Investigating English Code-Switching Frequency in ATEEZ's Korean Pop Songs

Nawat Sriautarawong¹*, Napapach Wattanapanich¹,
Tanaporn Chokkeaw¹ , Wisut Jarunthawatchai¹*

Abstract

To attract a global multilingual audience, K-pop has long incorporated English lyrics as a strategic tool. This study analyzes 20 songs by ATEEZ, a prominent fourth-generation K-pop group, focusing on tracks promoted through music videos to examine the phenomenon of code-switching. The analysis applies Poplack's (1980) code-switching framework alongside word class categorization by Biber, Conrad, and Leech (2002). The findings reveal that intra-sentential code-switching dominates, with interjections representing the most frequent word class. Furthermore, the study highlights that English lyrics are primarily employed for entertainment and marketing purposes, aiming to enhance listener engagement and expand global reach. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of linguistic hybridity in K-pop and the evolving role of English in global music trends.

* Corresponding Author
  E-mail: faaswsj@ku.ac.th
¹ Kasetsart University

1.   Introduction

The global dominance of English across popular culture, science, and business has profoundly influenced communication worldwide, affecting how people write and interact in various languages. In daily life, this is evident in the widespread use of English in social media conversations and photo captions, even in non-English-speaking environments. Recently, mixing two languages in a single statement has become a growing trend among bilingual speakers, evolving into a habitual practice for those fluent in multiple languages. This phenomenon extends beyond casual conversation to more specific contexts, notably in music, where English words, phrases, clauses, and sentences are woven into lyrics to enhance their impact.

In Korean pop music, known globally as K-pop, English has been prominently featured, particularly in song titles and idol stage names. Since the early 1990s, English inclusion has served to enhance artist identities and foster global appeal (Berliana & Anjarningsih, 2022). English continues to dominate the charts, reflecting both Korea's cultural export ambitions and the industry's responsiveness to global pop culture trends. The increasing integration of English also showcases K-pop idols' bilingual abilities and their adaptation to an international market. As K-pop expands worldwide, many artists now come from English-speaking backgrounds such as the United States, Canada, and Australia, further strengthening the genre's global orientation.

This study focuses on ATEEZ, a rising fourth-generation K-pop group comprising eight Korean members—Hongjoong, Seonghwa, Yunho, Yeosang, San, Mingi, Wooyoung, and Jongho. Debuting in 2018, ATEEZ rapidly gained international recognition for their high-energy performances and innovative concepts, quickly building a dedicated global fanbase. Their influence is evident in their social media presence, chart success, and numerous awards, including the Worldwide Fans' Choice Award at the 2020 Mnet Asian Music Awards, and the Favorite Global Performer Male Group award at the 2023 MAMA Awards. Their album *ZERO: FEVER Part.2* debuted on the Billboard 200, demonstrating their significant global reach.

Despite extensive research on the role of English in K-pop's global success, few studies have examined how specific cultural and linguistic choices, particularly code-switching, contribute to a group's international appeal. ATEEZ, as a representative fourth-generation K-pop group, demonstrates the effective use of English lyrics to enhance their global reach while maintaining a distinct Korean identity. This study focuses on analyzing English phrases in the lyrics of ATEEZ's songs released between 2018 and 2024, concentrating solely on the lyrical content without examining musical or vocal elements. To guide the investigation, the study poses two research questions:

(1) What code-switching patterns occur in the selected songs?

(2) What English word classes are incorporated into the selected songs?

By exploring English code-switching in K-pop lyrics, this research seeks to deepen understanding of language mixing phenomena and encourage further investigation into this underexplored area of multilingual music production.

2.   Literature review

2.1   Why has K-pop gained popularity?

K-pop's global rise is attributed to its catchy melodies, captivating choreography, high production values, and the constant release of engaging content, propelling it to international fame (Romano, 2018). Psy's "Gangnam Style" exemplified how a novel melody combined with distinctive choreography and slick production can trigger viral spread, breaking the Guinness World Record with 1.578 billion views on YouTube in 2012. Similarly, BLACKPINK's visual appeal and powerful stage presence, as in "How You Like That" (82.37 million views in 24 hours), demonstrate how strong vocals and dynamic performances leverage those production values to dominate global charts. Groups like BLACKPINK have attracted global fans with their visual appeal, strong vocal and dance skills, and dynamic performances. By 2021, BLACKPINK had achieved over 20 million Spotify followers, reflecting their global influence. Their fans, known as "Blinks," embody the strong, worldwide community that surrounds K-pop artists.

2.2 Definition and Concepts of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing

Code-switching refers to the use of two or more languages within the same conversation. Crystal (2003) defines it as bilingual speakers alternating between languages, often within the same sentence or paragraph. It is a natural feature of multilingual communities, reflecting group membership and social dynamics (Hymes, 1971). Bokamba (1988) describes it as the integration of words, phrases, or sentences from different grammatical systems within the same discourse, while Auer (2004) frames it as the alternate use of two or more codes in a single conversation. Although traditionally misunderstood as a sign of linguistic deficiency, contemporary perspectives recognize code-switching as a marker of bilingual proficiency. Poplack (2000) highlights how skilled bilinguals navigate between languages with competence, while Wardhaugh (1997) emphasizes speakers' choices in creating new linguistic forms through switching and mixing. Myers-Scotton (1993) further explains that code-switching typically occurs within the same conversation, and even within sentences.

