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# **Konglish, Korean L2 Learners' Unique Interlanguage : Its Definition, Categories and Lexical Entries**

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# Konglish, Korean L2 Learners' Unique Interlanguage: Its Definition, Categories and Lexical Entries<sup>\*</sup>

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The term Konglish has been commonly used in Korea. The use of the term has been, however, limited to certain cases of false friends between Korean and English. The purpose of the present study is twofold. First, it provides a definition of the unique interlanguage of Korean learners of English, arising from their impoverished knowledge of English and influence from Korean so as to provide a wholistic concept of Konglish for future studies. In Part 1, Konglish phenomena are identified in their phonological, intercultural, conceptual, metaphorical, collocational, pragmatic, semantic, and grammatical aspects. Second, the present study provides empirical evidence for future studies deploying Konglish use in L2 production as a means of reflecting whether/how L1 knowledge is involved, in particular, as evidence of L1 activation. In order to provide the foundation for future studies, in Part 2, Korean beginners in English were recruited to perform picture-naming tasks. The results suggest that Konglish words are stored as L1 items in subjects' L1 mental lexicon and accessed via the L1 entry in the production of English.

## Keywords

Konglish, L1 access, lexical entry, mental lexicon, cognates / 콩글리시, 모국어 접촉, 어휘 항목, 심적 어휘 목록, 동계어

<sup>1</sup>The present study is part of the author's doctoral dissertation.

## I. Part One: Approaches to Konglish

The present study will focus on Korean L2 learners' unique interlanguage arising from an impoverished knowledge of English, widely known as Konglish. Considering that language is not merely an instrument to fulfill basic linguistic needs but also a medium to convey culturally determined connotation and metaphor, Konglish at a linguistic level is not the only concern; sociolinguistic and pragmatic functional deficits of Konglish will be considered in this study as well. In accordance with this approach, the expression *Konglish words* will be reserved for lexical entities at the linguistic level, while the term *Konglish* will be applied to the whole range of Konglish phenomena, including socio-pragmatic aspects of language use.

Not all of the Korean L2 learner's Konglish productions jeopardize comprehensibility. For example, linguistic and non-linguistic context may aid the comprehension of Konglish, and the interlocutor may have some awareness of Konglish - in cases where he/she has frequent contact with Korean speakers of English. Therefore it is the extent of the impediment to comprehensibility rather than the issue of "right" and "wrong" that the present study will consider significantly.

The purpose of the present study is twofold. First, Konglish phenomenon will be defined and categorized. Second, the study will explore whether Konglish may be used as a valid tool to demonstrate that the use of Konglish words in English constituted evidence of the use of Korean resources rather than evidence of English-based communication strategies. Since Konglish words come into the category of loanwords, one might assume the possibility that such resources are stored as L2 entries but that in the midst of accessing a target L2 word, an L2 competitor is accidentally selected. For example, if an L2 learner uses a Konglish word *one-piece* in the L2 referring to a dress, one may consider this case an example of communication

strategies such as approximation (Váradi, 1983) in which some part (*one-piece*) of the semantic composition of the target item (*one-piece dress*) is deployed. If this assumption were true, the use of Konglish words in English might be cases of L2-based communication strategies, simply attributable to learners' insufficient practice, rather than evidence of L1 access.

In contrast, if it is evident that Konglish words are stored as L1 items in Korean and accessed through L1 entries in the L2 context, Konglish may be a valid tool for the future studies exploring whether/how L1 is activated in L2 access.

## 1. The Definition of Konglish Words

### 1) False Cognates

In some traditional linguistic approaches, cognate-pairs are considered only in cases of etymologically related languages; however, many studies have focused on formal cross-language resemblances between word pairs in the absence of any genetic relationship between the languages in question (Carroll, 1992). If such formal resemblances are accepted as falling within a broader definition of cognate, one might consider Konglish words to be cognates. Before defining what we mean by Konglish words, however, it should be noted that the term *cognate* has not been used consistently among researchers. Moreover, it should be noted that, as Grosjean (1997) points out, the overlap between cognate pairs in two languages is not always apparent in orthography, even though meaning and phonology may be shared between the cognates. Grosjean also notes that “an additional problem is that researchers do not seem to agree on what they mean by similar” (*ibid.*, p.230).

A further point is that not all loanwords from English in Korean are Konglish words in our understanding of the term, insofar as not a few of such loanwords retain the semantic

values of English. There are two factors to be considered: the semantic factor and the phonological factor. There are loanwords from English which have lost their English phonological features and have been fully integrated into the Korean phonological system - such as *테마* *tema* /tema/ (theme) - and loanwords which retain more phonological features of L2 such as *싸인* *ssain* /s'ain/ (sign). Although the latter type, which has undergone only modest modification in the process of their integration into Korean, may be easily understood by Anglophones, the first type of cognates may not be so readily comprehended. As for semantic features, there is a wide range of degree of English-Korean semantic overlap - from semantically identical cognates such as *커피* *kopi* (coffee) and *coffee* to the semantically dissimilar cognates such as *샤프* *syapu* (mechanical pencil) and *sharp*. For present purposes we shall call those items *Konglish words* which come into the category of false cognates, that is, items used in Korean which have some kind of formal resemblance to non-Korean source words (perceived as English-derived), but whose semantic representations differ markedly from those of their non-Korean source words. We shall also restrict our attention to items whose phonological resemblance to their non-Korean source-words is partial (sometimes to the point of being very difficult to recognize).

