the Korean loan from English 'service'

서비스 *sepisu* where it has been semantically narrowed to refer to a free sample or a bonus on the house in the service industry.

Haugen says loanshifts occur more easily when the RL and SL are similar both phonetically and semantically, for example between Germanic languages like Norwegian and English (1950, p. 220). This makes loanshifts between Korean and English theoretically more rare as the languages differ substantially on many relevant linguistic parameters, and in the case of borrowing, especially phonetically and morphologically.

### 3.2.3 Code-switching

One would be hard pressed to discuss borrowing without mentioning code-switching (CS). Code-switching refers to switching between two different codes or language varieties in the same speech exchange. Gumperz (1982, p. 59) defines conversational code-switching as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems.” CS is often divided into intersentential switching, switching between different sentences, and intrasentential switching, switching inside the same sentence (Thomason 2001, p. 132).

Code-switching and borrowing are both consequences of language contact, but there is a lack of agreement of how related they are. They are sometimes seen as separate sides of a spectrum. In other words, one-word switches can be considered loans or code-switching. This decision depends on how they are integrated into the RL, on frequency, on equivalency with RL words and phonology.

Code-switching has often been studied by using the Markedness Model as presented by Carol Myers-Scotton (1998, 2006). It is a model of social motivations for language choice which makes a distinction between marked and unmarked choices, dependent on communicative competence. Unmarked choices are expected choices, predicted in its context. Marked choices are the unpredicted choices. To decide markedness, context is very important “a choice that is marked in interaction X would be unmarked in interaction Y, the one that the speaker wishes to be in effect” (Myers-Scotton 2006, p. 160). However, as she herself states: “it was never my intention to limit the MM to switching between languages” (1998, p. 6), and the model has since proven useful for studying other language phenomena with markedness.

Both borrowing and code-switching are spoken phenomena, but borrowing has been studied more as a written phenomena. CS has not been studied to a large degree in written form outside of CMC, where many aspects are similar to spoken communication.

Androutsopoulos (2013) looked at studies done on CS in CMC and compared their results. By doing so, he identified 8 discursive functions of code-switching (p. 681):

1. formulaic discourse purposes, i.e greetings, good wishes
2. culturally-specific genres, i.e. jokes or poetry
3. reported speech
4. repetition for emphasis
5. to refer to an addressee, by matching or challenging language choice
6. shift of topic or perspective
7. marking for mood, like jocular or serious
8. switching to or from interlocutor's code to mark attitude

Frequency of code-switching in CMC are also influenced by technological factors, such as synchronicity, potential audience and participants. In synchronous CMC, which is more like FtF conversation, Paolillo (2011) found more code-switching than in asynchronous CMC.

## 4. Method

### 4.1 Data

The data my study is based on comes from the subreddit [www.reddit.com/r/kpop](http://www.reddit.com/r/kpop). It is a public subreddit and all comments are made publically available by Felipe Hoffa (n.d.) on Google's BigQuery. The subreddit has been active from 2011, and within 2015 it had an active, stable user base as well as established in-group language, especially in-jokes. Since I wanted to look at frequency of loanwords in part, I chose to look at material from an entire year to have substantial material to work with. All comments from 2015 amounts to 261 107 comments written by 10 723 users, after removing deleted comments from the count.

BigQuery (henceforth BQ) is a database management tool from Google. It is used with standard and legacy dialect of SQL, a programming language made for handling data in relational databases. BQ is the externalization of Google's in-house technology for handling Big Data, Dremel. It uses Google's infrastructure so it can utilise multiple servers at the same time, and thus perform very large and complex queries in a matter of seconds (Sato, 2012). This makes it useful for working with material from a site as massive as Reddit. In 2016 it was also announced that BQ would be able to work seamlessly with Google Drive and their cloud-based spreadsheet software Google Sheets (Novet, 2016). I utilised this by extracting data in BigQuery, exporting to Google Sheets for annotation, and importing to BigQuery again for further analysis.

To find all Korean loanwords, I first made a frequency list of all types by using a split function and grouping by types, which amounted to approximately 100 000 types. I ordered the list by frequency and removed all words used less than 5 times, and was left with 23 000. My lower limit for established loanwords is 10 occurrences, so by choosing the lowest limit for the words at 5, I also give room for the same word to be accounted for with different inflection or spelling. After removing words from a list of 20 000 of the most common words in English, I was left with 15 000 types to wade through. I manually went through the list to find established loanwords. I wrote down the stem of each loanword and variations in spelling so I could extract all comments containing the loanwords by using regular expressions from the complete dataset. For example, to capture 형 *hyeng*, meaning 'older brother', I would need to include the most frequent spelling 'hyung' and an alternative spelling 'hyong'.

Following RR-romanization I also included ‘hyeong’, despite that not being in the frequency list. It could be occurring just once, but it would still be a loan from the same borrowing, and I accounted for all such instances to the best of my ability for other lexemes as well. However, I also made my regular expressions greedy, as I preferred to get false positives instead of missing instances of loans. This meant that ‘hyung’ would capture the name ‘Hyungwon’, ‘oppa’ would capture ‘unstoppable’, ‘unnie’ would capture ‘funnier’ and more. Since I manually annotated all captured instances, I weeded out false positives as I went. Comments where the loanwords were part of links or song names were also removed, unless they served a discursive purpose.

Comments with Hangeul were included in this first set. By doing this, I could see if transliterated loanwords also appeared in Hangeul, or if there were instances of established loanwords in Hangeul as well as in Latin. To capture Korean words and phrases in Hangeul, the regular expression has to capture syllables instead of individual characters. In standard UTF-8 encoding, each Korean syllable are represented as separate characters like letters in the Latin alphabet (Baker & Brew, 2008). The regular expression thus has to account for all syllables, like so [ㄱ-ㅎ]+. Emoticons written in Hangeul are single characters, unlike other Korean words, so they were extracted with a separate regular expression [ㄱ-ㅎ], but included in the same sheet. All together, instances of Korean loanwords, hybrid creations and appearances of Hangeul come to 4805 comments. Loanshifts were extracted into separate sheets later so I could compare instances of use which included the original English meaning and instances with the semantic change caused by the Korean loan. These loanshifts were not structurally integrated in a different way like the Korean loanwords are, so annotations were different than for the rest of the dataset.

By doing this, I created a specialised corpus, a corpus focusing on a specific type of language (Hunston, 2002). General purpose corpora, also called reference corpora, like the British National Corpus need to be very large. The BNC is approximately 100 million words, and the Bank of English corpus is 400 million words. My 2015 r/kpop corpus amounts approximately 7 million words. This being a specialised corpus, it does not need to be as large as a general corpus, and it needs only be annotated for the relevant features of study.

### 4.1.1 Annotation

Annotation in corpus linguistics is both a cover term for tagging and parsing, ways of adding information in a corpus, but it is also a term for manual tagging of very specific elements (Hunston, 2002), like in this case, Korean loanwords. The option of using automatic taggers was quickly discarded as my material focused on two different languages, and a lot of creative usage at that. I had neither the skill nor opportunity to create my own or alter existing taggers. The complete annotation was done in Google Sheets and then used as a source for a table in BQ, so any changes done to the sheet would be updated in the table. Annotations were put in external columns so they would not interfere with the comments themselves.

Annotations got separate columns: word, lexeme, lexical tag. The ‘word’ column lists the specific words used in the comment, the type. The ‘lexeme’ column lists the loanword the word is based on or constructed with, adjusted to be uniform so I could perform analysis later. This way I maintain the original spelling made by the users, but also make the material searchable for myself and easier to perform frequency analysis on.

The lexical tag column follows these annotations:

Description	Annotation
Korean lexeme in Hangeul script	kh
Korean lexeme in Latin script	kl
English lexeme in Hangeul script	eh
English phrase in Hangeul script	eph
Korean phrase in Hangeul script	kph
Korean phrase in Latin script	kpl
Korean lexeme with English inflectional morphology	kei
Compound or hybrids with English and Korean Aka dual language neologism (Hoffer, 2002)	keh
Quote or name in Hangeul	qnh
Quote or name in Latin script	qnl

**FIGURE 4.1: ANNOTATIONS**

The ‘kh’ tag refers to single Korean words in Hangeul, contrasting in length and complexity with the ‘kph’ tag which refers to phrases. A phrase would mean more than one single lexeme, or a stem with derivational morphology. For example, the single word for love

in noun form: 사랑 *salang* appearing on its own would be tagged kh. The phrase:

사랑해요

*salang.hay.yo*

love.do.politeSpL<sup>4</sup>

would be tagged kph. The tags ‘kl’ and ‘kpl’ refers to the same, only in the Latin script. The tag ‘kei’ refers to Korean lexemes in Latin script with English morphology, like plurality markers and verb derivation. The tag ‘keh’ are compounds containing both Korean and English, and hybrids. Both Hangeul and Latin could be tagged for this, but the vast majority are written in Latin script. This category follows what Hoffer (2002) refers to as dual language neologisms. The ‘qnh’ and ‘qnl’ tags are not relevant for my paper, but I still tagged them so I could compare relative frequencies later. The tags ‘eh’ and ‘eph’ were only used 7 times, so English written in Hangeul is clearly a rare occurrence. These annotations give an account of the structural ways in which Korean appears on r/kpop.

After annotation, my data had these categories:

Body of comment	word	lexeme	Lexical tag	author	Created UTC	Post ID	Parent ID	score	ID
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‘Word’, ‘lexeme’ and ‘lexical tag’ are my added annotations, while the remaining columns come from the BigQuery material. ‘Body of comment’, ‘author’, and ‘score’ are self-explanatory. ‘Created UTC’ is the timestamp in UTC<sup>5</sup> of when the comment was posted. ‘Post ID’ is the unique ID of the post the comment was made to, and ‘parent ID’ is the ID of whatever the current comment is a reply to. When post and parent ID are the same, it means the comment is a mother node in the comment section under a post. ID is the identifier of the comment, which is how I refer to examples in my analyses.

In this study, the language use is in focus and not the users, so usernames are not listed with comment examples. Only the identifiers that follow the comments across the Reddit

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<sup>4</sup> SpL = speech level

<sup>5</sup> Coordinated Universal Time

system is listed. It is still searchable, but will not be so closely linked to the author of the comment.

The 4804 comments in my dataset were made by 1495 different authors (14% of all authors in 2015). These authors wrote 182 564 (70%) of the total comments in 2015, which would imply that they are of the more active users who influence the language use on r/kpop more than the remaining 9228 authors who wrote 77 990 (30%) of the comments through 2015. 974 of the authors in my dataset posted 10 comments or more during 2015. 661 of them posted 50 or more. The average amount of comments per user during 2015 was 24,3 comments overall, while for the authors in my dataset the average was 149,6. These statistics show that the users in my dataset include users who are very active on the subreddit and contribute to establishing language norms. When said active users include Korean loanwords, they are establishing this usage as normal for the subreddit.

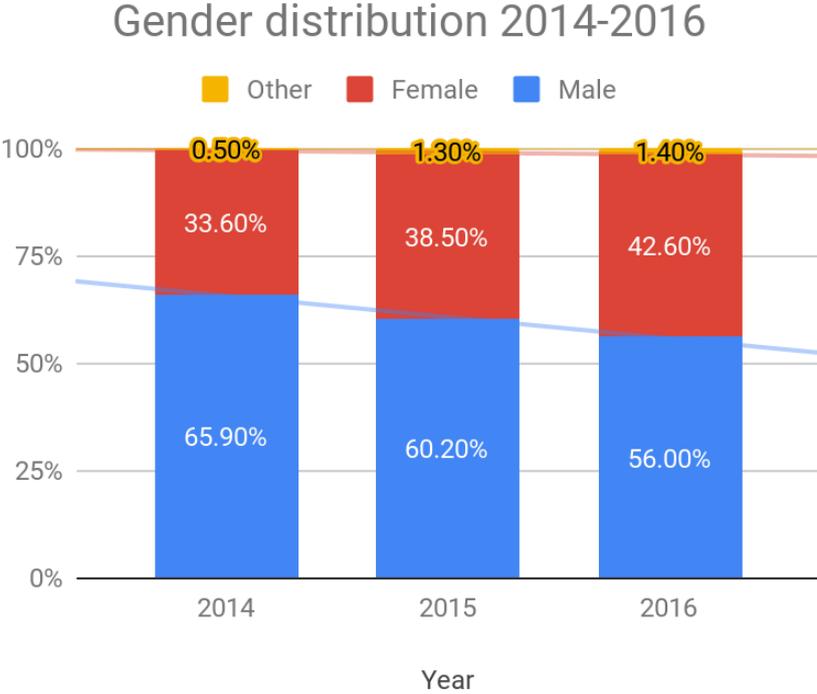
Now, 4804 out of more than 260 000 comments might not seem like much, since it means that only 0,02% of comments contain Hangeul or romanized Korean. However, this percentage is the same as occurrences of emoticons on r/kpop, which is an established typicality of written CMC (Danet, 2001). Use of Korean in English is rarer than emoticon-usage, so in that sense, it is still a significant amount.

In summary, all accounts of Korean used discursively, both in Latin and Hangeul from the subreddit r/kpop from the year 2015 are included in my specialised corpus. The dataset extracted from it which I base my analysis on contains, to the best of my knowledge, all accounts of romanized Korean loans. Each instance of Korean has been annotated for orthographic category, the word as it was used and lexeme it is based on. As such, I will be able to extract information on frequency of loans, specific constructions like loan blends as well as compare Korean written in Latin and Hangeul.

