



## Perceptions of Konglish by English language users: An analysis of a reaction video and its comments on YouTube\*

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**Ahn, Soojin. 2023. Perceptions of Konglish by English language users: An analysis of a reaction video and its comments on YouTube.** *Linguistic Research* 40(Special Edition): 151-169. This study aims to analyze how Konglish (i.e., Korean English) is perceived by subjects in a reaction video and its commenters on YouTube. Based on the netnographic approach, a short video that shows native English speakers' reactions to Konglish words on the selected YouTube channel *Korean Englishman* was analyzed through critical discourse analysis. About 2500 comments of the video, which were written by various English language users both in English and Korean, were also analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis showed that the video mainly presented two typical figures of personhood (Park 2021a, b) within the discourse of Konglish: the native speaker reacting to Konglish with puzzlement and amusement and the overhearer of Konglish trying to enlighten the Korean English user on the native speaker's way of using English. However, an atypical figure of the native speaker identifying the systematic rules of making Konglish words was also presented. The analysis of the comments further showed that most of the English language users were aligned with the figure of the overhearer of Konglish, whereas some of them demonstrated critical views on delegitimization or self-deprecation reflecting the notion of Koreans lacking in English competence. The findings of this study provide important implications for understanding the discourse around the issue of Konglish as a cultural practice and using interactive online platforms as mediational tools for language users' learning and discussions. (Jeonju National University of Education)

**Keywords** Konglish, Korean English, critical discourse analysis, figure of personhood, reaction video

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## 1. Introduction

In 2021, 26 words which originated from the Korean language and/or were related to Korea were added to the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford English Dictionary 2021). Those words include *bulgogi*, a popular Korean dish; *oppa*, a girl's or woman's elder brother or a respectful form of address of endearment; and *fighting*, an expression of encouragement, incitement, or support. Among the words, the first two are pure Korean words, while the last word *fighting* is based on English. Those words which are based on English but have been transformed in any way and/or have special meanings in the Korean language are often deemed as Konglish (i.e., Korean English), which is the focus of this study.

Konglish has a unique status in South Korea (henceforth, Korea). Words characterized as Konglish are frequently spoken by Korean people in both formal and informal settings. They are sometimes considered codified Korean English (Shim 1999; Baratta 2021), but are often considered artifacts of a spoken language, not codified language (Song 1998; Lawrence 2012). Moreover, Konglish is sometimes simply classified as “bad English” (Lawrence 2012). Several studies showed how and why Konglish has such a unique status in Korea. According to the study by Rüdiger (2018), most Korean college students showed mixed attitudes towards Konglish. Students are aware that it is sometimes valuable to use English loanwords. However, they agree that using unnecessary English loanwords can be seen as a way to show off or brag about their English proficiency. They also believe that the use of Konglish loanwords can be stigmatized by other Korean speakers who regard them as wrong or faulty English, so they need to be replaced by proper Korean words. Similarly, in the study of Charles (2015), Korean speakers either living in Korea or abroad showed mixed attitudes towards the use of Konglish as a standardized variety of English. Some of them considered Konglish an informal language, which is comprised of standardized English mistakes and would confuse non-Koreans. However, others who showed a positive attitude towards Konglish mentioned that there are other standardized varieties of English around the world and believed that Konglish would be used as a tool for communication in the international setting. Furthermore, Korean English teachers who have to teach students English also seem to have mixed attitudes towards Konglish. In the study by H. Ahn (2014), Korean English teachers expressed that Konglish can be a legitimate variety of English, and it is practical for communication, although most did not consider Konglish a “real” form of the English language. At the same time, the teachers believed that their duty is to maximize their students'

abilities to achieve a good score in the high-stakes English tests (e.g., Korean College Scholastic Ability Test) in Korea by making their students familiar with the particular variety of English—American English—used in these kinds of tests. In other words, Konglish is not the language the teachers need to encourage their students to learn and use.