## 2) Code Switching vs. Borrowing

There have been discussions of code switching from many perspectives. One approach to distinguishing code-switching and borrowing is to refer to the size of the unit of embedded language. Thus, borrowing is said to occur at word level while the notion code-switching is applied to larger stretches of speech (Færch & Kasper, 1983; Grosjean, 1982), which does not seem to provide a genuinely principled distinction between intrasentential code-switching and borrowing. Code switching has also been

discussed in relation to typological differences, such as those between Japanese and English. It has been suggested that borrowing is associated with the presence of a clear base language while code-switching is associated with the presence of two languages interacting in discourse (e.g. Nishimura 1995). With reference to the availability of L2 knowledge, on the other hand, code-switching is considered by some to symptomize “the most available word phenomenon (Grosjean, 1982, p.151) and not necessarily to result from “dysfluency” (Green, 1986, p.215). If this last account is accepted, Konglish words are not examples of code-switching if it is case, as generally accepted, that the use of Konglish words presupposes lack of L2 knowledge.

Konglish words have a different status when they are used in Korean and English. In Korean, the words are used by Korean monolinguals as loanshifts with extended or created meanings (Grosjean, 1997) or “cultural loans” introduced to apply new concepts to the L1 culture (Myers-Scotton, 1992, p.28). Borrowed forms become part of the matrix language mental lexicon and have their own matrix language lemmas in the matrix language mental lexicon, whereas code-switched forms remain clearly part of the embedded language and do not become part of the matrix language mental lexicon (*ibid.*, p.21). On the basis of this distinction, it will be hypothesized that Konglish words are introduced as loanwords in the form of “borrowing” and then integrated into the Korean lexicon. Through frequent use by Korean monolinguals, the words obtain their own entries in Korean and are activated through their own Korean lemmas. We suggest that when Konglish users deploy the words in question in English, on the other hand, Konglish words are embedded as code-switched forms in the matrix language, English, having been activated via the relevant embedded language (Korean) entries. It can be assumed that, with frequency of use, these words get borrowed from Korean into the L2 learners’ English interlanguage.

## 2. Categories of Konglish Phenomena

Konglish is a complex phenomenon and has a number of different dimensions. The following is an outline of some of the dimensions in question. It should be noted that these partly overlap, so that the identified categories are not to be considered as divided necessarily by clear-cut boundaries.

### 1) The Phonological Dimension

Odlin (1989, p.116) states that “[p]honemic errors can arise when the phonemic inventories of two languages differ”. Learners whose first language has a different type of phonology in this case Korean-speaking learners – may find it difficult to handle the L2 phonemic features which are absent from their native language (Swan, 1997). Examples of Konglish items arising from this cause include /kpi/ (*coffee*), /bodka/, (*vodka*), /lais/ (*rice*), and /tema/ (*theme*) showing the phonemes /f/,/v/,/r/,/ and /w/ respectively being replaced by /p/,/b/,/l/,/t/ and /u/, which are closer to Korean phonemes.

Other problems may be the stress pattern which is crucial both in speech production and in comprehension. Because of its effect on syllables and the segments, the stress pattern based on Korean may result in incomprehensibility. Korean is a syllable-timed language, where each syllable has identical length and almost all vowels are stressed and receive their full value, whereas English is a stress-timed language where many vowels may be unstressed and reduced (cf. Sohn, 1999). Examples of Konglish in this category are derived from English *inFORMative* – pronounced INFORMATIVE in Konglish – and *MOdel* – stressed as in MODEL in Konglish. In addition, L2 syllable structure may often be modified to fit Korean patterns – such as 트/t / 리/ri/ 트 /t / 먼/m?n/ 트/t / for *treatment*. Konglish users tend to extend final consonant clusters of syllables by inserting

the neutral Korean vowel // between individual consonants since this vocalic epenthesis enables the words in question to follow Korean syllable structure CGVC (C: consonant, G: glide, V: vowel). Similar cases of conforming to English structure can be found in the speech of Spanish speakers e.g. *esnob* for *snob* (Broselow, 1984, p.262) – and in Egyptian speakers' /filoor/ for *floor*, (*ibid.*, 1993, p.75).

## 2) The Intercultural Dimension

Since the ways in which we articulate the world are culturally specific (Hatch & Brown, 1995), cultural distance between Korean learners' L1 and the L2 has a dramatic impact in the area of cultural expectancy. A difficulty due to widely divergent experience may be so marked in the case of learners of English as a foreign language that they may find an object or phenomenon not existing in or not recognized by their native culture almost untranslatable in terms of their own conception of the world (Jandt, 2001). A lack of cross-cultural awareness may cause Korean learners to rely on Konglish rooted in Korean culture. The Korean culture reflected in Konglish includes intimacy and hierarchy within the social network, based on a collectivistic perspective, especially Confucianism (Hofstede, 1991). The intimacy between society members originates from Confucian philosophy, which views relationships as complementary and obligatorily reciprocal. Within this culture, being benevolent and supportive to each other secures long-term relationships, and thus communication is seen as an important means of maintaining interdependent social relationships (Yum, 2000). An example based on L1 cultural appropriateness is Konglish users' overuse of *grandmother* for *old lady* regardless of their relationship to the old lady in question, on the basis that the Korean equivalent 할머니 *halmoni* is used for any old lady as a way of expressing appropriate intimacy. Since Koreans tend to incorporate all

members of the community into a range of familial categories, intimacy may affect politeness. Omitting *please* or *thanks* in the Yes/No response to trivial offers (e.g. *Would you like some tea?*) from a person with an intimate social relationship such as a friend does not violate L1 communication rules, since this context is not considered to require a higher degree of politeness. However, it may be interpreted as rudeness by English-speaking interlocutors where Korean learners of English employ their L1 standards of politeness in the L2.

Hierarchy in Korean culture generates honorific language. In Korea, as a Confucian society, highly valued hierarchical relationships have promoted the differentiation of linguistic codes (Yum, 2000). For instance, Koreans call their friends *senior/junior* according to whether the friends in question occupy a higher or lower social position in the Korean hierarchy, which is mainly based on age or year in school, at work and in the army. This may be problematic when it is used by Konglish users in L2 production.

Culture also determines the meanings perceived by those belonging to the culture (Jandt, 2001). As a response to bad news the expression *I'm sorry* may often be interpreted only as an apology by Korean L2 learners. When the word *sorry* is activated in their lexicon, *fault* or *guilty* are the connected words that seem to be triggered on the basis of their L1 cultural values. This may result in communication failure.