#### 4.1.2 Census results

It is difficult to get demographic information on Reddit in general due to its semi-anonymous nature. However, r/kpop holds a census in September or October each year. While not all subscribers to the subreddit responds, it shows distribution trends for the entire subreddit. In 2014 there were 1826 responses, in 2015 it nearly doubled to 3426 responses, and in 2016 it almost doubled again with 6467 responses. The people who respond to the census are often

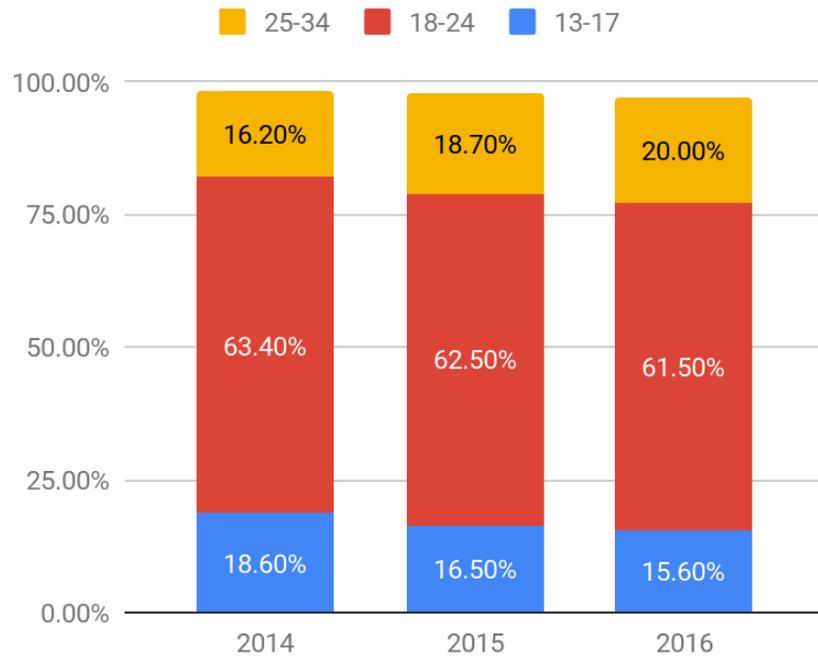
the people who are the most active on the subreddit and who visit the site often. In 2014 only 12% responded with visiting the site less than a few times a week, in 2015 5% and in 2016 10%. All other respondents visited more often than a few times a week. The trend showed that more users visited the subreddit more often from 2014 to 2015, but then it declined again in 2016. This could be due to the influx of new subscribers who got automatically subscribed upon registering. Most of the respondents frequent the site a couple of times a week or more, and approximately half of respondents say they visit the site multiple times a day. Most of the respondents are then, if not necessarily the most active users, users who take in the language and are affected by it.



**FIGURE 4.2: GENDER DISTRIBUTION ON R/KPOP**

Women are underrepresented on Reddit overall. When looking at figure 6, the overall statistic for the site is closer to that of r/kpop in 2014. However, the percentage of female users on r/kpop has been continuously growing. K-pop’s biggest demographic is female, so as the subreddit grows in popularity, it is logical that more female fans would discover it and subscribe. Kinship terms in use in K-fandom are restricted by gender, certain terms are only said by females and some by males, so frequencies of use are affected by the gender distribution.

## Age distribution 2014-2016



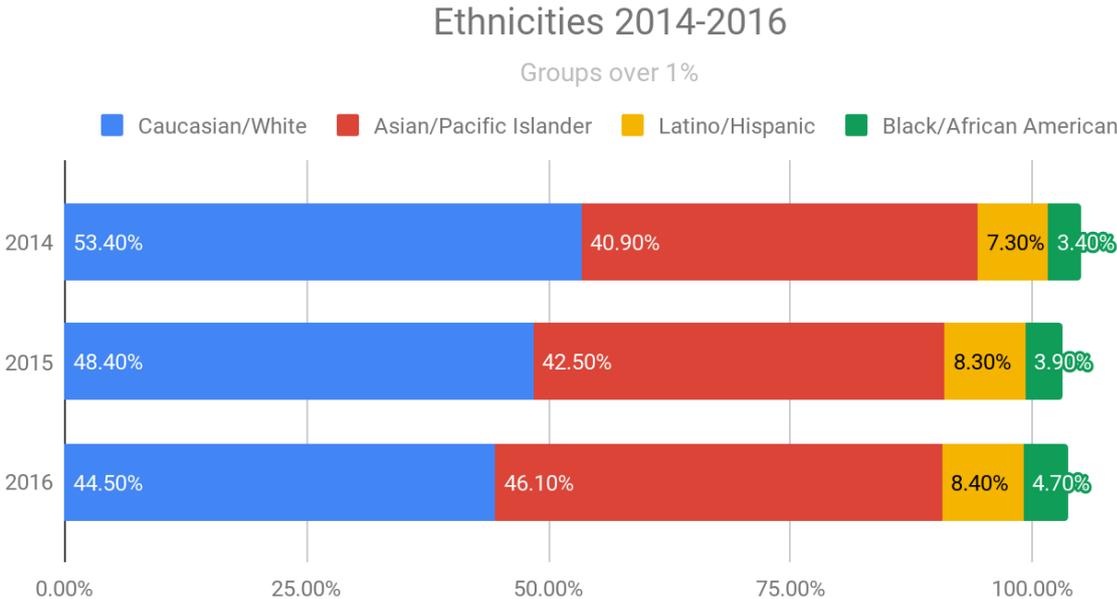
**FIGURE 4.3: AGE OF USERS ON R/KPOP**

The subreddit demographic is overwhelmingly straight with 70-80%, but more LGBTQ respondents show up on the census every year. Sadly, the percentage stays the same for relationship status of the subreddit, almost every year has 80% of respondents been single.

The subreddit gets a little older every year, as shown in figure .... This could be due to users growing older and still coming back to the subreddit without as many new users joining who are young, or it could be a general tendency on Reddit. The biggest age range on r/kpop is 18-24, young adults usually in college or university. This means that the average age is older than the general demographic for K-pop, teenage girls, and should be reflected in language use. When asked for social status, respondents have replied every year approximately 50% being unemployed students. The general age of K-pop idols are late teens to early 20s, so if users on r/kpop are older than them, this should be reflected in the titles and kinship terms that are used to refer to idols.

The majority of the subreddit used to be of caucasian ethnicity, like the rest of Reddit, but that has been on the decline. The subreddit population becomes more Asian every year. Since 57% of traffic comes from the US (section 3.1.4), the Asian population could be assumed to be from Asian diaspora in the US. A high numbers of Asian fans is to be expected

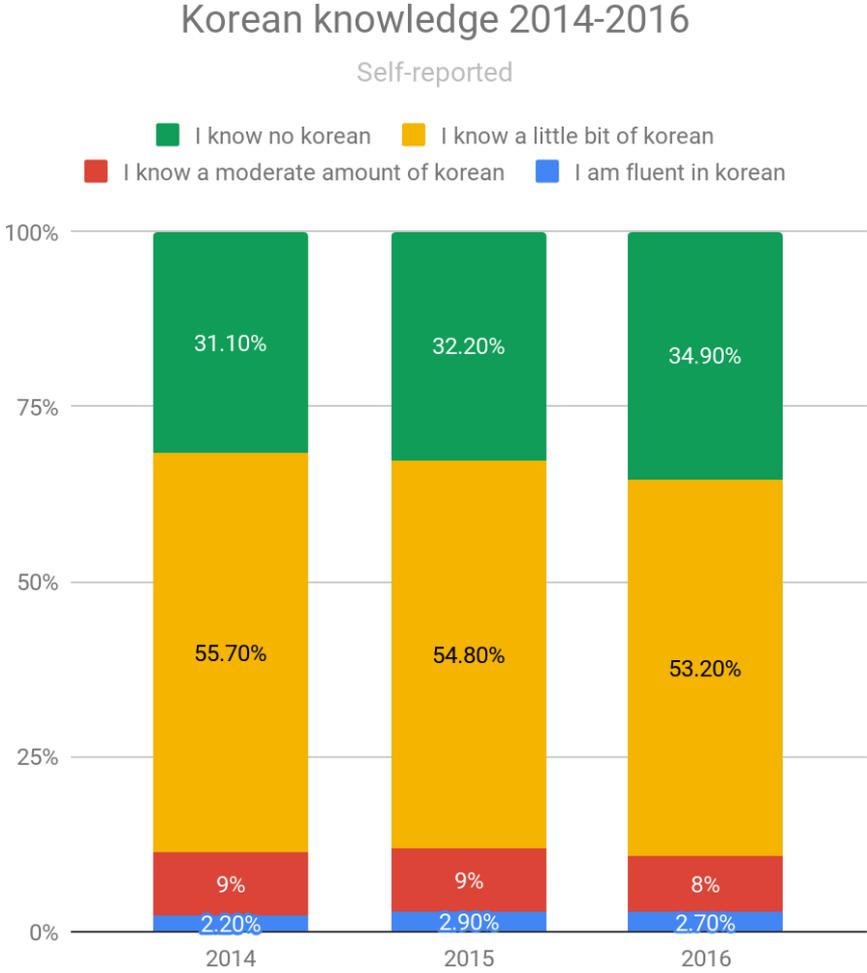
when discussing an entertainment phenomenon of Asian origins. With the lack of Asian representation in Western media, it is not surprising to see K-pop gain a large Asian following as they get to see themselves represented in roles they previously might not have been able to. For the question of ethnicities, multiple choices were allowed, which is why the replies add up to more than 100%. Respondents of mixed ethnicities chose all relevant ones as answers instead of making a separate, custom category.



**FIGURE 4.4: ETHNICITY ON R/KPOP**

It is clear that despite a large part of the population being Asian, they are not South Korean, due to the low percentage of people who are fluent in Korean, wavering between 2 and 3 percent each year. The respondents choosing one of the four categories in the chart on Korean knowledge, figure ..., amounts to 98% of respondents. The other 2% of the replies are custom replies where respondents say they can read Hangeul, but can't understand Korean or that they know a few words and phrases, but they don't know which category that belongs to. Which category to put oneself in is very subjective, and some people reported that understanding Hangeul and a few phrases was enough to put themselves in "I know a little bit of Korean", while others felt that one needed to be able to hold a basic conversation to be in that category. A third of the respondents in the subreddit say they know no Korean, but that also means two thirds have some understanding, and this contributes to a situation where use of Korean words are, if not encouraged, regular. In the custom replies, attitudes showing an interest in learning the language were also expressed. This mirrors attitudes seen in other,

more qualitatively oriented studies of K-pop fandoms. For example, Benjamin Han looked at K-fans in Latin American countries, and positive attitudes toward the language and wanting to learn it was made clear, and the linguistic differences were no hindrance (2017).



**FIGURE 4.5: SELF-REPORTED KOREAN FLUENCY ON R/KPOP**

With the rise of new subscribers in 2016, the main core of active users on the subreddit is also bound to change. The data I use in my analysis is from 2015. This is when the foundation for the style, content, and core groups of users was already built and maintained, and the community had established some in-jokes. While there are no clear demographics available, these census results show what can be affecting language use. Seeing as the general Korean knowledge level is reported as low, Korean usage can be expected to be limited to simple words easily inserted into the English-language frame as near equivalents to their English translated counterparts. Complex Korean structures are not expected. Even if 10% of respondents reported having moderate or fluent levels of Korean knowledge, they

would not be expected to use it often since the general audience on r/kpop reports knowing little to no Korean.

R/kpop was chosen as the source of data because of my own fascination with its use of Korean loanwords. I've been frequenting the subreddit for many years, but rarely posting. The few posts I made are not included in the data as they did not include the use of Korean loanwords. Studying the borrowing performed on r/kpop requires some knowledge of the community and of kpop. One would be hard pressed to understand many of the things that are talked about, and how they are talked about, without some knowledge and experience on the subject, but I also realize that this could color my own view of the data.

# 5. Analysis

To find answers to my research questions, I first separated all the loanwords into categories based on their structural properties and then on discursive properties. First I go through the different ways Korean appears on r/kpop, my first research question. Then I separate the romanized loanwords into 4 groups based on semantic properties. First I go through romanizations of each group, and then I analyse each loanword separately to see how they are integrated into the English-language frame and how they are used in context.

## 5.1 Loan typology

The Korean language elements used on r/kpop can be separated into three larger groups.

1. Korean words written in Hangeul, either in lone language islands or as parts of longer stretches of Korean. Such instances are tagged as ‘kh’ or ‘kph’.
2. Romanized Korean loanwords, including hybrids. Such instances are tagged as ‘kl’, ‘kpl’, ‘kei’ or ‘keh’.
3. English loanwords in Korean borrowed back both with semantic shifts, and original Korean creations using English. Extracted separately.

In other words, Korean elements show up both as full code-switches and nonce borrowings of Korean written in Hangeul as part of a bilingual context, and as loans. The loans constitute both loanwords, loanblends or hybrids, and loanshifts, in the form of semantically changed loanshifts, but not loan translations. The separation between code-switches and loans are clearer since it includes a literal switching between codes, the Hangeul and Latin scripts.

Annotation	Amount
kh	407
kl	2724
eh	3
eph	4
kph	187
kpl	68
kei	539
keh	298

FIGURE 5.1: ANNOTATION #

As seen by the annotation frequencies of lexical tags, the ‘kl’-tag, the tag for single romanized lexemes appearing on their own are the most frequent. The second most frequent category is the ‘kei’ tag, Korean lexemes with English inflectional morphology. Any variant of romanized Korean makes up 3779 out of 4888 tags. The amount of tags exceed the amount of comments tagged due to the appearance of more than one tag in the same comment.