Given the current local context of Konglish that evokes mixed feelings among Korean English learners and teachers, this study aims to see how Konglish is internationally perceived by various English language users. Particularly, this study firstly focuses on analyzing how Konglish is perceived by native English speakers in a reaction video on the popular social media platform YouTube. The study then analyzes the related comments on this reaction video, which include various English language users' perceptions of Konglish. The research questions for this study are as follows:

- 1) How is Konglish perceived by native English speakers in a reaction video on YouTube?
- 2) How is Konglish perceived by various English language users in the comments of the reaction video on YouTube?

## 2. Literature review

Konglish can be defined on various levels. First, Konglish is often defined at the word level as “the specific [English-based] set of lexical items generally considered unique to Korea” (Hadikin 2014: 9; cited in Rüdiger 2018: 186). Konglish words are “a legitimate part of the Korean lexicon,” which “serve the everyday needs of the speakers to the fullest extent, far more effectively than the unfamiliar, hard-to-pronounce standard English counterparts” (Kim 2012: 17). Kim (2012) summarized four major categories of Konglish words. First, there are some words with semantic shifts, which have different meanings from the existing English words (e.g., *stand* meaning “lamp”). Second, there are creative compounding words. Those words are created by combining two English words to replace existing English compound nouns or to create new words (e.g., *hand phone* meaning “cell phone”). Third, some words exhibit mixed-code combinations. These words utilize an English word in the second part of the compound word (e.g., *ahn-jeon belt* meaning “safety belt”). Fourth, there are clipping words, which are shortened forms of existing English words (e.g., *air con* from “air conditioning”). H. Ahn (2018) and Rüdiger (2018) discussed similar categories of Konglish words by adding a new category of borrowing words from existing English words with

phonological adaptation.

Moreover, Konglish can be defined at a more extended level—a discourse level. Lawrence (2012) applied the definition of Konglish as “[a] potential contact vernacular developing as a creative mix between English and the local language, which normally include[s] morphology, semantics and syntax but may also include pronunciation, pragmatics and discourse” (Lawrence 2012: 73). The word *potential* is used in his definition because Konglish is not considered a language, but a subsection of language. Also, the word *contact* is used because these words result from the contact of English and the local language. He further explained that the use of Konglish is creative because it is dynamic, not static, with new elements appearing and some disappearing over time. The reason the word *mix* is used is that elements of English are mixed with elements of the local language, changed, or recombined with other elements of English in unique ways (Lawrence 2012). In his study, Lawrence focused on the use of English, Korean, Konglish, and Chinese on public signs in different regions of Korea and concluded that English is easily found not only in the physical domains of streets or amusement parks, but also in the product domains of beer, wine, and clothing. Moreover, he found that English is frequently associated with the sociolinguistic domains of modernity, luxury, and youth. Fayzrakhmanova (2016) shared a similar understanding of Konglish at the discourse level. By analyzing patterns of Koreanized English words, she found that these words are indicators and markers of the unique Korean culture and Korean identity along with its values, attitudes, and behaviors. She further argued that current basilect, mesolect, or acrolect forms of English used in Korea cannot be referred to as a new English variety, but all new structural, phonological, and lexical patterns found in them could contribute to the development of Korean English as a new variety of the English language (Fayzrakhmanova 2016: 228).

Furthermore, at the discourse level, Konglish can be newly understood as a cultural practice. Park (2021a) said, “the way in which the World Englishes framework sought legitimacy for local practices of English was largely rooted in the traditions of structural linguists” (Park 2021a: 140). By pointing out some problems with the variety-based approach to English, including the reproduction of hegemony of inner-circle standard varieties of English, he argued that English should be understood as “part of people’s practices of meaning making, which cannot be understood as divergent language varieties” (Park 2021a: 141). In this sense, English in Korea can be understood as “things that Koreans do with the ideologized resource of English to engage in communicative action, to negotiate boundaries between languages, and to make sense of their own position in the world” (Park 2021a: 144).

Park continued to point out that Konglish is deeply associated with its ideological evaluation. He argued that Konglish is often considered as “incomprehensible, awkward, and strange to non-Korean users of English, particularly native speakers” (Park 2021a: 145), and “anything can serve as an element of Konglish as long as it has the potential not to be recognizable or understandable by a native speaker” (Park 2021a: 146).