### 3) The Conceptual Dimension

Language shapes the conceptual categories that influence how its speakers' perceptions are encoded and stored (Wierzbicka 1992). Different perceptions of the world lead to the absence of equivalent terms between different vocabularies; in other words, language differences in terms of lexical gaps and mismatches have their origins in different categorizations of environment

(Salzmann, 1993). Inevitably, such conceptual differences affect the process of L2 acquisition, where a mapping of new word forms on to pre-existing conceptual meanings may often occur. Most Konglish users are adult learners who have already developed concepts in their L1, and their attempts to access L2 meanings through the intermediary of L1 concepts are apt to be less than successful.

While it should be noted that the difference between Westerners and Easterners needs to be taken as a tendency rather than an absolute fact, Asian concepts in general have features which are distinct from their western counterparts. According to Nisbett (2003), English-speakers narrate an event from their point of view, looking outwards while Asians describe it from a third-person perspective as an observer. The Konglish example *Where is here?* in the third-person perspective may be understood in this regard, compared with English *Where am I?* in the speaker's perspective. Similarly, Korean learners of English tend to use *Your dress is beautiful*, which puts the speaker in the role of observer; Konglish users might assume that *I like your dress* would imply the speaker's desire to possess the dress in question. In Korean communication, receiver-centered utterances are more prevalent - under the influence of Confucian principles (Yum, 2000). This orientation to the interlocutor is also incorporated into Konglish - as in *You first*, as compared with the speaker-oriented English expression *After you*. Nisbett (2003) suggests that Asians have a more holistic view of events, with regard to taking into account the orientation of others. Such differences in hearer/speaker-oriented perspectives are linked to processes of lexical and pronominal choice (Koike, 1989). For example, speaker-orientation is manifest in expressions such as *Can I?* in English forms of request, while the hearer-oriented perspective reveals itself in expressions such as *Could you?* or imperatives, which are preferred by Korean learners. It should be noted that imperatives such as *Bring me some water, please?*

reflect hearer-orientation insofar as they contain the (understood) subject *you*.

Underlying concepts profoundly affect the meanings attached to linguistic labels. Even in domains where two languages seem to divide the world up conceptually in broadly the same way, linguistic labels are often applied in different places (Swan, 1997). For example, Konglish *half-boiled egg* (반 *ban* half, 숙 *suk* ripe/cooked in Korean) for *soft-boiled egg* can be interpreted in terms of Korean learners' different approach to the same concept based on the degree of being boiled.

Conceptual differences also play an important role in grammar. In Konglish, Yes/No responses to negative questions are interpreted in a contrary manner to their counterparts in English. As mentioned, Asians perceive relationships between events in holistic terms, while Westerners separate objects from their environments in analytic, atomistic terms (Nisbett, 2003). With this philosophical view, Konglish users often respond to negative questions based on their Korean conceptual configuration. For instance, a negative response *No* to a negative question *Aren't you hungry?* means that the relationship of the question and the response is negative in terms of congruity. In other words, to respond to the negative question *Aren't you hungry?*, a premise is made in the way that the content of the question has a true value ("You are not hungry"), and if the respondent's intention is in accordance with the true value ("I am not hungry") the answer *Yes, I am not hungry* can be used. Consequently the respondent is required to consider the congruity of the relationship between the question and the answer. In contrast, English does not require the hearer to think whether the relationship between the question and the answer has positive congruity or not, since the response is a discrete and separate event from the question.

#### 4) The Metaphorical Dimension

Metaphorical concepts and features are culture-specific (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). For example, someone who moves or drives very slowly is referred to be a *turtle* in Korean, an expression which highlights slow movement. If this metaphorical expression, based on Korean, is used as Konglish in L2, it may not be fully understood by English speakers, whose metaphors for slowness refer rather to the *snail*. Most Koreans perceive the brain as a fluid organ, which is not supposed to be hard as a stone if it is to function properly. On this basis, Konglish expressions such as *stone head* in place of *air head* follow L1 metaphorical concepts. Moreover, similes, such as *as white as a sheet*, are occasionally meditated through the learner's L1 metaphorical extension and produced *as white as a white paper* in Konglish.

#### 5) The Collocational Dimension

The importance of the appropriate use of frequent and familiar collocations beyond the syntactic level has been emphasized by researchers (e.g. Ellis, 1997, 2001; Lewis, 1993, 2000; Nation, 2001; Pawley & Syder, 1983). For language learners to achieve full control of collocations and prefabricated items, the associative networks need to be sufficiently developed in their second language lexicon. In the case of Konglish users, their L2 lexical entries do not have well-developed appropriate associative links and thus suitable collocates often fail to be triggered. Their lack of L2 collocational stock often induces their L1 to function as a resource in such circumstances. For example, Konglish users may collocate *answer* with *question* but may have difficulty with more marginal use of *answer*, as in *answer the phone* or *answer the door*. Another Konglish example is *strong drinker* (heavy drinker).

Meara (1984, p.228) suggests that “[w]ords for which no direct translation in the L2 exists tend to be avoided”. Likewise, Odlin

(1989) also claims that particular structures in the target language which are very different from their counterparts in the native language may be avoided. These insights provide a plausible explanation for the avoidance of certain collocations in Konglish where the equivalents of the collocated words do not have a collocational relationship in Korean; a case in point is the collocation *successful candidate*. Learning selectional restrictions in the target language is important for L2 learners. For example, the Korean equivalent of the adjective *available* is used only with inanimate nouns. This leads to a reluctant use of the word in conjunction with animate nouns/pronouns in L2 insofar as Konglish users may prefer *He is busy now* to *He is not available at the moment*.