### 5.1.1 Korean in Hangeul

The appearances of Korean written in Hangeul are usually limited to one short word inserted into an English comment. More than one Korean word is not used in the same comment often. For example:

“I never in a million years expected to see that. 대박 indeed.”

Id:cu7afhd

Here 대박 *taypak* is slang which means ‘big win’, used as an equivalent to ‘awesome’. This specific interjection also occurs as a romanized loan, in the form of ‘daebak’, which I come back to later in section 5.2. This example could be an early version of the form before it became a romanized, more established loanword.

Singly occurring instances of Hangeul are also used for humorous purposes, like in this comment:

“J.Fla truly is a hidden gem. 왜 are her songs so delightful?”

Id: conxfnm

The use of Korean is a reference to the artist J.Fla’s song “왜”, which means ‘why’. Korean is used with a clear humorous purpose, and meant for an audience who can read Korean or is aware of the meaning of the song title.

If a word or phrase is written in the Hangeul script, the user has either copied it from elsewhere or made a conscious choice of switching the keyboard settings on their device, which implies a previous need for the script, and thus a certain degree of knowledge of Korean. It could be as simple as knowing how to read Hangeul, or extend further. At least some effort has been made to understand a different script. So if not bilingual, the user could at least be classified as biscriptual.

The appearance of Korean written in the Hangeul script appear as a nonce borrowings, code-switching, and quotes, names and song titles. The longer stretches of code-switching in Korean are frequently found in comments belonging to AMAs. AMA stands for Ask Me Anything and they are Reddit's own type of Q&A<sup>6</sup>-sessions where users post questions and a the person doing the AMA answers. This can be a celebrity of some sort, like Barack Obama; an expert of a certain field, like astronaut Chris Hadfield; someone who has been through a difficult or rare experience, like cancer survivors. On r/kpop there have been a few instances of K-pop idols doing AMAs, and this is where many longer stretches of code-switching appear. For example, this is a comment from an AMA with a well-known girl group called Mamamoo. They have 4 members, and this question is meant for the member named Solar:

“Solar - Where did you get your name?

솔라 - 왜 '솔라'란 이름을 지으신 건가요?

로스엔젤레스 공연 기대돼요!!”

Id: cvd7xip

Here the first stretch of Korean is the same question as is written in English. The inclusion of both languages is likely to avoid the question being asked again by users who cannot read Korean. The second line of Korean is meant for the entire group and says ‘I’m looking forward to the concert in Los Angeles.’. This is not necessary information for commenters who cannot read Korean so it is not translated. The user is here code-switching to limit the audience, and directs the utterance toward specific people, i.e. the entire group Mamamoo. This type of usage fits Androutsopoulos’ list of discourse functions in CMC, number 5, “switching to index one particular addressee” (2013, p. 681). The second line also establishes the user as a Korean learner. The lack of the place-marking particle on ‘Los Angeles’ 로스엔젤레스 and a topic- or object-marking particle on ‘concert/performance’ 공연 *kongyen* makes it clear that the user is not fluent in Korean.

Around 200 occurrences of Hangeul are emoticons written in Hangeul. Users are switching keyboards just to write out an emoticon in a different script, much like how one

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<sup>6</sup> Questions and answers

would switch keyboards on mobile to enter in an emoji. No data is available on whether comments were written on mobile or on a computer, nor the percentage of users perusing r/kpop on computer vs. mobile.

For example:

“Nuuuuuu. Another delay. ㅋㅋ but at least there's a single! Can't wait for their comeback.”

Id: cwebw1o

The emoticon ㅋㅋ is used to signify crying, sadness about the delay. The interesting part about using ㅋㅋ is that an equivalent could easily be made on a Latin keyboard by typing TT or T\_T, but the user made an intentional switch to the Korean keyboard just to enter this emoticon, “crying in Korean”.

### 5.1.2 Romanized Korean

Romanized Korean loanwords are the focus of this thesis, and appearances of single romanized lexemes were the most common occurrence. This is not surprising due to the low Korean knowledge on the subreddit which would make complex constructions and phrases difficult and not accessible to a large part of the audience.

Description	Annotation	Amount
Korean lexeme in Latin script	kl	2724
Korean phrase in Latin script	kpl	68
Korean lexeme with English inflectional morphology	kei	539
Compound or hybrids with English and Korean Aka dual language neologism (Hoffer, 2002)	keh	298

**FIGURE 5.2: ROMANIZED KOREAN ANNOTATIONS**

An overwhelming amount of the loans tagged with ‘kei’ have the English plurality marker -s. Plurality is not mandatory in Korean, and is mainly used when plurality needs to be specified, and cannot be assumed from context. It is marked by the morpheme -들 *dul*, and is thus a more costly choice than -s. ‘Deul’ only occurs 3 times in the dataset, and all of them are satirical in nature.

The keh tag - Korean/English hybrid construction, contains many instances of the creation ‘oppar’, which means oppa, like the loan, but adds a satirical element with ‘-r’ to signify depreciation. This will be explored further in the analysis-section for ‘oppa’.

Most comments only contain one loanword at a time. Only 9 comments contain 5 loanwords or more, and only 44 comments contain 3 loanwords or more. The occurrences of multiple loanwords come from comments where the user is satirically imitating a different type of fan, one the user would like to be distanced from, like this:

“pretty much. I'd rather take something like that over 'daebak, hul, anneyong. he is no longer a nugu ~~~ omo pd-nim oppa deserves more saranghae juseyo kamsamida~~~”  
ID: cwtth0h

This attitude of satirical annoyance imitating fans who do not act in the way the user would like them to is a strong tendency in the comments using more than one loanword.

### 5.1.3 Hybrid creations and loanshifts

This category includes hybrid creations from Korean which were made using English loanwords as well as English loans in Korean which have been borrowed back on r/kpop with an extended or narrowed meaning. In this group, I based collection on my own knowledge and extracted more instances as I was tagging the comments with romanized Korean. In this section I chose to focus on a few specific creations and loans, because they showed the greatest difference and unique appearance from the English they were based on.

## 5.2 Loanwords

In this section i go through the romanized loans word for word. I have separated them into 4 groups based loosely on the semantic fields they belong to. Group 1 ‘Kinship terms’ consists of 7 lexemes and are reserved for Korean honorifics which refer to the personal relations of the people involved. Group 2 ‘Other titles’ consist of 11 lexemes which are, as the name suggests, used to group honorifics or titles referring to positions in work or society in relation to the interlocutors. Group 3 ‘Cultural concepts’ is the smallest category consisting of 5 lexemes, referring to names for concepts and things, specifically from the entertainment industry where there exists no equivalent translation. Group 4 ‘Discursive terms’ which

consists of 9 lexemes which are phrases and exclamations used for a discursive purpose. This includes slang terms and interjections. The meaning for each loanword is presented under each group's section.

	1. Kinship terms		2. Other titles		3. Cultural concepts		4. Discursive terms
618	oppa	572	nugu	378	aegyo	99	daebak
285	noona	426	maknae	102	sajaegi	45	sarang
209	unnie	145	sasaeng	15	satoori	34	juseyo
146	hyung	84	sunbae	15	gwiyomi	26	jjang
55	ahjumma	34	iljin	1	gwiyowo	15	aigoo
28	dongsaeng	31	-dol			15	kamsa
24	ahjussi	27	-nim			14	heol
		20	hoobae			13	wae
		16	naega			11	jinjja
		13	chaebol				
		13	byuntae				
<b>1365</b>		<b>1381</b>		<b>496</b>		<b>272</b>	

**FIGURE 5.3: LOANWORDS ORDERED BY AMOUNT**

In the analyses I maintain the majority-spelling used on r/kpop to refer to the romanized loans, since I will also be discussing such choices of spelling according to romanization systems. Other examples from Korean will follow the established example-structure.

### 5.2.1 Kinship terms

The Kinship term group are terms referring to the social relations between interlocutors based on age and gender. The kinship system in Korean is in general broader than in English, where general terms tend to be modified by adjectives. In Korean, distinctions between roles are lexicalised according to both gender and age, and in some cases relation. For example, a

married woman would address her husband’s younger unmarried brother as 서방님 *sepangnim*, contrasting in marital status with a younger married brother as 도련님 *tolyennim*.

In figure 5.4, the chart of kinship loans, the F and M markers shows what gender a speaker is in appropriate usage. They can also be used self-referentially, but the interlocutor would then be someone of the appropriate gender in the set context.

	1. Kinship terms	Meaning	Type of loan
618	oppa	F'older brother'	Cultural
285	noona	M'older sister'	Cultural
209	unnie	F'older sister'	Cultural
146	hyung	M'older brother'	Cultural
55	ahjumma	'Unknown married woman'	Cultural
28	dongsaeng	'Younger sibling'	Cultural
24	ahjussi	'Unknown male'	Cultural

**FIGURE 5.4: KINSHIP TERMS**

While some kinship terms having equivalent translations in English, they are all designated as cultural loans. They bring with them further expansions than the English kinship term system, and thus bring with them the cultural aspect of the kinship terms as well as the Korean tendency to use honorific titles for people who are older than the speaker.

The most common loanwords in this group are all related to designations used for idols, and reflects language usage in Korean fandoms. The top four loanwords, ‘oppa’, ‘noona’, ‘unnie’ and ‘hyung’, all denote a title for someone older, depending on the gender and age of the speaker. ‘Oppa’ and ‘hyung’ are kinship terms for ‘older brother’, said by a younger female and a younger male, respectively. However, as I will come back to in the analysis for ‘oppa’, the usage on r/kpop does not reflect the gendered differences that are inherent in the Korean terms. ‘Unnie’ and ‘noona’ are kinship terms for ‘older sister’, said by a younger female and a younger male, respectively. These kinship terms can be used with familial relations, close older friends, or in the case of ‘oppa’, boyfriends. In K-fandom, they are used as referents for idols. ‘Oppa’ and ‘noona’ are also titles that are used in K-pop lyrics. When the love interest in a song is older, a title would be used, while if the love interest is younger,

they would be referred to as 'you' or 'he/she'. In this way, the high number of occurrences of 'oppa' and 'noona' is likely contributed to by the widespread usage in song lyrics.

'Dongsaeng' means 'younger sibling'. It is gender neutral, but 'younger sister' can be specified by adding the prefix 'yeo-', and 'younger brother' can be specified by adding 'nam-'. These variations do not occur in the dataset at all. 'Dongsaeng' is not used for younger close friends like the kinship terms denoting older friends. This is due to the politeness system where given names are used refer to close friends who are younger (Song 2005:11), while titles are used for older close friends to maintain proper politeness and deference to their age. 'Ahjumma' and 'ahjussi' means 'unknown married woman' and 'unknown older man', respectively. 'Ahjumma' contrasts with 'agasshi' in marital status, 'unknown unmarried woman', but this kinship term does not occur on r/kpop.

'Oppa' is the most used loanword in the dataset overall and is quite productive as part of 23 types. Then follows 'noona', which is also part of 23 types. However, there is not complete agreement on the spelling of 'noona', and so the same constructions appear with different spelling in many instances. I will get back to this in the 'noona'-section. 'Unnie' and 'hyung' are part of 11 and 12 types, respectively, but many of these are also due to different spelling. 'Dongsaeng' is only used as is in singular or with a plural marker, and is only spelled this way. 'Ahjumma' and 'ahjussi' are part of 18 types, but except for inflection markers, the variation is mostly due to differences in spelling.

### 5.2.1.1 Romanization of group 1

1. Kinship terms	RR	MR	Yale
오빠 oppa	oppa	oppa	oppa
누나 noona	nuna	nuna	nwuna
언니 unnie	eonni	önni	enni
형 hyung	hyeong	hyöng	hyeng
아줌마 ahjumma	ajumma	ajumma	acwumma
동생 dongsaeng	dongsaeng	tongsaeng	tongsayng

아저씨 ahjussi	ajeossi	ajössi	acessi
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**FIGURE 5.5: ROMANIZATION OF KINSHIP TERMS**

‘Oppa’ is the only loanword in the dataset that is romanized the same way in all three systems, which contributes to making it more established. Since the word contains a tensed consonant in Korean which gets romanized to a double consonant in Latin, this helps approximate pronunciation since the preceding vowel-sound is shortened. ‘Noona’ is romanized differently in Yale than the other two systems, but all systems are different than the established spelling. Using ‘oo’ instead of ‘u’ can be seen as an approximation of English pronunciation. If ‘noona’ was romanized as ‘nuna’ instead, English-speakers could mistakenly shorten the ‘u’-sound instead of elongating it, as is made clearer by the ‘oo’-spelling.

‘Unnie’, ‘hyung’ and ‘ahjussi’ all have the same open-mid back vowel ㅓ /ʌ/ as was mentioned in section 2.1.3.1, which could present issues in romanization. However, despite established romanization not following any of the system, the same ‘u’-spelling is used in all word, seemingly following a consensus. The problem then arises in the romanization of ‘ahjumma’ which also uses the ‘u’-spelling, but for a different vowel, /u/. ‘Ahjumma’ and ‘ahjussi’ are not pronounced the same, and this is not reflected in established romanization. When it comes to ‘unnie’, there is no apparent reason for the addition of ‘e’. A possible reason could be to imitate other words with the diminutive ending in English ‘-ie’.

### Oppa 오빠

‘Oppa’ means older brother and is a title used by younger females to refer to older males, within an age difference of a few years. The unmodified ‘oppa’ is unsurprisingly the most used word in the kinship term group overall at 406 times, and the most used Korean word in the dataset.