Park (2021a) exemplified Konglish presented in several YouTube videos and blogs and pointed out that they commonly emphasize the effects of puzzlement and bewilderment that the native speaker supposedly experiences upon hearing Konglish words (Park 2021a: 145-146). Particularly, he referred to the three typical figures of personhood (i.e., indexical images of speaker-actors that can be socially identifiable: Agha 2005, 2007; Park 2021b) found in the context for Konglish. The first one is the figure of the Korean user of English whose English is distorted by his or her knowledge of Korean so it does not make sense to the native speaker. The second one is the figure of the native speaker who interacts with the English of Koreans with puzzlement and amusement. This figure further dictates the correct way to speak English. The third one is the figure of the overhearer of Konglish who listens to the interaction between the Konglish speaker and the native speaker with embarrassment and claims the responsibility to enlighten the Korean English user of the native speaker’s way of using English (Park 2021a: 146).

In this study, Konglish is understood in both word and discourse levels. In the analysis, some specific Konglish words are illustrated by the speakers in a reaction video. However, analysis of how Konglish words are perceived by native English speakers in the reaction video and how they are perceived by various English language users in the comments section of the video reveals that Konglish can be understood as a cultural practice. To differentiate the two meanings, I will use the term “Konglish words” to refer to Konglish at the word level and the term “Konglish” to discuss it at the discourse level.

### **3. Methods**

In this study, the netnographic approach is used as a research methodology. Netnography is “a form of qualitative research that seeks to understand the cultural experiences that encompass and are reflected within the traces, practices, networks and systems of social media” (Kozinets 2020: 14). Despite the original focus of netnography on consumer behaviors, it has been adapted for use in the field of second language

learning due to its potential to afford insights into the complex linguistic practices of web-based communities (Kessler et al. 2021). Recently, the reaction videos that introduce language and culture have gained some popularity, and they provide various language users with forums for exchanging opinions. The researcher has been interested in such phenomena and conducted the netnographic research on them (S. Ahn 2018, 2020). Also, the researcher has a good understanding of the cultural backgrounds of both Korean and English based on her learning and teaching experiences in Korean and American colleges.

For this study, the channel *Korean Englishman* on YouTube was chosen.<sup>1</sup> The channel was created by two English men who started uploading videos on June 8, 2013. According to the introduction of the channel, their channel presents videos linking the Korean and English cultures in a fun and good-natured manner. As of June 9, 2022, the approximate number of subscribers to the channel was 4.86 million. Among the more than 400 uploaded videos, the video entitled “UK English Teachers React To ‘Konglish’!! (Korean-English)” was chosen as data for this study.<sup>2</sup> This video showcases how native English speakers react to some typical examples of Konglish words introduced by a host, Josh. Seven native English speakers appear in the video, including the host, and 23 Konglish words are introduced to them one by one. The duration of the video is 11 minutes and 37 seconds, and it was uploaded on October 17, 2018. The approximate number of views was 4 million, and the number of comments on the video was 3,840 as of June 9, 2022. Among the comments, 3,373 comments were original ones, and 467 comments were replies. The languages of the subtitles used in the video and the comments were both Korean and English.

Several reaction videos on the subject of Konglish were found on YouTube, but this video was selected as data for this study based on four criteria to ensure the relevance and richness of data. First, the relevance of the video to language learning and teaching was considered. Second, the popularity of the video was considered, measured by the number of views of the video and the number of comments on the video. Third, the continuity of activities was considered. It was measured by the dates the comments were posted. Last, the variety of language users as reflected in the language of the comments was considered.

To select the comments as data for the study, two criteria were used. First, the relevance of the comments to the subject of Konglish was considered. General comments on the selected channel, video, and people and a few insulting comments were excluded from the data.