Furthermore, deficits in collocational knowledge also relate to the word order within the chunk. Thus Konglish *sour and sweet*, which is based on an L1 chunk (새콤 *saek'om* sour 달콤 *dalk'om* sweet), will be substituted for the appropriately ordered *sweet and sour*. Given that calques closely reflect native language orderings (Odlin, 1989, p.37), similar examples of Konglish are 동East, 서West, 남South, 북North (*North, South, East, West*), and 3 밤 nights 4 일 days (*4 days 3 nights*).

## 6) The Pragmatic and Discoursal Dimension

Since topics such as marital status and age are traditionally considered “free” goods (Lakoff, 1974) in Korea and as necessary information for Korean speakers to determine the degree of the honorific terms, Korean L2 learners unaware of the relevant cross-cultural difference tend to apply the L1 pragmatics to the L2 by asking personal questions even at the point when people are introduced to each other.

As Hatch (1984, p.191) suggests, “noticing”, especially lying in compliments, is more frequently used in native speakers’ greetings than in non-native speakers. Apart from the fact that

direct denial is still prevalent in Konglish in response to the compliment, certain stereotyped utterances are commonly used as “noticing” in Korean speakers’ greetings. From my observations of in- and out-of-class conversations with Korean L2 learners, expressions such as *Where are you going?* or *Did you eat your meal?* are commonly used among Konglish users. It may be attributed to the fact that the Korean expressions 어디 가세요? *odigaseyo?* (Where are you going?) and 식사 하셨어요? *Sikshahasyottoyo?* (Did you eat your meal?) are used as a form of “phatic communion” (Palmer, 1976, p.36) functioning as a greeting in their L1, and the literal translations of such expressions may be considered appropriate in L2 by the Konglish users, who lack awareness of cross-cultural differences. Since such formulations are in the form of interrogatives, the English speaking interlocutor might consider them questions rather than greetings.

The pragmatic differences between Korean learners’ L1 and L2 may also be observed in terms of politeness norms. The positive politeness strategy is chosen on the basis of cultural preference in Korea, where intimacy and closeness between members of the community are highly valued within Confucianism. As Robinson (2000, p.77) states, “[a] polite expression may mean anger and an impolite expression mean friendliness in Korean culture”. Konglish users tend to respond *No* in situations where *No thanks* would be more appropriate, assuming that it would be acceptable in their target culture as it is in their native culture. In requests, negative politeness is preferred with the use of interrogatives such as *Can (could) you?* among English speakers since the imperative mood is considered as the least polite or possibly as face-threatening (Odlin, 1989). On the other hand, Korean usage allows more directness than English, as in 물 줘주세요 *mul jom juseyo* (Give me some water, please), especially in requests considered to be trivial favors. Since the positive politeness strategy shown in requests and responses is believed to be covered under the heading of Korean concept 정 *cheng* (love,

caring or affections) in Korean society, Korean L2 learners often believe that the English speaker would not be offended by their “being less polite” or “being direct. Indirect speech acts and downtoning” structures in particular (Færch, Haastrup & Phillipson, 1984, p.57), which are usually used as a way to convey politeness, may be absent from the Konglish user’s L2. Examples often observed in Konglish are *Do you like Korea?*, *Why did you come to Korea?*, and *Why?* (to a statement *I like Korean food*).

In short, pragmatically inappropriate Konglish use may be attributed to Korean L2 learners’ belief that the forms and functions of L1 pragmatics can simply be recycled in the L2 and can also attributed to their lack of L2 knowledge in pragmatics.

#### 7) Influence from Another Foreign Language

Interference may be from another foreign language as well as from the L1, and learners may also re-import from another foreign language words which the source language has itself borrowed, often changing their meaning (Swan, 1997). Korean makes use of a considerable number of loan words from Japanese which the Japanese have borrowed from English and then reconstructed according to Japanese linguistic norms. These loan words have been further modified to conform to the Korean phonetic system and are also used in Konglish. Examples are *back mirror* (rearview mirror), *autobi* (motorcycle), *white shirt* (dress shirt), *cunning* (cheating for a test), and *hand phone* (mobile phone).

Konglish words originating from German are *호프 hopu* (bar), *아르바이트 arubaitu* (part-time job), *기브스* and *gibusu* / *깁스 gipsu* (*gips* in German; [plaster-] cast). In addition to German, French examples are also found in Konglish, such as *앙케이트 angkeitu* (*enquete* in French; survey or questionnaire). Korean L2 learners consider these words to originate from English and often use

them with/without phonological adaptation to English in their production of English.

## 8) The Semantic Dimension

Odlin (1989, p.79) states that “[l]anguage transfer can also occur when there is no morphological similarity between words that appear to be semantically equivalent”. Konglish users tend to presume that L1 meanings may be transferable to the L2 despite the language distance. However, in cases where semantic properties are different between L1 and L2, transfer based on L1 semantics may be problematic. In the case of Koreans learning English, when more than one semantic equivalent exists in the L2, the split-categorization activates Konglish. For example, a single form 약속 *yaksok* has two equivalents, *appointment* and *promise*, in English; moreover, it can also be used as *plans* in a sentence like, *I have plans after school*. Among the English equivalents, the word *promise* seems to be the general term for Korean L2 learners and thus it is often observed in English contexts where other words would be more appropriate, as in *I have promise after school* (I have plans after school). Other examples are *oil/gasoline* (L1 translation equivalent: 기름), *guest/customer* (손님), and *class/lesson* (수업).