#	Word	#	Word cont.
406	oppa	1	oppa-lovers
73	oppas	1	zombie-oppas
70	oppar	1	toilette-oppa
31	oppars	1	taec-oppa
15	oppaya	1	opparpologists

#	Word	#	Word cont.
7	oppa's	1	oppalogist
1	oppareul	1	oppahr
1	oppas'	1	oppa'ing
1	exo-oppas	1	oppa-lover
1	oppa-status	1	oppa-logists
1	choppas	1	oppa-didnt-mean-it
1	ceoppa		

**FIGURE 5.6: OPPA CONSTRUCTIONS**

‘Oppa’ is easily inserted into the English-language matrix, and is often marked with English inflectional morphology, and sometimes it is even marked with Korean particles. Looking at figure 5.6, the singly occurring ‘oppareul’ contains the Korean object-marking particle ‘-reul’. ‘Oppaya’ is also not marked for English inflection, but with Korean.

The ‘-ya’-marker is the vocative particle added after a given name or title in Korean to call out to someone. It is in the ‘intimate’ speech level, and is used between friends. It signifies a level of intimacy and closeness when used correctly, but if used with someone not close, it’s seen as very rude. Out of the 15 times it is used, 11 is made by the same user. 6 of these times it is used to thank a specific fansubber, and 2 of the remaining 4 occurrences of ‘oppaya’ are other users thanking the fansubber in the same way. The user who leads the charge on this is also one of the users who employ loanwords the most in the dataset.

The words marked with only English inflection are ‘oppas’, ‘oppa’s’ and ‘oppas’ used 81 times together. The remaining uses of English inflection are from the keh-tag, Korean-English hybrid constructions. They are head-final constructions, and follow English morphology. Ex. ‘zombie-oppas’ and ‘toilette-oppa’ changes the properties of ‘oppa’, while in ‘oppa-status’ and ‘oppa-lover’, ‘oppa’ is used as the modifier.

‘Oppar’ is a curious construction and specific to r/kpop. The addition of -r is used to signify satire. It is clearly prominent, and from the subreddit itself, it is described as an imitation of fangirls:

“However, to seriously answer your question, "oppar" is to make fun of young and blossoming koreaboos who must not call their favorite male idol by his name because using korean words makes them psychologically closer to said idol and korea, thus affirming their non-existent "right of place" within the fandom/kpop fandom for being so knowledgeable about their personal fantasy holy land and the hallyu wave.”

ID: co4i2mi

“I think most people (me included) just use "oppar" to make it clear they are being ironic.”

ID: ctjoyns

The first example shows clear disapproval toward said ‘koreaboos’<sup>7</sup>, and the idealized attitudes they show toward Hallyu and Korea in general. It also contributes to the notion that assumed knowledge provides a certain status, at least in other parts of K-fandom, if not on r/kpop. There are multiple instances of users asking what ‘oppar’ means, but none asking what ‘oppa’ means, which implies the users already know that word from elsewhere, but are new users on r/kpop and unfamiliar with the linguistic norms on the subreddit. Usage of ‘oppar’ are also clearly marked as “they-code” by often referencing “their oppars” or “your oppars”, but never “my oppar”.

“Must be hard not being able to stomach facetiousness directed towards your oppars.”

ID: cnwmss2

4 creations are variations of the same construction of ‘oppa’+’apologist’ becoming ‘oppalogist’ They all concern the tendency for other fangirls to forgive “their oppas” for any wrongdoing they might have done. The “oppa didn’t mean it”-construction (ODMI) is based on that attitude, and is an imitation of what a typical ‘oppalogist’ would say. It appears 30 times in the ‘oppa’-data, as well as in constructions with other lexemes, based on ODMI.

“Oppa didnt mean it”

ID: cqzqc7y

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<sup>7</sup> A derogatory term for non-Korean obsessed with Korean culture

This comment came up in a thread requesting sentences that would “piss off r/kpop”. The only daughter-node to this mother-node was “my eye just twitched a little”. The comment received 53 karmapoints, one of the higher scores in my dataset. The high score and the reply shows that appologist attitudes like the one portrayed in ODMI are not welcome. The statement is based in satire, again in imitation of “other” fans.

“T-ara: scandalous group

iKON: oppa was just joking! he didnt mean it!”

ID: cvo9qow

This is the highest scoring comment with the ‘oppa’-loan. It refers to two situations of in-group fighting and how most fans were more than willing to excuse the boy group, while the girl group were dismissed and not forgiven. Judging by the high score, it is a sentiment echoed in the community and has touched on something many users agree with. Not only is the ODMI-construction an established in-group expression, the point of the comment also references something the community blames other fan communities for overreacting on, and has an air of superiority to it. This strengthens the community membership bond of r/kpop as a different kind of fan community than the ‘regluar’ fan forums.

‘Oppa’ was surprisingly mostly used in a way of distancing from “other” fans, and for satirical purposes. It was overwhelmingly used to discuss other fans’ attitudes toward their favorite idols as in “their oppa”. Rarely was it used sincerely as a marker of intimacy toward a favorite idol like it is in Korean, and it was only used to refer to the user in reported speech, never self-referentially.

Noona 누나

‘Noona’ is said by younger males to adress older females. The established spelling on r/kpop is not the same as any of the romanization systems, and the spelling ‘nuna’ which follows the RR- and MR-systems only appears 4 times, so users prefer the spelling which approximates English pronunciation.

#	Word	#	Word
186	noona	1	noona-fangirling
50	noonas	1	noona-feels
10	coordi noona	1	noona-slayer
5	coordi noonas	1	pedo-noonas
5	pedo-noona	1	protective-noona-stan
5	coordi-noonas	1	noonar
4	coordi-noona	1	nuna's
3	noona's	1	noonas'
3	nuna	1	coordinoonas
2	pedonoona	1	livinlavidanoona
1	noonalife	1	cordi-noonas
1	noona-fan	1	nagging-noona-zoned

**FIGURE 5.7: NOONA CONSTRUCTIONS**

Like with ‘oppa’, the unmodified ‘noona’ is the most used version of the lexeme, and together with the plural-marked ‘noonas’ is by far the most used word. 84 instances were of ‘noona’ being used as a relational marker, like it is in Korean.

For example:

“Oh shit, it's Juhee noona. She's boss.

All the ladies from the Spellbound video are fantastic dancers.”

ID: cx2zgpq

71 instances are self-referential, in contrast to ‘oppa’ where barely any were self-referential. Using ‘noona’ self-referentially is also normal in Korean, but it requires that one of the interlocutors is someone who would call the woman in question ‘noona’. On r/kpop, it is instead used a title, a mark of what type of fan they are. 26 instances were inclusive in usage, i.e. there were references to ‘us noona fans’ and the shared experience of being an older female fan of a younger boy group.

Noona fan here as well! I love these adorable kids and how talented they are.

ID: cxmuc1v

We're 27/28 year old noonas and even though most Kpop fans are younger than us we still manage to get along with them because music has no age limit. Go have fun at the concert just try not to talk to the kids under 18 LOL

ID: crj0ntj

The rest could hardly be called anything but singly-occurring loans, but useful to analyse nonetheless as 'noona' is quite productive. The 5 different versions of 'coordi-noona' is a Korean hybrid creation of Eng. coordinator + Kor. 'Noona'. It refers to the stylists who dress the idols for performances and public appearances. 조정자 *cocengca* means coordinator in Korean, and 코오디네이터 *khootineyithe* has become a loanword referring to stylists, concerning clothing and fashion. Usually, blends in Korean are based on syllables, one from each stem involved in the blend, but in this case, the blend fits phonemically better because of the common 'n' in each stem, by replacing 'nator' with 'noona'. The word also involves thorough phonemic analysis from users. 'Oo' is present two places in the word, but is read as different sounds, where the first in 'coordi' is read as /ko:di/, while the second in 'noona' is read as /nuna/. 'Coordi noona' is used on r/kpop to compliment or disapprove of styling choices. In this example, the user is implying that whoever made the stylist mad is the one who receives the poorest styling:

Every group got that \*one\* member who pissed off the coordi-noona.

ID: cqgdip3

Pedo-noona refers to older female fans where the age difference is wide and the fans sexualize underage members of boy groups. Attitudes toward the 'pedo-noona' status was wholly negative, and the one user who seemed to self-identify as it, was worried about how the age difference would be perceived:

I spent the entire Dope video fawning then looked up their ages and felt the need to pray. I can't go down the pedonoona route lol.

ID: cs1xfa8

## Unnie 언니

‘Unnie’ is used by younger females to refer to older females, usually within an age difference of a few years, and means ‘older sister’. While ‘noona’ was used self-referentially a lot, that is not the case for ‘unnie’. ‘Unnie’ is used more in the same way as ‘oppa’ and the two are often used together, like this:

You too?! Get your dirty hands off my oppars and unniers plz.

ID: cxyhjvh

This example also contains the singly-occurring ‘unniers’, but the user who made the comment has also made other comments using the established spelling. Using ‘unniers’ instead marks this comment as satirical, especially due to the use of ‘oppars’ as well.

#	Word	#	Word
135	unnie	2	unnirs
39	unnies	1	coordi-unnie
18	unni	1	unnier
4	eonnie	1	unniers
3	unnie's	1	unni's
2	unnir		

**FIGURE 5.8: UNNIE CONSTRUCTIONS**

‘Unnie’ has clearly not become very productive, as the only construction is coordi-unnie, but seeing as this is the same loanword as coordi-noona, only changed for gender (the speaker is also female), ‘unnie’ is only used unmodified or with English inflectional morphology.

“ ...

Also for the most part all dem Shawol noonas are sweethearts. Some are intimidating as fuck, but they will still throw you a hot pack or give you a snack if you look cold and hungry. 90% of the time I love my Shawol unnies, they treat me well and the ones that don't are usually those lazy ones that only show up occasionally and are hella entitled.”

ID: cyeeftl

In this example, the user is referring to older female fans of the group Shinee when she says “Shawol unnies” and “noonas”. The special thing about this usage is that she first refers to the ‘noonas’ in relation to the male user she is replying to and then referring to them as ‘unnies’ when they are in relation to herself in “I love my Shawol unnies”. This shows that the user has enough knowledge of the Korean kinship terms that she knows they change according to the gender of the person they are put in relation to.

Use of ‘unnie’ was generally relational, but used satirically when used with ‘-r’- constructions. It was often used together with ‘oppa’ since they are both kinship terms used by younger women, and the target of satire are other female fans.

Hyung 형 and dongsaeng 동생

‘Hyung’ means older brother and is said by younger males to refer to older males. Deference and politeness-level can be increased by adding -nim, and that would change the meaning to something akin to ‘honorable older brother’. Using ‘hyung’ would make the younger male seem endearing to the older male while the addition of ‘-nim’ still shows deference by the younger male. The -nim-suffix can be added to most kinship terms to make them stronger honorific markers. ‘Dongsaeng’ on the other hand, is used for younger sibling. It shares a section with hyung because the two terms are often put in opposition of each other, at least in the case of ‘dongsaeng’, which is used more rarely than ‘hyung’, and is also only used unmodified and with English plurality-marking.

#	Word	#	Word
97	hyung	1	hyungnim
31	hyungs	1	hyong
18	dongsaeng	1	hyungwhore
10	dongsaengs	1	hyungry
8	hyongs	1	furniture-hyung
2	hyungs'	1	hyungnims
2	hyung-nim		

FIGURE 5.9: HYUNG AND DONGSAENG CONSTRUCTIONS

“Kihyun, Shownu, IM and Jooheon are my dongsaengs. LOL. I'm that hyung fan”  
ID: cvkpzr0

This example is one of the few where ‘hyung’ is used self-referentially. It is more often used to establish relationships in boy groups. Usage of ‘hyung’ are most often discussing relations internally in groups, 86 instances of 146, often surrounding the same two groups, BTS and Big Bang, and all instances of ‘hyong(s)’ are made by the same user about Big Bang. The user says that the spelling was encouraged by a member of the band to seem endearing:

“Seungri (back in his "made for study English" twitter days) would use "hyong". He said it was the aegyo version of hyung. Seungri and I are the same age...idk, I guess i ironically/not ironically use it.”  
ID: cpxb15p

While the established spelling is ‘hyung’, this user goes against the grain at the word of a favorite idol. The source that is closer to Korean culture takes precedence over the masses.

Ahjumma 아줌마 and ahjussi 아저씨

Ahjumma and ahjussi are titles used to refer to unknown women and men, respectively, also of unknown age in relation to the speaker, but usually middle aged. When said to someone, social rules require careful navigation, at least in the case of ahjumma, and the terms seem to be used more often when talking about strangers, and not when talking with strangers. It is also used to mark fans of a certain age like this:

“Yup they got the ahjumma fans. There was a pair of straight up grannies that came at sat with us through line ups for Jonghyun's solo promotions. I was hella impressed with them cause it was bitterly cold and super early in the morning at that time.  
...”  
ID: cr9doe9

#	Ahjumma	#	Ahjussi
21	ahjumma	10	ahjussi
15	ajumma	6	ahjussis
5	choahjumma	2	ajussis

#	Ahjumma	#	Ahjussi
4	ahjummas	2	ahjussi's
4	ajummas	2	ajussi
1	kenjumma	1	ahjussi-line
1	choajumma	1	ahjusshi
1	choahjumma		
1	chajumma		
1	ajhumma		
1	ken-jumma		
1	n-jumma		

**FIGURE 5.10: AHJUMMA AND AHJUSSI CONSTRUCTIONS**

‘Ahjumma’ refers specifically to a unknown woman who is married, contrasting with ‘agasshi’, an unknown woman who is unmarried. When women reach a certain age where Korean society would expect them to be married, people could ask if they should be referred to as ‘agasshi’ or ‘ahjumma’. However, the meaning for ‘ahjumma’ that is implied through usage on r/kpop is that it refers to unknown middle-aged women, and the title is added to imply that the person in question acts like a middle-aged Korean lady would. ‘Choahjumma’, ‘kenjumma’, ‘chajumma’ and ‘n-jumma’ and their variations are all nicknames for idols containing ahjumma, but it’s in not limited to refer to women as the title is in Korean. The last three all refer to men, so the -jumma marker is added as a term of endearment to show that sometimes the idols in question act like middle-aged women. In this example, the user refers to an idol around 20 years old who does not know how to use a modern gadget, and thus acts like a stereotypical middle-aged woman:

“modern technology too hard for choahjumma”  
ID: cu7geyj

### Other kinship terms

Terms like mother ‘umma’, father ‘appa’, uncle ‘samchon’ did also occur, but clearly less than the 10 times discursively as I set as my lower limit for loans. ‘Samchon’ only occurs in ‘samchon fans’, uncle fans, a way to describe older male fans of young female idols with an

age gap as would generally be found between uncles and nieces. This term is usually used in the context of discussing fans of the idol ‘IU’, who has the nickname the nation’s little sister, and is known for having many ‘samchon fans’, so it’s usage is limited to this context.