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1 <https://www.youtube.com/user/koreanenglishman>

2 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2bi\\_q72T5Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2bi_q72T5Q)

Second, the clarity of content was considered. Vague or unclear comments and comments with only emoticons were excluded. As a result, 2,071 comments, including 1,583 comments in Korean and 488 comments in English, were used as data for this study. The comments written in Korean and English were analyzed as a whole.

For the data analysis, two methods were used. First, critical discourse analysis (CDA) informed by interactional sociolinguistics (IS) was used to examine the verbal and nonverbal languages presented in the video. The IS approach is useful to investigate the way people use language in different contexts, as IS shows the significant differences that small, subtle, non-linguistic elements of verbal communication can have in meaning-making (Cameron 2001). This study also focused on contextualization cues (i.e., intonation, pitch, stress, pause, hesitation, speed, and volume) (Gumperz 1982) and attempted to interpret the hidden meaning of all of the messages conveyed within the video. The researcher watched the selected video and read the transcript of the video several times to interpret the hidden meaning of both verbal and nonverbal languages of the speakers in the video.

Second, thematic analysis was used to analyze the comments on the selected video. The researcher read the comments in the comments section of the video carefully several times and made specific codes. Then key categories and themes were developed according to their repetition and importance in the data (Creswell and Creswell 2018). The 41 codes were firstly grouped into eight categories, and then the eight categories were grouped as four themes. Particularly, the themes were analyzed in terms of alignment (i.e., the encounters' responses to voices indexed by speech; Agha 2005) to the three figures of personhood illustrated in Park (2021a). Thus, the final four themes were found as follows: the alignment with the typical figure of the overhearer, the alignment with the typical figure of the native speaker, the alignment with the typical figure of the Korean speaker, and the alignment of the atypical figure of the English language user. To increase validity, the data analysis included descriptions of the setting, participants, methods, data collection and analysis, interpretations, and the researcher's role (Becker 1970; Creswell and Creswell 2018). In addition, since the comments were usually short and the total number of comments that were analyzed were over 2,000, the number of comments was added to show how the specific codes were discussed frequently. Also, peer debriefing including the process of peer review of the preliminary interpretation of data, was conducted.

## 4. Findings

The findings from CDA analysis of the reaction video and thematic analysis of the comments of the video are shown in the following sub-sections.

### 4.1 The figures of personhood around the discourse of Konglish

#### *The typical figure of the native speaker*

The analysis showed that two typical figures and an atypical figure of personhood around the discourse of Konglish were found in the video. The first typical figure is the native speaker who interacts with the English of Korean speakers with puzzlement and amusement (Park 2021a). When the native speakers were asked to guess the meanings of Konglish words, their first facial impressions were filled with puzzlement. They seemed to have no clue regarding the answers to the questions. As they tried to guess the meanings of the words, they sometimes had the right answer but sometimes had the wrong answers. When they heard the meanings of the words from the host, they seemed either amazed or annoyed. Figure 1 is an example of amusement shown when two native speakers had the right answers upon guessing about the Konglish word, *sign*<sup>3</sup> meaning “autograph,” while Figure 2 is an example of annoyance shown when the two native speakers had the wrong answers in their guess on the Konglish word, *consent* meaning “power socket.”

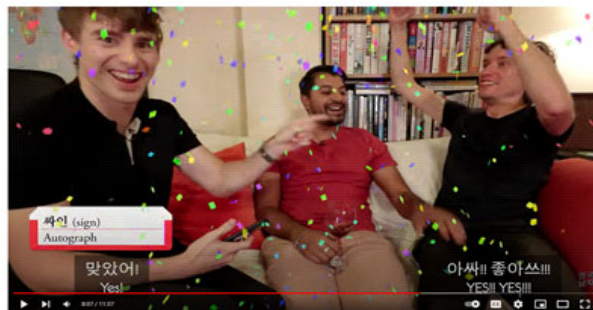


Figure 1. An example of amusement shown when two native speakers had the right answers upon guessing about the Konglish word

3 As one reviewer pointed out, “sign” and “autograph” may be used interchangeably by various other speakers from all over the world, but “sign” was introduced as a Konglish word in this video.