In the process of incorporation into the L1 lexicon, Korean loan words experience semantic changes: expansion, narrowing, innovation and pejoration. Problems may arise when the loan words which are semantically changed and fully integrated into the L1 are transferred to the L2 without any process of examination. Examples are as follows:

### **Expansion (generalization)**

<i>burberry coat</i>	(trench coat)
<i>coating</i>	(laminating)
<i>hip</i>	(rear, bottom or buttocks)

**Narrowing**

<i>sign</i>	(signature or autograph)
<i>manicure</i>	(nail polish)
<i>glamour</i>	(a girl with a sexy figure)

**Innovation**

<i>edge</i>	(fashionable)
<i>blues</i>	(slow dance)
<i>booking</i>	(an instant blind date)
<i>fighting!</i>	(go for it! or hurray!)
<i>gagman</i>	(comedian)
<i>magic pen</i>	(marker)
<i>meeting</i>	(blind date)
<i>mixer</i>	(blender)
<i>one shot</i>	(bottoms-up!)
<i>open car</i>	(convertible)
<i>sedan</i>	(luxurious car)
<i>skin [-lotion]</i>	(toner or after-shave)
<i>skinship</i>	(casual contact between lovers)
<i>talent</i>	(TV actor/actress)

**Pejoration**

<i>hostess</i>	(a woman who works at an adult bar)
<i>room salon</i>	(an adult bar)

9) The Grammatical Dimension

The simplified form based on L1 is more quickly retrieved than the target-language equivalent, since learners' fully-automated control over their L1 is more available for actual use than imperfect L2 knowledge (Swan, 1997). This induces Konglish users to adapt the Korean grammatical system to L2 production. As noted earlier, Korean L2 learners often use the passive form

*My arm is broken* on the basis of their L1 both for indicating the state (as in English) and for the act of breaking the arm as in: *I fell down on the stairs and my arm was broken yesterday*. Other typical examples of L1-driven use of the passive include *My finger is cut* (I cut my finger) and *It is written in the sign* (The sign says...). English expressions such as *The sign says* may take a considerable time to be understood by Konglish users since the verb *says* takes only animated subjects in their L1. Seliger's (1989, p.32) finding that Hebrew speakers avoid the passive, which is not used in their own language, in English seems to provide a parallel case for the avoidance by Konglish users' of the active voice in the sentence *The sign says*...

Although there are compound nouns where the first noun has adjectival function in English, in the Korean language compound nouns are the most numerous and varied and "the most productive type of compound nouns is the noun-noun combination of the subcompounding type, in which the first root modifies the second", as discussed in Sohn (1999, p.245). Konglish examples in this category include *can coffee* (canned coffee), *ice coffee* (iced coffee), and *ice tea* (iced tea).

Differences relating to permissible grammatical contexts for equivalent words in the two languages often cause error (Swan, 1997). In the cases of certain Korean verbs which do not contain a prepositional meaning such as 결혼하다 *kyorhonhada* (marry), a prepositional element is required; in this case ~와/과 *wa/gwa* (with) is required to refer to the person whom someone marries. Accordingly, Konglish users sometimes feel the need to add the preposition to satisfy the Korean system. Examples include *marry with*, *discuss about*, *mention about*, and *describe about*.

#### 10) The Dimension of Lexical Form

Clipping is used in English, as in the reduction of *dormitory* to *dorm*. However, clipping in an arbitrary manner beyond the

acceptable range of the target language may cause misunderstanding (Hatch & Brown, 1995). Ill-formed contractions in Konglish include:

#### **Clipping (one word missing)**

<i>one piece</i>	(one piece dress)
<i>white</i>	(white-out; liquid solution, correction tape)
<i>complex</i>	(inferiority complex)
<i>one-room</i>	(one-room apartment or studio apartment)
<i>after service</i>	(after sales service or warranty)
<i>ball pen</i>	(ball point pen)
<i>dryer</i>	(blow-dryer)

#### **Clipping (part of the word missing)**

<i>accel</i>	(accelerator)
<i>gang</i>	(gangster)
<i>note</i>	(notebook)
<i>over</i>	(overreact/overact)
<i>stain</i>	(stainless steel)

#### **Contraction from two words**

<i>remocon</i>	(remote controller)
<i>aircon</i>	(air conditioner)

#### **Non-native acronym formation**

<i>DC</i>	(discount)
<i>BGM</i>	(background music)
<i>CF</i>	(commercial film)

#### **Blending**

<i>leports</i>	(leisure + sports)
<i>officetel</i>	(office + hotel)

## II. Part Two: The Empirical Investigation

One cannot deny that Konglish is influenced by Korean. It, however, will not be valid to employ Konglish data as evidence of L1 access in any research until Konglish is empirically proven to be accessed through L1 lexical entries. The present study therefore investigates whether Konglish words are stored as L1 lexical items in Korean and accessed through L1 entries in the L2 context.

### 1. Design

The study is designed to track the accessing of loanwords (in respect of both cognates, as defined earlier, and Konglish words) in L1 and in L2. Attention is paid to whether the words produced by Korean L2 learners for the given pictures in the picture naming task in L1 are the same as in L2. The pictures presented in the picture naming tasks include cognates, cognates\*, and Konglish words. These terms are used for clarity's sake, since loanwords may embrace Konglish words but not all loanwords in Korean become Konglish in L2. The term *loanwords* is used for words borrowed from any foreign language. Among loanwords, the cases where the linguistic properties of the words in Korean are equivalent to their properties in English and thus the potential risk of misunderstanding when they are used in an English context is minimal, will be labelled *cognates*. The extent of integration of English loanwords into Korean lexicon<sup>1</sup> may vary between individuals or between generations. In comparison with cognates, which are incorporated into both the Korean (L1) and the English (L2) lexicon, certain English loanwords have not been fully integrated into the Korean lexicon and thus have not yet

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<sup>1</sup>The term *lexicon* used as in *Korean lexicon* and *English lexicon* narrowly refers to the domain of vocabulary in the present context.

attained firm cognate status yet; these will be marked as cognate\*. cognates and Konglish words are similar in terms of integration into the Korean lexicon in that both are loanwords which have been integrated into the Korean lexicon and thus have similar status to other words in Korean. The difference between cognates, as defined above, and Konglish words lies in their linguistic properties, in particular the degree of semantic overlap between Korean and English in such cases.