### 5.2.2 Other titles

The second group, “Other titles” are comprised of titles used to navigate social and hierarchical positions.

	2. Other titles	Meaning	Type of loan
572	nugu	who?	Cultural
426	maknae	Youngest in a group	Cultural
145	sasaeng	Stalker fan	Cultural
84	sunbae	Senior (working relation)	Cultural
34	iljin	Trouble-maker or bully (designation in school)	Cultural
31	-dol	Marker for different types of idols	Cultural
27	-nim	Honorific marker	Cultural
20	hoobae	Junior (working relation)	Cultural
16	naega	I	Core
13	chaebol	Person from a family which runs a Korean conglomerate	Cultural
13	byuntae	pervert	Core

**FIGURE 5.11: OTHER TITLES**

‘Nugu’ is a question word in Korean meaning ‘who?’, but in usage on r/kpop it has come to mean an unknown group or idol, which is why it is designated as a cultural loan. As the section on ‘nugu’ will show, it has become quite productive. The word in itself does show up in song lyrics, but in Korean usage, as a question-word, not the usage on r/kpop. ‘Maknae’ ‘sunbae’ and ‘hoobae’ are referents used to signify relations between the people talking, or being talked about. These do not come up in song lyrics, but are often discussed behind the scenes and on variety shows. ‘Sasaeng’, ‘iljin’, ‘-dol’, ‘chaebol’ and ‘byuntae’ are titles which say something specific about the person referred to. They are never discussed in song lyrics or

national TV broadcasts, and are likely from social media, which explains the lower numbers. The ‘-dol’ ending-marker is specifically attached to say what kind of idol a group or idol is. Ex. variety-dol, where the idol in question is someone who does well on variety shows. The -nim marker is attached to titles or names to imply a higher level of politeness or deference towards the entity marked with -nim, like ‘hyungnim’ in the Hyung-section.

In Korean ‘naega’ 내가 nay.ka is a construction of *nay* meaning me and the subject marker *-ka*. When used on r/kpop it is either used as a quote or to discuss the confusion some people experience the first time they hear it and assume they are saying the N-word. This made me suspicious that all comments with ‘naega’ in them might be coming from the same discussion, but they have different post ids, and no more than two comments came from the same posts, and the same was true for authors. No users were authors of more than two posts containing ‘naega’.

Again, most of the loans are cultural loans. The only core loans are ‘naega’ for I and ‘byuntae’ for pervert, but they are used less frequently. The borrowing of ‘naega’ was incited by a popular reality show in 2015 called “Unpretty Rapstar”, a competition between female rappers. While the introduction of the term was quoting from the show, the phrase quickly gained a life of its own as an in-joke. The other core loan, ‘byuntae’ with the meaning ‘pervert’, is one of the lesser used loans, and it is almost always used jokingly or endearingly.

“Welcome home, good byuntae. What is it you desire?”

ID: cvlsq5o

The ‘-dol’-marker is the most productive, unsurprisingly, but many of the terms only occur once. The titles where ‘-dol’ is used are often learned titles from the Korean K-pop fandom. For example, a ‘variety-dol’ is an idol who excels on variety shows, a distinctly Korean thing. A ‘concept-dol’ is an idol, or group, who can work with any concept they are given for their new song release. ‘-dol’ is part of 23 different constructions, not including plural versions. How many of these are borrowed in their complete form from Korean and how many are constructed in English is impossible to know.

### 5.2.2.1 Romanization of group 2

2. Other titles	RR	MR	Yale
누구 nugu	nugu	nugu	nwukwu
막내 maknae	mangnae	mangnae	maknay
사생 sasaeng	sasaeng	sasaeng	sasayng
선배 sunbae	seonbae	sōnbae	senpey
일진 iljin	iljin	ilchin	ilcin
-돌 -dol	-dol	-tol	-tol
-님 -nim	-nim	-nim	-nim
후배 hoobae	hubae	hubae	hwupay
내가 naega	naega	naega	nayka
재벌 chaebol	jaebeol	chaebōl	caypel
변태 byuntae	byeontae	pyōnt'ae	pyenthay

**FIGURE 5.12: ROMANIZATION OF GROUP 2**

In this group, the variation is greater from one romanization to the next than in the kinship title group. There are more consonant sounds that get romanized differently, but the vowels that give trouble are the same as in group one. In the case of ‘maknae’ both the RR and the MR systems account for the pronunciation rule of ㄱ /k/ becoming ㅇ /ŋ/ in front of ㄴ /n/. The Yale system does not so it can be reversible. However, this pronunciation rule is not unique to Korean, and English does the same thing, so changing the spelling to reflect that is not necessary like it is with vowels.

‘Iljin’ and ‘chaebol’ both have the same character ㅈ /dz/, but they are romanized differently in the established spellings. This is likely due to ‘chaebol’ being an established loanword outside of r/kpop. It is first attested in English in 1972 according to the OED (Oxford English Dictionary, 2018, *chaebol* entry). The spelling then can be assumed to come from the main romanization system at the time for English, the MR-system. Except for the diacritical mark, the spelling is the same. ‘Iljin’ on the other hand, follows the RR-system, and since it is slang not even attested in the Naver Korean Dictionary, it is a newer term and even

newer loan. The ㅟ /ɛ/ vowel occurs often in this group. In the Yale romanization is is transliterated as ‘ay’, and is the least intuitive. The ‘ay’-spelling implies it is to be pronounced as a diphthong, when that is not the case.

In the case of ‘sunbae’ the Chinese roots become apparent with romanization in the Yale system. The Chinese root for ‘sunbae’ is the same as the Japanese ‘senpai’, which is clearer with the romanization ‘senpey’ than the others.

## Nugu 누구

Nugu, meaning who in Korean, is the second most frequent loanword in my dataset. It is used mostly unmodified, 419 times, or with English inflectional morphology as shown by the frequency of ‘nugu’ and ‘nugus’ on their own. As previously mentioned, ‘nugu’ has gained quite a special meaning on r/kpop in that it is used as a marker for unknown groups or idols. The word is supposed to refer to the reaction one gets from the general public upon mentioning a group or idol who has not made it big yet. Typical usage would be like this:

“BTS aren't really popular or known by the public. They're at the top of the lower tier, but still fairly nugu. Most Koreans who don't follow Kpop as a whole will have no idea”  
ID: cte58nt

In 2015 an average Korean would most likely reply with “who?” when asked about the band BTS. Today, however, BTS is arguably the most famous K-pop group on a global scale. This comment not only shows the normal usage of ‘nugu’ on r/kpop, but also shows the speed of change in the K-pop sphere. ‘Nugu’ can not be used it this way in Korean. It is only used as a question word, or with a ‘-na’ ending particle which changes the meaning to be ‘anyone’. On r/kpop, they have borrowed the form, but shifted the meaning to be a more economical replacement for ‘unknown’. It also appears as a replacement for ‘unknown’ in relation to other things than groups or idols as well, like this:

“Yeah I like the nugu Cupid more. I wonder if Kara themselves do too...”  
ID: crp3yb1

Kara is the band, and Cupid is a song here being compared to another, more famous song of theirs. This next example shows the usual sentiment conveyed when using ‘nugu’: worry for

the unknown groups, and a risk that they might not survive in the industry long. This is part of the reason why ‘nugu’ is used so frequently, since all new releases are posted on the subreddit and fans of lesser known groups naturally want their favorites to succeed.

“I know it's risky stanning for nugus since you don't know if they'll make it to the next comeback, but this song is so good. Lemme stan a bit.”

ID: cstgj3z

These types of discussions happen regularly, and so similarities in the compounds containing ‘nugu’ are very clear. ‘Nugu’ has become very productive, and in the following chart, all modified appearances of nugu are sorted in the word formation process they were made by.

	<b>inflection</b>		<b>morphological derivation</b>		<b>compound</b>
97	nugus	17	nugudom	4	nuguland
8	nugu's	9	nugu-dom	2	nugu-obscurity
1	nugu-est	2	nugu-ness	1	old-but-nugu
1	nuguest	2	perma-nugu	1	nugu-zone
		1	somewhat-nugu	1	nuguhell
		1	non-nugu	1	nugu-shaming
		1	sub-nugu	1	nugu-loving
		1	half-nugu	1	nugu-land
				1	nugu-ship

**FIGURE 5.13: PRODUCTIVITY OF ‘NUGU’**

The most regular modification is as expected plurality. In the inflection category it is also used as an adjective as in ‘nuguest’. A rare occurrence, clearly, but it contributes to the overall impression of linguistic creativity shown on r/kpop.

There is a preference for hyphenated compounds and derivations over closed compounds and derivations, even if the closed ones are more stable, as can be seen with 17 occurrences of nugudom while the hyphenated nugu-dom has 9 occurrences. All ‘nugu’ words where the construction is left-branching change the degree to which the subject is ‘nugu’, or ‘nugu-ness’ if you will.

When it comes to usage, ‘nugudom’ and ‘nuguland’ are used with specific verbs. ‘Nuguland’ is used with verbs describing a state of being, as in “they are in nuguland” or “stay

in nuguland”, while ‘nugudom’ is used a long with verbs describing movement, as in “break out of nugudom”, “climb out of nugudom”.

“\\* debuted the first \*and second\* time. They were in Taken before A-Prince. It really seems like they are cursed to stay in nugu-land :(“

ID: cy2hegq

“Every time they come back I hope its the comeback that breaks them out of nugudom T\_T”

ID: cpr6loj

### Maknae 막내, sunbae 선배 and hoobae 후배

Maknae, sunbae and hoobae are all titles used for describing relations between people in a group or the same industry. They all have adequate translations in English, but when used in Korean they all bring with them some part of the cultural distinction. ‘Maknae’ is the title for the youngest person in a group (not just idol groups). The English ‘youngest’ is a satisfactory translation, but in Korean, the title also includes social practices that must be followed. The oldest one in a group usually pays for shared meals, while the youngest one is responsible for making sure cups are filled and managing the grill when the group goes for Korean barbeque, and similar tasks. The maknae is an important title in idol groups because the youngest is usually tasked with looking cute and performing ‘aegyo’, winsome acts which I will return to in the third group of loanwords.

“I didn't know shes THAT hot. I always see her as the maknae with innocence all over her. dkasjbdksabdass I can't! oh god! She's beautiful!”

ID: creyawr

This example shows the inherent connotations in ‘maknae’, that the youngest member appears innocent. The user is subsequently surprised when this is not the case, despite the member talked about is the youngest. This also goes the other way, in that the oldest members appear cute and innocent enough to be considered the ‘maknae’ in comparison to the rest of the group, like in this example:

“Oh my gawwwd, Chorong looks so cute and precious with that outfit, that bow and the Super Broccoli top...she could be the maknae, seriously. A Pink and Soshi both have Kid Leaders and they're so loveable.”

ID: ctmod44

In this example the user also refers to “kid leader”, a title for leaders of a group (usually the oldest) who appear to be the youngest. While these titles might seem superfluous, the age hierarchy is very important in Korean culture, and those aspects of the culture are in part borrowed along with the words.

#	Maknae	#	Sunbae	#	Hoobae
386	maknae	35	sunbae	13	hoobae
29	maknaes	31	sunbaes	6	hoobaes
5	maknae's	11	sunbaenim	1	hoobae's
2	maknaeline	6	sunbaenims		
1	maknae-leader	1	sunbaebaes		
1	ex-maknae	1	sunbaenim's		
1	maknae-line				
1	maknaein				

**FIGURE 5.14: MAKNAE, SUNBAE AND HOBAE CONSTRUCTIONS**

Many of the instances of ‘maknae’ in the dataset are from comments where users share information about their favorite groups to attract new fans. Especially one thread which prompted recommendations of everyone’s favorite groups is a big source of instances of ‘maknae’. It is not very productive and is only part of 8 types, most of them only with inflectional modification.

Other hierarchical titles are sunbae and hoobae. They means senior and junior, respectively, and is used in academic settings and in certain career settings. Students who attend the same school or university can refer to each other as sunbae or hoobae depending on what year they are in, and in the entertainment industry idols will use the titles to refer to each other depending on how long they’ve been active in the industry. Sunbae is used to refer to people who have been in the field longer, like seniors. Hoobae is used for people who have been in the field shorter, like juniors. Usage on r/kpop match that of Korean, and the titles are used to place idols in relation to each other.