Figure 2. An example of annoyance shown when the two native speakers had the wrong answers in their guess on the Konglish word

In Figure 1, the two native speakers besides the host have big smiles on their faces. In particular, the person on the right side raised his hands and made gestures of celebration. The video scene also includes shiny, colorful special effects. In Figure 2, however, the two native speakers are frowning. The one on the right side has frown lines between his eyes clearly visible. It can be inferred that the match between the Konglish words and the original English words did not make sense to him.

Moreover, the typical figure of the native speaker also has the characteristic of dictating the correct way in which English should be used (Park 2021a). In other words, the figure showed an authoritative attitude towards standard English and explicitly said that it is not correct to use the Korean way of speaking English. For instance, in one scene, a native speaker said, “Don’t say that,” when he heard the host’s explanation of Konglish use with the example of the Konglish word, *one-piece* meaning “dress.” He seemed to know that the major audience of this video is Korean speakers of English, so he looked at the front, not the host, when giving that feedback.

#### *The typical figure of the overhearer*

The host of this video is shown as another typical figure, that of the overhearer (Park 2021a). He speaks both English and Korean fluently and poses questions about Konglish words to his guests, the native English speakers. While he was interacting with them, he first showed strong facial expressions of surprise or amazement when the native speakers had the right answers (see Figure 1). He also showed exaggerated gestures of embarrassment when he heard some ridiculous or interesting guessing of the Konglish words from the native speakers. Figure 3 provides an example of a facial expression of

this overhearer figure (the one on the left) when he heard the wrong guess on the Konglish word, *one shot* meaning “bottom’s up” by a native speaker.



Figure 3. An example of a facial expression of the typical overhearer figure

In Figure 3, the overhearer throws his head back in laughter. He also puts his right hand on his stomach to indicate a big laugh. It can be inferred again that the Konglish words are understood totally differently by the native speakers, which becomes a source of embarrassment for a person who knows both languages.

This typical figure of the overhearer of Konglish has the characteristic of claiming the responsibility to enlighten the Korean English user of the native speaker’s way of using English (Park 2021a). In the example of the Konglish word *one-piece* meaning “dress,” the host explained to his colleague that a lot of Korean people presume that Konglish words are also used in the West. Even though he did not explicitly say, “Don’t say that,” as his colleague said, his explanation clearly implies that Korean speakers of English should know that Konglish words are not considered standard English, especially by native speakers in the West.

#### *The atypical figure of the native speaker*

It is noteworthy that an atypical figure was also found in the video, which has not been discussed by a previous researcher (Park 2021a). This figure is the figure of the native speaker who appreciates the creativity of Konglish. For instance, when a native speaker, the one on the right in Figure 4, heard the meaning of the Konglish word *skinship* meaning “physical affection,” he said, “That’s the first one that I feel we should bring into the UK, and we should start using that.” This suggests that he has become more open-minded and serious about using some Konglish words, even in his country.

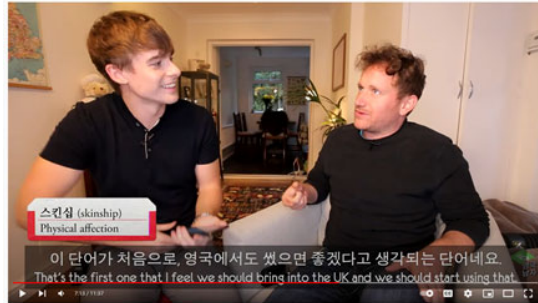


Figure 4. An example of a facial expression of the atypical native speaker figure

In addition, another native speaker, the person on the right in Figure 5, said, “Oh, cool! Fight for it?” when he heard the meaning of *fighting* meaning “Let’s go! You got this!” He seemed to appreciate an alternative way of saying English words.