If a Korean L2 learner accesses loanwords through L1 entries to describe the given picture, its semantic features in Korean will fit in an English context in the case of cognates, as earlier defined, but not in the case of Konglish words. The study will scrutinize possible cases where certain loanwords with no origin in English (e.g. 아이젠 *aijen* originating in German *eisen*; crampon in English) are used as English words in an English session in the same way as in a Korean session. Since these loanwords do not have any lexical entries in English, any attempts to transfer them to an English context may carry the potential risk of misunderstanding. Clearly, since this kind of case of Konglish lexis has an entry in Korean but not in English, its presence in English production strongly indicates that the resource is accessed from an L1 entry.

Variation regarding the extent of the integration of loanwords into the L1 and frequency of word use in L1 is also considered. It is apparent that, even for the same loanword, individual learners of different age and gender may have different activation levels of the word on the basis of the frequency of its use in L1. Thus, it is additionally tested whether frequency/preference in respect of the use of loanwords in the L1 (Korean) affects their use of in the L2 (English) – for example, whether male L2 learners who do not use a certain word (e.g. 립크로스 *lip-gloss*) in Korean do not use the word in English either, and whether young learners of English who do not use an old-fashioned Konglish word (e.g. 올드 미스 *old miss*; spinster) in L1 do not use the word in English

either. If these parallels do indeed emerge, we may assume that Konglish words are stored in L1 like other L1 items.

## 2. Method

### 1) Subjects

A total of 120 Korean L2 learners participated in the study, and these were divided into three groups (A, B and C) on the basis of age. The mean age of each group is as shown in Table 1 (Group A: 16.85; Group B: 24.6; Group C: 49.90). Group A consisted of 40 volunteers in their late teens who were L2 beginners. Group B was comprised of 40 college students taking a beginners' class in a private English institute. 40 oldest participants, taking an English course at a Shi Hung community centre, constituted the Group C.

**Table 1**  
**Age Statistics of the Groups A, B and C**

Group	N	Mean	Std
A	40	16.85	.362
B	40	24.60	3.986
C	40	49.90	9.262
<b>TOTAL</b>	120	30.45	15.304

### 2) Materials

A list of Konglish words for picture naming tasks in the present study was obtained from a preliminary survey where 50 Korean monolingual participants were asked to write loan words they use in their Korean. A total of 10 pictures of *bolero*, *leggings*, *lip-gloss*, *backpack*, *van*, *stapler*, *tow truck*, *crampon*, *spinster*, and *prostitute* were prepared for picture-naming tasks on a laptop computer.

### 3) Procedure

Each participant was asked to name each picture appearing on the computer screen within the designated time. The first session required the pictures to be named in the L2 (English). The same procedure was then gone through in the L1 (Korean). The L2 session preceded the L1 session in order to avoid any possible undue native language influence via a repetition effect.

### 4) Data Treatment

Each participant's data were recorded and quantified. The data from the L2 session and the L1 session were quantified separately. The corresponding data in the L1 and L2 data-sets were then identified. The data were analysed in relation to both age and gender.

## 3. Results

The response rates in respect of the loanwords (both cognates and Konglish words) are shown in Table 2. The results show the tendency that the group that used a loanword most in L1 also used the loanword most in L2, with the exception of item 6 (for the picture of a van). For example, in Korean item of the cognate pair 레카 *reka* (wrecker/tow truck; see Item 5 in Table 2) is the item most named by Group C in L1 session and in English item of the cognate pair, *wrecker*, is also the item named most by Group C in the L2 session. The word *crampon* (Item 7 in Table 2) appears neither in L1 naming task (0% for all groups in the L1 session) nor in L2 naming task (0% for all groups in the L2 session). Some of the words (e.g. *Eisen* and *bongo*) are not in fact of English origin but were nevertheless perceived as English by many subjects. For example, the word *Eisen* (Item 7 in Table 2) was used as an English word to name the picture of a

crampon by 2.5% of Group A, 10.0% of Group B and 42.5% of Group C.

**Table 2**  
**Response Rates of the Loanwords**

Item	Session	Status	Name	Group A	Group B	Group C
1	L1	Cognate	볼레로	15.0%	17.5%	<b>22.5%</b>
	L2	Cognate	<i>bolero</i>	12.5%	20.0%	<b>20.0%</b>
2	L1	Cognate	레깅스	0.0%	<b>12.5%</b>	0.0%
	L2	Cognate	<i>leggings</i>	5.0%	<b>27.5%</b>	7.5%
3	L1	Cognate	립크로스	<b>70.0%</b>	57.5%	40.0%
	L2	Cognate	<i>lip-gloss</i>	<b>62.5%</b>	60.0%	40.0%
4	L1	Cognate	백팩	<b>30.0%</b>	17.5%	0.0%
	L2	Cognate	<i>backpack</i>	<b>70.0%</b>	70.0%	20.0%
5	L1	Cognate*	투우트럭	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	L2	Cognate	<i>tow truck</i>	0.0%	5.0%	0.0%
	L1	Cognate	레카	0.0%	12.5%	<b>55.0%</b>
	L2	Cognate	<i>wrecker</i>	0.0%	17.5%	<b>55.0%</b>
6	L1	Cognate	밴	2.5%	2.5%	<b>10.0%</b>
	L2	Cognate	<i>van</i>	<b>32.5%</b>	12.5%	20.0%
	L1	Konglish	봉고	<b>85.0%</b>	65.0%	70.0%
	L2	Konglish	<i>bongo</i>	17.5%	20.0%	<b>52.5%</b>
7	L1	Cognate*	크랩폰	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	L2	Cognate	<i>crampon</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	L1	Konglish*	아이젠	2.5%	7.5%	<b>37.5%</b>
	L2	Konglish	<i>eisen</i>	2.5%	10.0%	<b>42.5%</b>
8	L1	Cognate	스테이플러	20.0%	<b>27.5%</b>	2.5%
	L2	Cognate	<i>stapler</i>	30.0%	<b>82.5%</b>	22.5%
	L1	Konglish	호치키스	70.0%	57.5%	<b>75.0%</b>
	L2	Konglish	<i>hotchkiss</i>	27.5%	10.0%	<b>47.5%</b>
9	L1	Konglish	올드미스	0.0%	0.0%	<b>15.0%</b>
	L2	Konglish	<i>old-miss</i>	2.5%	7.5%	<b>22.5%</b>
10	L1	Konglish	호스테스	0.0%	22.5%	<b>45.0%</b>
	L2	Konglish	<i>hostess</i>	2.5%	10.0%	<b>47.5%</b>