Don't forget Exo is back so it'll be a very tough fight even if MissA are their sunbaes.  
ID: cpz3vgb

However, there are also instances where it does not follow Korean usage, and is integrated further into the English-language frame, like this:

“I'd like for them to win, since they absolutely knock performances out of the park. But there is no repackage to drive sales of physical albums, and the digital charts are hard to crack with formidable sunbae groups all coming back.”  
ID: cskakin

In this example, sunbae is used as an adjective to modify groups to signify that they are groups with more experience in the industry. This contrasts with Korean where it is a relational term and is never used as an adjective.

“Yeah big fan of twice but i feel bad for got7 which only got their first win on The Show 3 weeks ago and their hoobae group will probably win a week into debut”  
ID: cwa5pkn

This example also shows a cultural aspect of the loan ‘hoobae’ where the user implies that a group with less experience in the industry should not win first place in a music show before their senior group. So while the loans on their own can be classified as core loans, their usage includes cultural aspects, and are in that way cultural loans.

### Sasaeng 사생

‘Sasaeng’ 사생 is a word referring to a special kind of obsessive fan in K-pop culture. The closest equivalent in English would be a stalker fan, or a stan if you will, even if that word has a changed meaning of lesser severity by now. The etymology of ‘sasaeng’ is not clear due to its slang status, but most likely it comes from “sa” meaning ‘private’ and “saeng” meaning ‘life’ (Lansky, 2012). It is the only word where the plurality-marked type is more frequent than the unmodified type of the lexeme.

#	Word
74	sasaengs
65	sasaeng
2	saesang
1	sasaeng-like
1	sasaengery
1	non-sasaengy
1	sasaeng-ish
1	saesangs

**FIGURE 5.15: SASAENG CONSTRUCTIONS**

Sasaeng is a unique concept related to the idol culture in South Korea. Intense and obsessive fans are rarely actively discouraged and can go too far in trying to get close to their favorite idols. When stories about them arise, they are heavily debated. For example:

“The most disturbing part of this is that she was able to get that close to them.

I sincerely worry about the safety of K-pop idols sometimes. EXO especially since they seem to have the most sasaeng fans...”

ID: cnd2i91

In this example, sasaeng is used unmodified, but ‘fans’ is in plural. The plural ‘sasaengs’ or ‘sasaeng fans’ is referred to more often than any singular sasaeng fan because it is the entire culture of sasaeng tendencies which are frowned upon. In general, ‘sasaeng’ is discussed when a new story of ‘sasaeng’ behavior makes it to the news. These can be as extreme as attempted poisoning, kidnapping and breaking and entering an idol’s home. The behavior is always looked down upon, and often the boundary between being a regular fan, an obsessive fan, or koreaboo, and a sasaeng fan is brought up.

-nim -님

Adding -nim 님 behind a name is a marker of politeness, in Korean. In the usage on r/kpop it is more often a humorous or sarcastic marker. It is added to names and entities in the same way as in Korean.

“I was going to say that if I wanted to see stupid comments, that is what the comment section here is for.

You're the last one who can talk btw, herniated disk-nim.”

ID: cxgnq37

Here the -nim is added in a jocular way to lessen the insulting attitude expressed previously with “stupid comments”. The Korean marker is added to avoid face-threatening acts, following number 7 on Androutsopoulos’ (2013) list.

### 5.2.3 Cultural concepts

Loans in the cultural concepts-group are all cultural loans except for ‘satoori’, which is a core loan. ‘Satoori’ refers to dialect in the same way as in English, but in combination with ‘-dol’ from group 2, it refers to idols who maintained their regional dialect after moving to Seoul for idol training. Most other idols from outside of the capitol attempt to train away their regional dialects, but can use them for entertaining purposes on variety shows. In this sense, the concept of performing ‘satoori’ could be seen as a cultural loan. However, I chose to designate it as a core loan because it has an English equivalent, and the usage that appears on r/kpop is equivalent to that.

	3. Cultural concepts	Meaning	Type of loan
378	aegyo	Winsome, cute act	Cultural
102	sajaegi	Vote hoarding/fraud	Cultural
15	satoori	accent/dialect	Core
16	gwiyo-mi/wo	Cute act	Cultural

**FIGURE 5.16: CULTURAL CONCEPTS**

One of the most foreign concepts introduced to new K-pop fans, at least outside of Asia, is the aegyo act. The Naver online dictionary definition of it is “(personal) charms, winsomeness, attractiveness, courtesy” and “intense childish cuteness” (Naver Korean-English Dictionary, 2019, 애교 entry). While the dictionary definition implies it is a state of being, the usage on r/kpop refers more often to a performance act. Gwiyomi is a certain type of aegyo act. The

word is based on 귀여워 *kwiyeowe* which means 'to be cute'. I will return to this in the 'aegyo'-section. 'Sajaegi' means "hoarding" or "stockpile" (Naver Korean-English Dictionary, 2019, 사재기 entry). It's usage on r/kpop, however, refers specifically to a type of vote hoarding or vote fraud performed to get a higher ranking on music charts i.e. manipulation of music charts, which is why it is designated as a cultural loan. All loans in this group are frequently used on variety shows. The last one, 'sajaegi', concerns music shows but is never discussed on broadcast. It is likely to have come from social media.

### 5.2.3.1 Romanization of group 3

3. Cultural concepts	RR	MR	Yale
애교 aegyo	aegyo	aegyo	aykyo
사재기 sajaegi	sajaegi	sajaegi	sacayki
사투리 satoori	saturi	sat'uri	sathwuli
귀여미/워 gwiyo-mi/wo	gwiyeomi/wo	kwiyoŏmi/wo	kwiyemi/we

**FIGURE 5.17: ROMANIZATION OF GROUP 3**

Romanization of group three does not bring up any new issues that has not been made clear in the other groups already. However, the Yale romanization of 'aegyo' makes clear the Japanese stem it is based on, *aikyoo*, which means charms, especially referring to females. This is another Korean term that most Korean are not aware is borrowed from Japanese, because it is borrowed from Kanji, Chinese characters in Japanese. 'Aegyo' is also a prominent part of Korean entertainment culture, and has become very distinctly Korean.

Aegyo 애교 and gwiyomi 귀여미

Aegyo is most often used unmodified, as shown by the chart. Since it is a performance, an act, it is very rarely used in plural. 'Aegyo' is also productive, and most often used as a modifier, not as the modified. 'Aegyosal' is a compound from Korean referring to the skin under the eyes. When that part of skin is puffy, or becomes prominent when someone smiles, it is referred to as aegyo-sal or aegyo-fat.

#	Word	#	Word
355	aegyo	1	puffy-aegyo
3	aegyosal	1	aegyo'd
3	aegyos	1	aegyo-sal
2	aegyo-ish	1	aegyo-y
2	aegyodom	1	aegyo-filled
1	aegyo	1	aegyo-flower
1	hip-hop-not-aegyo	1	aegyo-gate
1	out-aegyo-ed	1	aegyo-pop
1	aegyo-sexy	1	aegyo-voice
1	aegyo-vocals		

**FIGURE 5.18: AEGYO CONSTRUCTIONS**

Aegyo refers to ‘cute or winsome acts’, and on r/kpop it is often used when talking about how an idol acts in a performance or video. An example of normal usage would be a comment like this:

“Oh god, Victoria aegyo. I'm dying from the cuteness”  
ID: cngjaz3

In this example ‘Victoria aegyo’ refers to the cute behavior performed by the idol named Victoria. It becomes clear to a potential reader that ‘the cuteness’ refers back to ‘aegyo’, and the meaning is made explicitly clear. This is one way the word can spread to new users.

While the first example implies a positive attitude towards ‘aegyo’, it is not always welcomed. In Korean culture as well, excessive ‘aegyo’ can be seen as over the top. This sentiment has carried over to r/kpop, like in this comment:

“I think yuna needs to tone her aegyo voice down a notch or two. She's 22, and my 5 year old niece sounds more grown up.”  
ID: cnhsgvk

The rest of the instances of ‘aegyo’ is also referring to either the performance of ‘aegyo’ or using ‘aegyo’ as a modifying descriptor of something else, like in ‘aegyo voice’. However,

one type of ‘aegyo’ performance is ‘gwiyomi’, which was used more than 10 times. The name is based on ‘gwiyowo’, which means ‘to be cute’. As one user explains it:

gwiyomi! its like a cute way of counting  
ID: cskeyma

The stem it is based on, ‘gwiyowo’ only shows up once, and users do not show signs of being aware of the stem of ‘gwiyomi’, and refers to it exclusively as the ‘aegyo’ performance.

‘Aegyo’ and ‘gwiyomi’ are used as they are in Korean, like descriptors of acts. However, ‘aegyo’ is also used as a verb, but only in past tense like the variations of ‘aegyo’d’

### Sajaegi 사재기

‘Sajaegi’ was a hot topic in 2015, but discussion surrounding it has since died down. There were many accusations of stockpiling of votes, especially for newer groups who were not believed to have a fan base strong enough to provide the amounts of votes that resulted. Since 2015, music chart voting has changed many times, and is very different across charts. Now that streaming numbers are taken into account, there is little chance to affect numbers on music charts to a large degree by stockpiling or hoarding albums. However, in 2015, it was used 102 times.

For example:

“\*Slays charts\* PLAGIARISM! SAJAEGI!”  
ID: ct2f64p

This comment is a reference to how many fans reacts when a rivalling group does well on music charts - they immediately imply fraud. The marking of \*word\* is a way of writing out actions in CMC (Danet, 2001, p. 17). And the following ‘PLAGIARISM!’ is the assumed reaction. ‘Sajaegi’ as a term is mostly used unmodified, and the few modifications are hyphen constructions of head-modifying constructions. For example, a ‘sajaegi-dol’ is an idol or idol group who is often accused of vote hoarding to do well on music charts.

## Satoori 사투리

‘Satoori’ is the Korean word for dialect. In South Korea, the Seoul-dialect is the standard dialect, while dialects from other parts of the country is referred to as ‘satoori’. When young kids move to the big city to become idols, many of them also attempt to hide their dialect to present a more modern image. Dialects are still brought up for entertainment on variety shows, and is often seen to be cute and endearing. ‘Satoori’ is most often used unmodified, but this as well as ‘sajaegi’ is also used in a -dol-construction to describe an idol who is famous for their accent.

“I love hearing Mina and Lizzy speak with their satoori accents. Busan girls best girls”  
ID: cwrsq4v

In general, the loans in the cultural terms group are used to refer to their cultural sources as they would be in Korean, but they are integrated into the English-language frame by moving across parts of speech categories, and being involved in language play.

### 5.2.4 Discursive terms

	4. Discursive terms	Meaning	Type of loan
99	daebak	Big win (slang)	Cultural
45	sarang	love	Core
34	juseyo	give.imp.politeSpL	Core
26	jjang	awesome (slang)	Cultural
15	aigoo	Oh my	Cultural
15	kamsa	thank-	Core
14	heol	wow (slang)	Cultural
13	wae	why	Core
11	jinjja	really	Core

**FIGURE 5.19: GROUP 4**

Discourse markers are the biggest category of core borrowings, as proposed by Myers-Scotton (2006, p. 216). In my dataset it is also clear that the largest proportion of core loans come

from discursive terms. Korean discourse markers in use on r/kpop are markers used as interjections, like ‘aigoo’, to express attitude, like ‘jjang’, and as responses, like ‘kamsa’.

These are interjections used for discursive acts such as thanking, exclamations of excitement and similar acts. They do not change the meaning of the utterance, but contribute to emotional expression. ‘Daebak’ is the most used, and the most positive of the loans in this group. It is slang and means something akin to ‘big win’. Often it is used in a way to substitute ‘awesome’ or ‘great’. ‘Sarang’ and ‘kamsa’ are the stems for ‘love’ and ‘thanks’ respectively. ‘Juseyo’ means ‘please give’, but is mostly used as a replacement for ‘please’. ‘Jjang’ is a slang term meaning ‘the best’ or ‘super’. ‘Aigoo’ is an expression of upset or annoyance, and is based on the onomatopoeia Koreans would use if something is not to their liking to express dissatisfaction. ‘Wae’ is a loan of another question word. It means ‘why’ and is used that way on r/kpop. ‘Jinjja’ means ‘really’. ‘Heol’ is a newer slang term and as such does not have a meaning in the Naver online dictionary. However, examples from subtitles and other open dictionaries on Naver coin the meaning as an exclamation used to express mild shock or surprise, like something akin to ‘gosh’ or ‘woah’ in English.

Of these loans, ‘sarang’, ‘juseyo’, ‘kamsa’, ‘wae’ and ‘jinjja’ are often occurring in K-pop song lyrics, while the rest are from other sources. Considering the rest are slang terms not usually used on national TV broadcast in Korea, these can be assumed to have come from social media.

#### 5.2.4.1 Romanization of group 4

4. Discursive terms	RR	MR	Yale
대박 daebak	daebak	taebak	taypak
사랑 sarang	sarang	sarang	salang
주세요 juseyo	juseyo	chuseyo	cwuseyyo
짱 jjang	jjang	tchang	ccang
아이구 aigoo	aigu	aigu	aikwu
감사 kamsa	gamsa	kamsa	kamsa
헐 heol	heol	höl	hel

왜 wae	wae	wae	way
진짜 jinjja	jinjja	chintcha	cincca

**FIGURE 5.20: ROMANIZATION OF GROUP 4**

Again, there are few issues in romanization that have not been made apparent in the previous groups. One issue that arises in this group concerns ‘jjang’ and ‘jinjja’ due to the tensed consonants, and causes the biggest difference among romanization of the same character. The ‘jj’ of the RR-system seems to be the most intuitive to approximate English pronunciation. And while the MR-system ‘tch’ also replicated the sound, it is less economical to type. Once more the Yale system keeps Hangeul reversible, but is the least intuitive of the three.