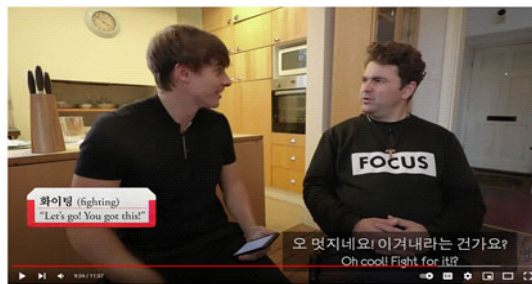


Figure 5. Another example of a facial expression of the atypical native speaker figure

His facial expression in Figure 5 seems to indicate amusement that there is another way to use an existing English word. Along with his verbal expression, his facial expression seems to indicate appreciation for the Koreans’ creative way of replacing an existing English word.

Furthermore, the native speaker, the one on the right in Figure 5, shows another characteristic of this atypical figure. This figure is the one who identifies the systematic rules of making Konglish words. At nearly the end of the video, he seemed to naturally come to find the systematic rules of making Konglish words after repeating the word-guessing games of popular Konglish words with the host. He explicitly said, “It’s a really economic way of creating words.” This comment suggests that Konglish is possibly understood as a new variety of English that has the systematic rules for creating and combining words.

#### 4.2 Perceptions of Konglish by various English language users in the comments section of the video

##### *Alignment with the typical figure of the overhearer*

The perceptions of Konglish by various English users are shown to be in alignment with either typical or atypical figures of personhood of Konglish. Most users seemed to align with the typical figure of the overhearer who listens to the native speaker's reaction to Konglish with embarrassment or amusement. The most important reaction within this theme was surprise at the fact that Konglish words are not understood by native speakers. More specifically, the two outstanding codes were: to be amused by the scene in which the native speaker cannot guess the meanings of Konglish words and to introduce some other typical examples of Konglish words. The amusement by the scene was 22 percent of the total comments, and the introduction to other examples was seven percent of the total comments. In addition, surprise in the case in which the native speaker can guess the meanings of Konglish words correctly was three percent of the total comments, and sharing of episodes that made them embarrassed upon being unable to communicate with native speakers using Konglish words was two percent of the total comments. Those codes with example comments and the number of comments are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Comments from the users in alignment with the typical figure of the overhearer who listens to the native speaker's reaction to Konglish with embarrassment or amusement

Codes	Example comments	Number of comments
To be amused by the scene in which the native speaker cannot guess the meanings of Konglish words	I am laughing continuously watching the video... (hahahaha) ... The words we use are Konglish~*	446 (22%)
To introduce other typical examples of Konglish words	Other examples are "one plus one," and "two plus one" (haha)*	140 (7%)
To be surprised by the scene in which the native speaker can guess the meanings of Konglish words correctly	how can you get the right answer for "cunning"?????	67 (3%)
To share some episodes that made them embarrassed upon being unable to communicate with native speakers using Konglish words	(hahahahahahahahahahaha) I used "sns" when I talked to my native English teacher, and he didn't understand that... This video reminded me of that episode*	48 (2%)

Note: The comments with the asterisk (\*) were originally written in Korean but translated into English by the researcher.

Furthermore, in the second most important category for this theme, English language users showed alignment with the typical figure of the overhearer who claims responsibility for enlightening the Korean English user regarding the native speaker's way of using English. Although these represented three percent of the total comments, they explicitly said that Konglish words are not correct forms of English. The code with example comments and the number of comments are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Comments from the users in alignment with the typical figure of the overhearer who claims responsibility for enlightening the Korean English user regarding the native speaker's way of using English

Code	Example comments	Number of comments
To say that Konglish words are not correct forms of English	Wow, I didn't know that they were Konglish words. They are totally different from English words. They are bad English. (hahahahaha)* I am Korean Canadian. None of these make sense.	65 (3%)

Note: The comment with the asterisk (\*) was originally written in Korean but translated into English by the researcher.