**Note** Cognate: loanword from English with high overlap of semantic representations between Korean and English  
 Cognate\*: English word that has not yet been incorporated into Korean vocabulary  
 Konglish: loanword from English with low/no overlap of semantic representations between Korean and English  
 Konglish\*: loanword that does not originate in English

While Table 2 shows all the loanwords including cognates and Konglish words produced by Korean L2 learners to name the pictures in the present study, Table 3 summarizes Konglish words extracted from among all the loanwords in Table 2. Table 3 shows the cases where the subjects produce Konglish word pairs which match the picture stimulus in L1 but not in L2. Table 3 also indicates a general tendency for the oldest age Group C to use the Konglish word pairs most in the picture-naming task. For example, Table 3-a shows that a Konglish word pair *붕고 bonggo* (a Korean van brand-name; van) is applied to the picture of a van by 20% of the Group A, 22.9% of Group B, and 57.1% of Group C. Table 3-b shows that Group C used the Konglish word pair *아이젠 eisen* (*Eisen* in German; crampon) the most both in L1 and L2 (Group A 5.3%, Group B 15.8%, Group C 78.9%). Table 3-d shows that an old-fashioned Konglish word pair *올드미스 old-miss* is applied to the picture of a spinster only by the oldest age-group (Group A 0%, Group B 0%, Group C 100%). Table 3-e also shows that another old-fashioned Konglish word pair *호스테스 hostess* is applied to the picture of a prostitute predominantly by the oldest age-group (Group A 0%, Group B 17.6%, Group C 82.4%). The result shows unsurprisingly that the earlier (quasi-)borrowings from English *호스테스 hostess* (prostitute) and *올드미스 old-miss* (spinster) were preferred by the oldest age-group both in L1 and in L2. The Konglish word *아이젠 aijen* (*Eisen* in German; crampon), which the older generation is generally familiar with in L1, was also preferred by the oldest age-group in L2.

**Table 3.1**  
**Konglish Word Pair (붕고 in L1 - bongo in L2) Applied to a**  
**Picture of a Van**

		Konglish (붕고- <i>bongo</i> )		Total	
		0	1		
Group	A	Occurrence	33	7	40
		%	38.8%	<b>20.0%</b>	33.3%
	B	Occurrence	32	8	40
		%	37.6%	<b>22.9%</b>	33.3%
	C	Occurrence	20	20	40
		%	23.5%	<b>57.1%</b>	33.3%
TOTAL	Occurrence	85	35	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Table 3.2**  
**Konglish Word Pair (아이젠 in L1 - Eisen in L2) Applied to a**  
**Picture of a Crampon**

		Konglish (아이젠- <i>eisen</i> )		Total	
		0	1		
Group	A	Occurrence	39	1	40
		%	38.6%	<b>5.3%</b>	33.3%
	B	Occurrence	37	3	40
		%	36.6%	<b>15.8%</b>	33.3%
	C	Occurrence	25	15	40
		%	24.8%	<b>78.9%</b>	33.3%
TOTAL	Occurrence	101	19	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Table 3.3**  
**Konglish Word Pair (호치키스 in L1 - Hotchkiss in L2) Applied to a Picture of a Stapler**

		Konglish (호치키스- <i>hotchkiss</i> )		Total	
		0	1		
Group	A	Occurrence	29	11	40
		%	33.0%	<b>34.4%</b>	33.3%
	B	Occurrence	38	2	40
		%	43.2%	<b>6.3%</b>	33.3%
	C	Occurrence	21	19	40
		%	23.9%	<b>59.4%</b>	33.3%
TOTAL	Occurrence	88	32	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Table 3.4**  
**Konglish Word Pair (올드미스 in L1 - Old-miss in L2) Applied to a Picture of a Spinster**

		Konglish (올드미스- <i>old-miss</i> )		Total	
		0	1		
Group	A	Occurrence	40	0	40
		%	35.1%	<b>.0%</b>	33.3%
	B	Occurrence	40	0	40
		%	35.1%	<b>.0%</b>	33.3%
	C	Occurrence	34	6	40
		%	29.8%	<b>100.0%</b>	33.3%
TOTAL	Occurrence	114	6	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Table 3.5**  
**Konglish Word Pair (호스테스 in L1 - hostess in L2) Applied to a**  
**Picture of a Prostitute**

		Konglish (호스테스- <i>hostess</i> )		Total	
		0	1		
Group	A	Occurrence	40	0	40
		%	38.8%	.0%	33.3%
	B	Occurrence	37	3	40
		%	35.9%	17.6%	33.3%
	C	Occurrence	26	14	40
		%	25.2%	82.4%	33.3%
TOTAL	Occurrence	103	17	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Among the loanwords elicited in the picture naming task, those which showed variation according to the subjects' gender are shown in Table 4. Table 4-a shows that the number of subjects who produced the target word *볼레로* (Korean item of the cognate pair *볼레로 bolero*) in the L1 session was 22 from 120 subjects (90 female and 30 male), all of the *bolero*-producing subjects being female. Table 4-b shows that the number of the subjects who named the target word *bolero* (English item of the cognate pair *볼레로 bolero*) in the L2 session was 21, all of whom, again, are female. The gender of the subjects who used the word *레깅스* (Korean item of the cognate pair *레깅스 leggings*) in the L1 session was in 80% of cases female and the producers of *leggings* (English item of the cognate pair *레깅스 leggings*) were 75% female in the L2 session. The gender of the subjects who named the cognate pair *립크로스 lip-gloss* was female in 86.6% of cases in the L1 task and in 83.1% of cases in the L2 task. These loanwords which were predominantly preferred by female subjects both in L1 and L2 relate to fashion-related items that Korean women are more likely interested in. The overall results suggest that the loanwords that male subjects do not frequently use in L1

were rarely used by the male subjects in L2.