### Daebak 대박 and heol 헐

Daebak is a Korean slang term which means something akin to ‘big win’ or ‘awesome’, as previously mentioned, and it appears 99 times on r/kpop, always unmodified. The Naver Online dictionary meaning is “big win, a great success, a big hit”, and it can be used either as a noun or an adverb in Korean. On r/kpop it is not used as an adverb, but as an adjective when it directly substitutes ‘awesome’, like this:

“This is going to be daebak”

ID:cpfjg9v

It’s also used as an exclamation of excitement, where it serves no additional purpose than a communicative one:

“This is going to be a serious jam. Same sort of electronic vibes Expectation has.

Daebak.”

ID: cst4ap

Like most of the other loanwords I’ve gone through so far, ‘daebak’ is also used satirically and sarcastically. Sometimes it is unmarked and one would only catch the sarcasm by being a part of the speech community, but most often it is overtly marked due to the large user base, like this:

“Your comment is nomu daebak, oppar

/s”

ID:ctj1z85

Here, the comment is intentionally marked for sarcasm by the “/s” at the end, a normal marker of sarcasm on Reddit, but it is also overtly, but not necessarily as intentionally marked for satire or sarcasm by the use of ‘oppa’ with the -r ending. It also uses ‘nomu’, Korean for ‘very’ instead of the English equivalent, both of which are economical and easy to type. To use ‘nomu’ instead of ‘very’ is an unnecessary loan, which is done for the sake of a certain prestige. In this satirical example, it is the prestige the user assumes an obsessive fangirl would feel when using Korean.

When going through collocations for daebak, the phrase “hit daebak” was prominent. While I have been unable to find any clear source for how this phrase came to be, it seems that it was created on English-speaking fansites, and not coming from Korean. To ‘hit daebak’ means to become successful and have a song do well upon release.

“Omg I'm so happy people here love Sana too!

I said earlier that I will stan the hell out of the group if JYP debuts Sana and Mina and that I was even willing to forgive the elimination of Momo.

You can't even imagine my happiness when I watched the final episode.

Japanese trio gives me life.

Let's hit daebak TWICE!”

ID: cszac19

Here the use of ‘hit daebak’ is also part of wordplay along with ‘TWICE’. It obviously means ‘let’s do well two times’, but since Twice is the name of the group the comment is about, it also means ‘let’s do well, Twice!’

‘Daebak’ is used satirically, but mostly it is one of the interjections which appear to be used sincerely. This could be due to it being faster and easier to type out on a normal keyboard than ‘awesome’, while also carrying a degree of prestige or association with the culture the users feel is ‘daebak’.

‘Daebak’ can be interchanged with ‘heol’. ‘Heol’ is another slang term, less known and used than ‘daebak’ with only 14 occurrences, and it is an exclamation of mild shock or

surprise. In Korean, it does not carry an inherently positive or negative connotation. On r/kpop it is mostly spelled ‘heol’, following the RR-system, but 2 occurrences are spelled ‘hul’, which does not follow a romanization system, and is instead a closer approximation of American English pronunciation. Yale romanization would transliterate it to ‘hel’, approximating a similar treatment of the e-sound as in ‘her’. This comment shows an example of how the word is used:

“I watched it at times two speed and was like " heol how are they so fast" before realizing my speed was on x2”  
ID:cxergt3

However, in 5 out of 14 instances ‘heol’ appears on its own in a comment, and the meaning can only be gathered from the context of the posts. They are all mother-nodes without any daughter-nodes which respond to news stories with negative connotation, so the usage of ‘heol’ is used in the context of something more negative, in spite of the lack of connotational value in Korean. ‘Daebak’ has a more positive connotation. Comments containing ‘heol’ also often has a lower score than those containing ‘daebak’, so it appears that the more established loan is more allowed, or possibly carries higher prestige.

### Sarang 사랑

‘Saranghada’ means ‘to love’. The -hada ending is the neutralizing verb-stem used for verbs when listed in the dictionary, while ‘sarang’ is the noun stem. Instances of sarang which include ending markers like ‘-hae’ and ‘-haeyo’ are often sincere in their usage. The ending ‘-hae’ is from the intimate speech level.

#	Word
24	saranghae
11	saranghaeyo
6	sarang
1	sarang-hae
1	saranging
1	saranghaba

#	Word
1	saranghayo

**FIGURE 5.21: SARANG- CONSTRUCTIONS**

While it would not be socially correct in Korean to have a conversation with an idol in the intimate speech level without knowing them, it does add a level of intimacy when shouted to the idol from a crowd, which is usually as close as many fans get. Using the ending -haeyo is a more appropriate speech level, the polite one, and they both occur in the data. When using either the -hae or -haeyo-ending, they do appear as expressions of fondness for idols, like it would be in Korean as well. For example:

“IU saranghae <33”  
ID:crrz9n7

This comment is a simple declaration of fondness of the artist named IU. It follows a structure closer to that of the fangirls that are often imitated sarcastically on r/kpop, but it is not overtly discouraged in this form. Instances of ‘sarang’ without an ending marker, however, are used sarcastically, satirically or as jokes, for example:

“For my oppar to fall in sarang with me what else do you expect”  
ID:cx51iq2

In this example, the usage of oppar with the -r ending underlines the sarcasm. By not inflecting ‘sarang’ and leaving it in its noun form, which would be ungrammatical in Korean, the user is underlining the satire by staying as close to the English language matrix as possible. If the user attempted to follow a Korean matrix closer it would be seen as an attempt of language learning, and encouraged. In this form it is satirical, and the form is frowned upon if used sincerely in this way. Furthermore, ‘sarang’ is used for jokes:

“you used to call me on my handeupone late night when you need my sarang”  
ID: cx4qrd9

This comment was made on a post about a new music video release. In the video, a rapper references the dance done by Drake in his video for the song “Hotline Bling”, and thus the

user is referencing lyrics from “Hotline Bling”, but switching out some content words for their Korean equivalents.

‘Sarang’ is used sincerely, sarcastically, jokingly, and in other words inserted into the English-language context as a direct equivalent to ‘love’. The different politeness levels are not taken closely into account, and using a Korean ending-marker occurs in comments where the user is expressing a more genuine fan tendency than in the jocular nature of comments with only ‘sarang’.

### Juseyo 주세요

Juseyo 주세요 ... is a an imperative phrase meaning “give!”, inflected with the imperative-marker for the polite speech level. It’s based on the stem ju-da, and the -seyo inflection marks imperative in polite speech.

Haugen (1950, p. 226) says that a loanword can introduce inflections or affixes that the borrowing speakers are unaware of, and that can cause instability in the classification of loanwords. This is relevant in the case of ‘juseyo’. The verb on its own ju-da ... or simply ju-, are not borrowed on its own, but rather as a complete phrase where the inflectional marker is unbeknownst to the users. ‘Juseyo’ is inserted as a replacement for ‘please’. For example:

“It was taken down. If someone finds another link for it, publish juseyo :3”

ID: csxkfbf

In this case, the user is requesting a new link, and ‘juseyo’ is clearly a replacement for ‘please’. However, in other instances, it is not as clear. For example:

“You guys are focusing on the wrong thing here. IS WONDERBANG MAKING A COMEBACK AS WELL????? JYP, ANSWER JUSEYO.”

ID: csh567d

In this case, the last sentence can be analysed both like the user understands the morphological structure of ‘juseyo’ with the imperative ending particle, or it could be analysed as a replacement for ‘please’. If ‘answer’ is analysed as a noun, the sentence is closer to the Korean version of the utterance where the order would be SOV. If ‘answer’ is analysed

as a verb, ‘juseyo’ would be a replacement for ‘please’ and the sentence would follow SVO-order as in English.

### 5.3 Hybrid creations

This section explains loanwords from Korean which were created using English loanwords.

#### Selca 셀카

Selca 셀카 *selkha* is a Korean compound of English loanwords. Using the first syllables of the loanwords self + camera, the compound becomes ‘selca’. In Hangeul, the loanwords are written like so: self = 셀프 /sel-peu/, camera = 카메라 /ka-me-ra/, 셀/sel/ + 카/ka/. Selca. It has the same meaning as selfie, a much more prominent choice in the western world, evidenced on r/kpop as well since selca appears 62 times while its western counterpart selfie occurs 112 times. For example:

Only f(x) fans will understand this lol \*still waiting for that luntoria selca  
ID: crmcdmh

In this example, the use of the Korean version of ‘selca’ instead of ‘selfie’ is pointing out that the people who will not understand will understand even less. Luntoria is the ship-name for two of the idols in the band f(x) which is being referred to. As part of the fandom of this group, not only would you understand the topic of the discussion, but also the ship name. The addition of ‘selca’ underlines the difference from non-fans who would choose to use ‘selfie’.

#### Skinship 스킨십

Skinship 스킨십 *sukhinsiph* is borrowed from Japanese, which again created it as an original construction to mean physical touch from combining “skin” and “relationship”. Another theory is that it was based on kinship. It is a loan, not from English, but “Japanified” English (Hoffer, 2002) where it is an original creation based on English loanwords. It has been reintroduced into English before, then to refer to the physical intimacy between a mother and her child. Upon its return to English on r/kpop it is often used to refer to fanservice, or acts idols do to appeal to their fans by way of physical contact. Like two idols hugging on stage,

rubbing each others back or the like. Used in colloquial Korean, it mostly refers to physical intimacy in couples, and has a romantic connotation. The Naver Korean-English Dictionary states the meaning of ‘skinship’ is “physical affection, touch” (n.d. 스킨십 entry). Most Koreans are also unaware that this is a Japanese loan. After the end of Japanese colonial rule, there were attempts to clear the Korean language of the forced Japanese influence, and overt Japanese phrases and words were avoided. Since skinship is a Japanese hybrid creation based on English loanwords, there was no reason to remove it from the language.

Its usage on r/kpop refers to physical contact between idols, or “fanservice” as it is called, when idols perform acts that are to the benefit of their fans. “Fanservice” has a negative connotation in that it often includes scantily clad behavior, and online it includes connotation of homoerotic acts. However, in Korea relationships between male friends are typically close and involve more acts of physical intimacy like hugging and putting arms over each others shoulders. Quite a few instances of the word ‘skinship’ refers to a discussion around a specific idol who uttered an opinion that homosexuality was wrong, while still engaging in acts of fanservice, skinship, with members of his own group, which to many international fans, was seen as abusing a sexuality he considers wrong.

“holding wrists is now "intimate skinship" - what has this world come to? Oh wait. I forgot I live in the world of Kpop.”

ID: cvb4loh

Many of the discussions surrounding skinship are similar to this, wherein attitudes portrayed are tilted toward the negative. The cultural aspect of ‘skinship’ is understood, but often ridiculed.

“Oh god that would be the biggest scandal in the history of 4minute.

And yet watching their interactions is a little plausible. They skinship more than any other group I've seen (except Perverted Sunny).”

ID: cq5v6jz

In this comment the user is employing the noun ‘skinship’ as a verb. This is very easily done in English, but it also underlines that the user is comfortable enough with his/her knowledge of the word to manipulate its syntactic properties.

## All-Kill 올킬

‘All-Kill’ (AK) 올킬 *olkhil* is a description of when a newly released song gets to the number one spot on all real-time music charts. There are other variations, like Perfect All-Kill (PAK), Certified All-Kill (CAK) and Real-time All-Kill (RAK). All version refer to different qualifications which need to be fulfilled to get an ‘all-kill’. All-kill originates from the game StarCraft, which is also very popular. All-Kill in Starcraft refers to a format of a game where a single player has the possibility of taking out all players of the other team and as such achieving an all-kill. This is transferred to K-pop as in the newly released song takes over the number 1 spot in all music charts. The term also changes along with the music charts. A realtime all-kill is hitting number 1 in all real-time charts, which is not the same as a certified all-kill, when a song hits number 1 on daily charts as well. A perfect all-kill is when a song reaches number 1 on weekly charts as well.

‘All-kill’ was captured in different variations 113 times. 10 comments captured by the regular expression was an English way of using the phrase ‘all kill’, like in ‘they’re all killing it’. All-kill does not exist in English and is a Korean creation. In the very least, I can not find sources of it coming from anywhere else.

“First really good girl group song of the year IMO

Judging by this Perfect All Kill, the Korean public agrees”

ID: cpx94dm

As this user writes, ‘all-kills’ are gauges of popularity among the general korean public since sales and streaming numbers factor in when winners are named. Getting an ‘all-kill’ is an important factor in the industry since it is a less abstract way of showing popularity.

“Wonder Girls only achieved an All-Kill, not perfect unfortunately.

Aside from Big Bang, Sistar achieved a PAK with Shake It, this summer.”

ID: ctwr34y

In this example, but ‘all-kill’ and ‘PAK’ are used, and as the user shows, just a regular ‘all-kill’ is worth less than the prestigious ‘PAK’.

## 5.4 Semantically shifted words

Some of the words used in Korean are loans from English, and when they get used on r/kpop, they have gone through a semantic shift. While in English, the word is merely getting and extended or narrowed meaning, since the meaning change occurs because of borrowing, it is still relevant for the scope of this paper.

### Visual 비주얼

‘Visual’ is an English loanword in Korean which means having an attractive appearance. When borrowed back to r/kpop, it is often used to refer to the role a member has in a group. Visual is a role to a similar degree as the leader of a group, the rapper or the main dancer. The orthography of the word is adapted to fit the Korean frame upon borrowing, and as it’s borrowed back to English, nothing is changed in orthography to reflect the borrowed status.