#### *Alignment with the typical figure of the native speaker*

Only a few users seemed to align with the typical figure of the native speaker who interacts with the English of Korean speakers with puzzlement and amusement. The most important category for this theme was confusion by the Konglish words that did not make sense to them. Two specific codes for this category were: to feel that the pronunciations of Konglish words are weird and to not understand the Konglish words. The codes with example comments and the number of comments are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Comments from the users in alignment with the typical figure of the native speaker who interacts with the English of Korean speakers with puzzlement and amusement

Codes	Example comments	Number of comments
To feel that the pronunciations of Konglish words are weird	I understand aircon, remocon etc. but konglish pronunciation is sooo weird (ㄷ)	5 (0.2%)
To not understand Konglish words	i couldn't guess !even one!	4 (0.2%)

*Alignment with the typical figure of the Korean speaker*

On the other hand, many English users showed alignment with the typical Korean figures who are oblivious to the fact that their English does not make sense to the native speaker. The most important category for this theme was that they did not realize that they are Konglish words. The specific codes were to be surprised by the fact that the words presented in the video are all Konglish words (15 percent of the total comments) and to say that they learned English through this video (just one percent of the total comments). The codes with example comments and the number of comments are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Comments from the users in alignment with the typical Korean figures who are oblivious to the fact that their English does not make sense to the native speaker

Codes	Example comments	Number of comments
To be surprised by the fact that the words presented in the video are Konglish words	It is shocking that all of them are not real English words..*	320 (15%)
To say that they learned English through this video	I really enjoyed this English learning♡ I laughed a lot and learned English with a native speaker's pronunciation.^^*	29 (1%)

Note: The comments with the asterisk (\*) were originally written in Korean but translated into English by the researcher.

Moreover, another important category for this theme was that English language users are aligned with Korean users who identify Konglish words as foreign, reflecting the ideology of externalization. They said that Konglish words mostly originated from Japanese, Japanese English, or American English (see Table 5). In fact, Konglish and Japanese English share some linguistic features and ways of creating new words due to their historical background and linguistic similarities (Yoneoka 2005). Although some words are unique in Konglish, it seemed that these English users try not to consider Konglish words as part of their own language by emphasizing the words' foreign origins. Rather, they consider Konglish words as those which others are forced to use.

Table 5. Comments from the users in alignment with the typical Korean figures who identify Konglish words as foreign, reflecting the ideology of externalization

Codes	Example comments	Number of comments
To talk about the Konglish words	Most of the words here are Japglish. The	206 (9%)

which originated from Japanese or Japanese English	words with the Japanese origin just came over to our country.*	
To talk about Konglish words which originated from (American) English	Well, a simple word such as “cheese” is a Konglish word... In fact, our pronunciation of cheese is slightly different from the original one.*	117 (5%)

Note: The comments with the asterisk (\*) were originally written in Korean but translated into English by the researcher.

Within another category for this theme, a few English language users are aligned with the typical figure of the Korean who demonstrates an attitude of self-deprecation, the notion of Koreans as being intrinsically unable to acquire English to a satisfying degree. Although they are just two percent of the total comments, they clearly showed their shame using incorrect forms of English, which are different from the standard English forms (see Table 6).

Table 6. Comments from the users in alignment with the typical Korean figures who demonstrate an attitude of self-deprecation

Code	Example comments	Number of comments
To feel ashamed by the way Koreans use Konglish words instead of standard English	I feel ashamed of myself for using Konglish words without knowing that they are not real English (hahahaha).* If Koreans say Konglish words to English people, they will sound uneducated (haha).*	35 (2%)

Note: The comments with the asterisk (\*) were originally written in Korean but translated into English by the researcher.

*Alignment with the atypical figure of the English language user*

However, it is interesting that some English language users represented the atypical English language user who was not found from the previous typical figures. The important category for this theme is that they think Konglish should be recognized as a new variety of English. Specifically, some claimed that the words presented in the video are real English words which are spoken in other parts of the world. Others also claimed that the words presented in the video should be considered Korean English, a distinctive variety of the World Englishes, and argued that Konglish is a codified language, a part of the Korean language system. Moreover, some discussed other varieties of World Englishes, such as Japlish, Singlish, and Manglish, assuming that they share some similarities with Konglish as a variety of World Englishes.