**Table 4**  
**Gender Comparison**  
**4.1 Production of Bolero in the L1 Session**

		Cognate 볼레로 ( <i>bolero</i> )		Total	
		0	1		
Gender	F(90)	Occurrence	68	22	90
		%	69.4%	<b>100.0%</b>	75.0%
	M(30)	Occurrence	30	0	30
		%	30.6%	.0%	25.0%
TOTAL	Occurrence	98	22	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**4.2 Production of Bolero in the L2 Session**

		Cognate bolero		Total	
		0	1		
Gender	F(90)	Occurrence	69	21	90
		%	69.7%	<b>100.0%</b>	75.0%
	M(30)	Occurrence	30	0	30
		%	30.3%	.0%	25.0%
TOTAL	Occurrence	99	21	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**4.3 Production of Leggings in the L1 Session**

		Cognate 레깅스 ( <i>leggings</i> )		Total	
		0	1		
Gender	F(90)	Occurrence	86	4	90
		%	74.8%	<b>80.0%</b>	75.0%
	M(30)	Occurrence	29	1	30
		%	25.2%	20.0%	25.0%
TOTAL	Occurrence	115	5	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**4.4 Production of Leggings in the L2 Session**

			Cognate <i>leggings</i>		Total
			0	1	
Gender	F(90)	Occurrence	78	12	90
		%	75.0%	<b>75.0%</b>	75.0%
	M(30)	Occurrence	26	4	30
		%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%
TOTAL	Occurrence	104	16	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**4.5 Production of Lip-gloss in the L1 Session**

			Cognate 립크로스 ( <i>lip-gloss</i> )		Total
			0	1	
Gender	F(90)	Occurrence	32	58	90
		%	60.4%	<b>86.6%</b>	75.0%
	M(30)	Occurrence	21	9	30
		%	39.6%	13.4%	25.0%
TOTAL	Occurrence	53	67	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**4.6 Production of Lip-gloss in the L2 Session**

			Cognate <i>lip-gloss</i>		Total
			0	1	
Gender	F(90)	Occurrence	36	54	90
		%	65.5%	<b>83.1%</b>	75.0%
	M(30)	Occurrence	19	11	30
		%	34.5%	16.9%	25.0%
TOTAL	Occurrence	55	65	120	
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

In conclusion, there is evidence that Konglish words are stored as L1 lexical items and retrieved through L1 lexical entries in L2 access.

#### 4. Discussion

Given that older generations tend to use outdated loanwords (Hoffer, 1990), it is interesting to observe that the Konglish words *호스티스* *hostess* (prostitute) and *올드미스* *old-miss* (spinster), which are generally considered as old-fashioned loanwords, were most used by the oldest age-group in L1 session. The young groups (Group A and Group B) used either message abandonment (Corder, 1983), simply giving up answering the given question, or explained in their L1, which may be attributed to lack of sufficient L2 lexical knowledge to use L2-based communication strategies. The results for *호스티스* *hostess* (prostitute) were: Group A: 0.0%, Group B: 22.5%, Group C: 45.0%, and for *올드미스* *old-miss* (spinster): Group A: 0.0%, Group B: 0.0%, Group C: 15.0%. Since hiking or mountain climbing is a popular pastime among Koreans in their 40s or above in Korea, it is unsurprising that the Konglish word *아이젠* *eisen* (*Eisen* in German; crampon) was predominantly used in Korean by Group C who were over 40 (Group A: 2.5%, Group B: 7.5%, Group C: 37.5%). These Konglish words used mostly by the oldest group were transferred to the L2 naming task by the oldest group predominantly, as shown in the results; the Konglish word pair *호스티스* *hostess* (prostitute) was produced by 0% of Group A, 17.6% of Group B and 82.4% of Group C; the Konglish word pair *올드미스* *old-miss* (spinster) was produced by 0% of Group A, 0% of Group B, and 100% of Group C; the Konglish word pair *아이젠* *eisen* (*Eisen* in German; crampon) was used by 5.3% of Group A, 15.8% of Group B, and 78.9% of Group C. The cognate words with which females are more familiar in L1 were also used more by female subjects in the L2. A Korean item of cognate pair *볼레로* (*bolero*) was used by 22 subjects (out of 120) in L1. This consisted of 100% female subjects. The subjects who used *bolero* in L2 were also 100% female subjects. Other cognate pairs produced mostly by female subjects were *레깅스* *leggings*

(80% in L1, 75% in L2) and 립크로스 *lip-gloss* (86.6% in L1, 83.1% in L2). This suggests that if the cognate words are not stored in the male subjects' L1, the words are not retrieved in L2 contexts.

### III. Conclusion

Konglish lexis has an entry in Korean and its presence in English production strongly indicates that the resource is accessed from an L1 entry. This is more evident in the result that even the loan words which do not originate from English were also used as English words. The result that Konglish words are stored as L1 lexical items and accessed via L1 entries for L2 production, will be an empirical foundation that Konglish data in L2 may be interpreted as evidence of L1 access for the future studies investigating cross-linguistic lexical access or organization of the mental lexicon of bilinguals.

The present study has some limitations. It employed Korean beginning learners of English, who were expected to manifest the Konglish phenomenon most distinctively and utilized picture-naming tasks involving single words since their knowledge of English was deemed not sufficient to be tested on the basis of longer stretches of language. Future studies should extend the discussion of Konglish use at the word level to the broader Konglish phenomenon ranging from linguistic to pragmatic and conceptual aspects, and accordingly subjects with different level of proficiency should be examined.

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### Author's Biodata

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