#	Word	Meaning
309	visual	role
290	visuals	look
94	visuals	role
53	visual	look

**FIGURE 5.22: VISUAL**

‘Visual’ 비주얼 *picwuel* is used the most to discuss idols with the title of “visual” in a group, or their role. 281 times it is used as in English. 309 times it is used like for example “she is the group’s visual”, “who is the group’s visual?” In plural with the meaning of role title, for example “they are all visuals”.

For example:

“wow I actually like the song .. its pretty fun :D .didn't really expect the trot but i think she pulled it off pretty well. She sings really well O\_O I honestly thought she was just a visual member. feel like they could have styled her better tho. She looked better in kiss and cry and vnt mv”

ID: cqj9nli

This example also shows attitudes toward members with the ‘visual’ role. They are expected to be average singers at best, and are only part of the group to look attractive. They are seen as a necessary component to the group since the ‘visual’ have a better chance of getting commercial deals, while for example the lead vocal would get changes at singing soundtracks for K-dramas. Depending on how the groups split their income, one member getting contracts outside of music, can benefit all.

Which users on r/kpop are aware of:

“Most groups share their income, and it's the visuals who often bring the most money because they are the first to be contracted by agencies to model for their products. Without the visual, the rapper and main singer wouldn't get paid either, which would lead to the group fall apart.”

ID: cx3vxnn

The second meaning of visual is the visual appeal of something. According to Merriam-Webster, visual as a noun means “something (such as a graphic) that appeals to the sight and is used for effect or illustration —usually used in plural”. This meaning is represented in the last entry on the chart, visual with the meaning of a look, used 53 times. However, at second place with 290 usages, is visuals, a mass noun denoting the overall aesthetic pleasing of the eye. This usage brings about a semantic extension to the word.

For example:

“I don't even like Hyeri's visuals either. She looks like she's confused about what she's supposed to be doing onstage half the time.”

ID: ct10in4

This refers to the visual impression the idol Hyeri leaves when performing, encompassed in the one loan ‘visuals’.

Visual in English is usually an adjective, but into Korean it got borrowed as a noun (Naver English-Korean Dictionary, n.d., 비주얼 entry), and then the meaning and POS got extended and changed upon its return to English again. In Korean, adjectives and verbs have

the same base stem, *-hada*, in the dictionary, and words of these types can often be confused as the same grammatical category.

Visual has been borrowed back into English in this online speech community, and probably others discussing K-pop as well, but what type of borrowing it constitutes is a matter worth looking at. Haugen (1950:222) already uses ‘reborrowing’ to refer to the same loanword entering a language at different places by different people, so that seems an inadequate, albeit fitting, title for the process. ‘Visual’ is borrowed from English into Korean without affecting any change on the word in English or changing something in Korean. When it is subsequently used in English again, it does cause a semantic shift, but the change comes from the word returning, not from another word entering the language to cause a narrowing or extension of the meaning. This phenomenon does not seem to be covered by existing terminology, and I have not managed to come up with similar examples yet.

The thread with the most amounts of comments containing loanwords was a thread requesting recommendations for new groups. In most of these comments the idol group is described with name, a selection of songs and a description of the members, usually including the descriptor “maknae” for the youngest member of the group and visual to mark that role.

### Fighting! 화이팅

Fighting is a cheer, like “go you!” Since Korean does not have an ‘f’-sound, they transliterate the word to ‘hwaiting’ 화이팅 to fit Hangeul. When used on r/kpop, it appears in all forms: 화이팅, ‘hwaiting’ and ‘fighting’. This is contrary to what happens with ‘visual’ where nothing is changed in orthography to identify the loan status when used to refer to role.

#	Variant
25	화이팅
37	hwaiting
171	fighting

**FIGURE 5.23: VARIANTS OF FIGHTING!**

They all appear in identical contexts, so only user preference and Korean knowledge affect which one is used, but the usage follows Korean and accommodates for surrounding choices. For example:

“Ladies and Gentleman, MAKE SOME NOISE!

What more can I say? Mamamoo has proved time and time again that they can stand up to the best of them, and are no doubt one of the best in the business right now.

Oh my GOSH those little name intros just really set the energy level for the entire song, and from then on I knew they had the audience (and me) hooked!~ 마마무 화이팅!!!”

ID: colghin

“Wow. This performance was amazing!

I was rocking out in my seat~ That drumline ~ Those harmonies.

EXID HWAITING!”

ID: co4fo33

These boys and their overflowing talent! New song in five minutes and even the point dance was made. I like how they accept contributions from all members even if it's weird and work to make it fit, much like with the dino's gaht in OMG. Sweet melody too. Seventeen fighting!

ID: cvh23u0

In all three examples, the choice of variant accommodates the context. In the first instance, the user refers to the idol group Mamamoo using Hangeul, and then uses Hangeul for the cheer as well. In the last two examples, only user preference decides the spelling, but the word order follows Korean SOV word order. When cheering for the band with a Korean cheer, despite it being based in an English loan, users choose to follow the Korean structure, likely due to the cheer being directed to the band. Users adjust for the potential audience who they mean the cheer for, even if the idol group in question will never see it.

When users choose the ‘hwaiting’ spelling over the other two, it is a stronger marker of identity as a non-Korean K-pop fan. By choosing Hangeul, the user can be code-switching to index the Korean idol in particular. The user might just be a Korean learner with a small interest in K-pop, and taking advantage of the opportunity to practice some Korean. By choosing the Latin spelling, it is distancing from the loan-status of the cheer, and distancing from the Korean cultural aspect. By choosing the ‘hwaiting’ spelling, users are making clear that they know the cheer is a Korean loan, and also the purpose it is used for, and are choosing to make that overt.

## 6. Discussion

### 6.1 Results

Usage of Korean on r/kpop is clearly limited. When appearing in Hangeul, more complex constructions are made, but romanized Korean is limited and is most often only appearing as single lexemes as part of a larger English-majority comment, rarely as more complex structures, reflecting the low Korean knowledge reported on the subreddit.

When it comes to my first research question, what Korean elements are borrowed on r/kpop, it is clear that elements borrowed are in the majority lexemes focused around the idol culture in Korea, most of them cultural loans. The most frequently used loans are lexemes related to the idol-fan relationship and idol culture in Korea, like ‘oppa’, ‘nugu’ and ‘aegyo’. However, when looking at the types of loans borrowed, the majority is not specifically related to idols or K-pop. Since K-pop is not simply an auditory phenomenon - music videos, performances on music shows, fashion and variety shows are all equal parts of it - the loanwords in use reflect that. Many cultural loans refer to cultural practices and concepts related to the idol industry in South Korea, like *sajaegi* ‘vote hoarding’, and that would likely not be borrowed if idol groups’ performances and results on music shows did not matter in the industry and to fans. There are also more discursive terms borrowed than anticipated, and they constitute a group of core loans, which are not specifically related to K-pop.

As expected, kinship terms used to refer to idols and relationships related to them are borrowed frequently, but their usage does not always follow Korean usage. Gender-reliant kinship terms are borrowed, but they are not proportionate to the gender-distribution reported in the subreddit census. The kinship terms used to refer to females, ‘noona’ and ‘unnie’ are used more self-referentially than kinship terms used to refer to males. There are fewer women than men on the subreddit, so this usage implies that women are more willing to self-identify with Korean and the marker of a fan that comes with it, than the men. This follows what Oh (2017) found among Youtube fan-reactors, where women showed more integration of Korean than men. The terms used to refer to men, ‘oppa’ and ‘hyung’, are used more often to refer to idols in the K-pop industry in relation to each other or other female fans than in relation to the users who borrow the loans.

When it comes to my second research question, how are Korean integrated, I show that romanized lexemes are fully integrated into English. Inflectional markers are from English with a few rare instances of Korean particles. Loanwords are used creatively and productively to form new hybrid words and loanblends, but follows the English-language frame closely. For example, ‘perma-nugu’, ‘sasaengery’ and ‘out-aegyo-ed’ are creative hybrid constructions using Korean loans and English modifiers and inflectional morphology, that are cleverly integrated to form new, easily analysable words. Hangeul mostly appears in longer stretches of Korean, and often translated for the sake of non-Korean speakers. Romanization does not follow any one system clearly. Romanization favors approximating English pronunciation for new loans, but there are no clearly established romanisation rules, and this leads to unstructured romanization and different ways of transliterating the same characters.

Lastly, regards my third research question, how are romanised Korean used in context on r/kpop, Korean elements are used as markers of membership. They are used for jokes, satire and sarcasm at the expense of other K-pop fans outside of r/kpop. The use of the r/kpop-specific constructions like oppar, other -r constructions, and “oppa didn’t mean it” are distancing from “other” fans, and in usage on r/kpop constitutes in-group language. The unmarked choice on r/kpop is to refer to other people’s ‘oppas’ and ‘unnies’ and rarely ones own. The tendency to use the female-reliant kinship terms to discuss ‘other’ fans is clear, and other female fans of K-pop are often the target of satirical imitations. Furthermore, Korean loans are more often used to position idols or things being discussed in relation to the K-pop industry in contrast to users positioning themselves in relation to it. On r/kpop, idols are put in relation to each other, and rarely positioned in relation to users. When loans are used in reference to anyone involved in the conversation on r/kpop, it is used satirically or with humorous purpose. Fans are at the same time participants in the fandom and positioning themselves on the outside by satirically imitating the rest of the K-pop fandom.

The exception in the kinship-terms is ‘noona’ which is used self-referentially to position users in relation to their favorite idols and the industry. This also matches Oh (2017), where the female Youtube fan-reacters were positioning themselves in relation to the idols, and putting themselves as actors in situations involving idols. Especially when it comes to

relational loanwords, the kinship terms and the other titles, r/kpop uses them to discuss the idol industry and rarely uses them as themselves as referents.

## **6.2 Further research**

Since this work is exploratory in nature, and looking at many different parts of a phenomenon that has received little scholarly attention as of yet, there are many ways for research to go, and many ways the research I have done in this work can be improved upon.

I started working with this material when the BigQuery material only was completed up to 2015. While that was at a time when the subreddit had come into its own and established in-jokes and a self-proclaimed subreddit culture, it has since grown substantially. With the influx of new users, the loanwords used could have changed as well. Just from my own perusing as of late, there seems to be more non-native english speakers than before, which could have a greater effect on the linguistic variety of the subreddit. There is also an argument to be made for automatic taggers, the opposite of what I did. Automatic taggers are becoming better and better, and a way to help them improve is to use them on more types of and more varied data. Tagging a multilingual corpus could help improve automatic taggers' categorization, and it could keep up with rapidly changing material online. Due to the rapid pace there is always the risk with studying internet language that everything will have changed by the time you are done.

A comparative study across different fan forums is recommended as future research to gauge whether use of loanwords on r/kpop are restricted to this one forum, or if other fan forums show similar borrowing behavior. As Baheri (2013) says: "Users of one social media platform are likely to be users of several and they take the language with them across Internet borders." This is especially true for r/kpop which restricts content to news and updates and encourages serious discussion, while other fan forums gives space to fan creations like fan art, memes and dance covers, and encourages bonding and socialisation amongst users.

Other fan forums are also catering to younger demographics than r/kpop, so age could also impact the what loanwords are used and how frequently. Furthermore, a study of other fan forums could verify if users there are in fact using Korean as the users on r/kpop satirically imply in this paper. Does Korean occur more frequently on other fan forums? Are more elements of English replaced by core loans from Korean on other fan forums? The scope

of this study did not include comparison, but since I have yet to find other linguistic studies on borrowing in fandoms, this study can contribute valuable grounds for contrasts.

There were many occurrences of differing spelling for the same loan in my data. This makes it clear that there is a lack of an established romanization system for non-official purposes, or the current systems not accessible enough to most people outside of official settings. Since Korean is establishing a greater presence with a broad demographic outside of South Korea, seeing how fans choose to romanize Korean can contribute to making more intuitive adjustments to current romanizations systems. However, different languages can also be taken into account. A native speaker of Spanish might find one spelling more intuitive than an English-speaker, despite the romanization attempting to replicate Korean. There are a lot of different perspectives to consider, and romanization of Korean has not gotten the same amount of attention as Chinese or Japanese because of its lesser position in the global hierarchy. Now that this is changing, it might be time to give it some attention.

## 7. Conclusion

Korean is a global minority language, but is now seeing more global exposure due to a local pop culture phenomenon. This goes against the notion that the world's largest languages will dominate their geographical areas (Danet & Herring, 2007, p. 22), and shows that there are ways for minority languages to gain exposure. Now, the context surrounding the spread of The Korean Wave is not something to be easily replicated by any one nation willy-nilly, but it does show that utilising globalisation and increasing interconnectedness around the world due to technological expansions is something to consider for nations wishing to establish a stronger presence, culturally, linguistically or otherwise.

The Korean Wave has managed to gather passionate fans from around the globe, and their participatory actions online are sharing K-everything to even more people. Fandom in a globalised world means more interconnectedness, more sharing of culture and language, and especially on CMC, more creativity. Fans take their beloved content and reimagines it to create new things, very creatively, and this includes language.

This paper has looked at borrowing in a new context, as a consequence of pop cultural exposure, and not due to political issues, geographical location or institutionalised contexts. While fandom affect and love of a pop cultural phenomenon might seem superficial compared to situations where there are more serious power-dynamics at play, I hope that with this work I managed to show that there is room for research on fun, light-hearted subjects as well.

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