A few users echoed the view that Konglish words represent a more economical way of using English words, which was mentioned by one native speaker in the video. Specific codes and example comments are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Comments from the users in alignment with the atypical figure of the English language user who thinks Konglish should be recognized as a new variety of English

Codes	Example comments	Number of comments
To claim that the words presented in the video are English words	“Air con” is not a Konglish word. It is an English word. It is Australian English.* We actually call laptop like a notebook in our country too 😊	112 (5%)
To claim that the words presented in the video should be considered a variety of World Englishes	They are not Konglish words. They are “K-English.”*	74 (4%)
To argue that Konglish is a codified language in Korea	To write “fighting” in Korean, you should follow the loanword rules of the Korean language system.*	65 (3%)
To mention other varieties of English (i.e., Japlish, Singlish, Manglish)	in some asian country they tend to abbrev. stuff to make it easy and simple and sometimes incorporate their own language with english, like taglish, konglish, singlish..	59 (3%)
To echo the view of Konglish words as a more economical way of speaking	I agree that Konglish words are made in an economical way.*	55 (3%)

Note: The comments with the asterisk (\*) were originally written in Korean but translated into English by the researcher.

## 5. Conclusion and implications

The findings of this study suggest that Konglish can be reconceptualized as a cultural practice. On the one hand, in the selected reaction video, the typical figure of the native speaker and the overhearer of Konglish were found (Park 2021a) when several specific Konglish words were introduced to the native speakers of English. However, the atypical figure of the native speaker who appreciates the creativity of Konglish words and identifies the systematic rules of making Konglish words was also presented in the reaction video. On the other hand, most English language users who left the comments on this video were aligned with the typical figure of the overhearer (Park 2021a). A few English language users were aligned with the typical figure of the native speaker. Many



of them also seemed to portray the typical figure of the Korean who is oblivious to the fact that their English does not make sense to the native speaker and identifies Konglish words as foreign, reflecting the ideology of externalization. Some of them even seemed to hold the attitude of self-deprecation (Park 2009; Rüdiger 2018). However, some of them also represented the atypical figure of the English language user who applies the World Englishes framework to understand Konglish words. Atypical figures might arise because it is assumed that the native-speaker participants in the video are language teachers who must be familiar with communicating with other people or students from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and are willing to find the systematic rules of language. The English language users who left the comments might be also affected by native speaker participants in the video. Another possible explanation is the recent spread of Korean culture. Since Korean culture including K-pop and K-drama has been spreading rapidly, English language users are more familiar with Konglish words presented in K-pop songs and K-dramas. The users who are interested in K-pop or K-drama often watch the videos on this channel, which is one of the popular channels that introduces Korean culture to the world, and these viewers are likely to leave their opinions.

This study shows the possibility of understanding the concept of Konglish at the extended level and Konglish as a cultural practice. The concept of Konglish is flexibly understood by different English language users in the community of practice (Wenger 1998, 2000) in which they share a common interest and learn from interacting with each other. The reaction video and its comments within the particular YouTube channel are examples of an online community of practice (Kulavuz-Onal 2021). Importantly, this study shows how interactive social media platforms such as YouTube can be used as mediational tools for various language users to explore how languages are used and how they are perceived.

Moreover, this kind of reaction video and its comments can provide a great source of learning and teaching for English classrooms. Teachers can introduce this kind of reaction video and its comments to students to help them expand their exposure to how Konglish or Korean English can be presented and perceived by other English language users. They can share what they think in the class and even participate in the online discussion themselves. The learning activities and discussions including these kinds of resources might be more suitable for English classrooms at the secondary and tertiary levels.

There are some limitations to this study. Due to the nature of anonymity of social media, it was hard to find specific demographic information about the English language users who

left comments on the video. If more specific information about the demography of English language users is given, the analysis would be more systematic. Also, due to the subscription feature of YouTube channels, the comments can be biased. In fact, although any user can leave a comment on the videos, it might be possible that the subscribers or fans of the particular channel are likely to leave their comments. Future studies should analyze several reaction videos and their comments across different channels to reduce the bias from their subscribers.

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