Scholars also differentiate code-switching from code-mixing based on linguistic structure and function. McCormick (1995) defines code-switching as shifting between languages across longer sentences, while code-mixing involves blending smaller linguistic units—such as words or phrases—within the same utterance. Similarly, McLaughlin (1984,

cited in González, 1989) distinguishes code-mixing as involving intra-sentential switches, whereas code-switching spans phrases or full sentences. Although distinctions exist, scholars like Gardner-Chloros (2009) and Hamers and Blanc (2000) observe minimal differences between the two, often leading to overlap in practice. Muysken (2000) supports this view, describing code-mixing as intra-sentential switching, while code-switching usually operates at the clause or sentence level.

2.3 Reasons for Code-Switching

Hoffman (1991) outlines several reasons for code-switching: to discuss certain topics, quote others, express solidarity, use interjections, clarify through repetition, ensure comprehension, or assert group identity. Interjections like *"Damn!"* or *"Hey!"* are especially common for emotional emphasis.

Likhitphongsathorn (2012) adds that in music, code-switching serves marketing, trend alignment, rhythm, and global reach. English phrases make songs catchy and accessible to international audiences, particularly younger listeners. Songwriters also use code-switching creatively to enhance rhythm, rhyme, and musicality, while contributing to global appeal and identity expression.

Furthermore, it is important to note that code-switching is not limited to specific proficiency levels or settings. Pedraza (1978) highlights that code-switching emerges across a wide spectrum of language proficiencies, indicating its role as a flexible communicative tool in both casual and artistic contexts. Complementing this, Poplack (1978) classifies code-switching based on the degree of integration between languages. Fluent bilinguals, for example, skillfully integrate linguistic structures from both languages, while non-fluent bilinguals may exhibit influence from their first language. These insights not only broaden the understanding of everyday conversational switching but also provide relevant background for exploring its intentional use in music lyrics.

2.4 Code-Switching in Song Lyrics

Code-switching in lyrics differs from spontaneous conversational switching. In music, language choices are deliberate, shaped by aesthetics and audience appeal (Riehl, 2005). Sarkar and Winer (2006) argue that songwriters consciously use code-switching to represent cultural identity and enhance rhythm and meaning. Nyman (2012) emphasizes the intentionality in written lyrics, requiring conscious selection of linguistic codes. Code-switching in songs thus functions to highlight meaning, create musicality, and evoke emotion, making it distinct from conversational code-switching.

2.5 Code-Switching in Korean Pop Songs

Previous studies of K-pop lyrics have explored English usage and code-switching patterns. Margaretta and Rangkuti (2024) examined songs by NewJeans, while Likhitphongsathorn (2012) analyzed English in Thai pop songs, revealing varied listener and

songwriter perceptions. Lawrence (2010) explored the functions of English in second-generation K-pop, including identity expression and challenging traditional norms.

However, few studies have specifically analyzed code-switching's role in attracting international audiences in K-pop. This study seeks to fill that gap by examining how ATEEZ, a fourth-generation group, integrates English into their lyrics to enhance global appeal.

2.6 Shana Poplack's Theoretical Framework

Shana Poplack, a leading scholar in sociolinguistics, defines code-switching as the practice of alternating between two or more languages or dialects within a single discourse, sentence, or conversation. Her theoretical framework, developed in the early 1980s, remains highly influential in understanding the structural patterns of code-switching. According to Poplack (1980), code-switching can be categorized into three primary types: inter-sentential switching, tag-switching, and intra-sentential switching.

Inter-sentential switching involves shifting from one language to another between sentences. In this type, complete sentences are composed in different languages, typically separated at sentence boundaries. For example: *"I am going to the store. ¿Quieres comer algo?"*
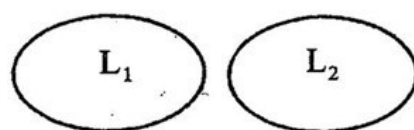
a. Inter-sentential switching

Figure 1a *Model of Inter-sentential Switching (Poplack, 1980, p. 615).*

Tag-switching refers to the insertion of a tag phrase or short expression from one language into a sentence structured in another language. Such tags may include exclamations or discourse markers like *"you know"* or *"I mean"*, which can be seamlessly integrated into monolingual sentences without disrupting syntactic rules. For instance: *"It's a beautiful day, ¿verdad?"*
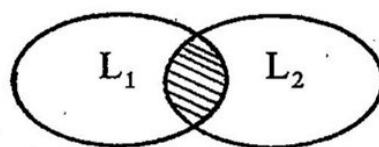
b. 'tag'-switching

Figure 1b *Model of Tag-switching (Poplack, 1980, p. 615).*

Intra-sentential switching, often equated with code-mixing, occurs within a single sentence. It involves embedding words, phrases, or clauses from another language directly into the grammatical structure of the base language. An example of this is: *"I'm going to the tienda to buy some milk."*

c. Intra-sentential switching

Figure 1c *Model of Intra-sentential Switching (Poplack, 1980, p. 615).*

Poplack's model highlights that these forms of switching are not random but follow identifiable linguistic patterns. Particularly, intra-sentential switching requires a high degree of bilingual proficiency, as it involves greater syntactic and morphological integration across languages. This framework is crucial for the present study, as it provides the analytical lens to examine the types of code-switching in ATEEZ's lyrics.

2.7 Word Class Classification

Following Biber, Conrad, and Leech (2002), words are categorized into lexical and functional classes. Lexical words carry the primary meaning of a sentence and include nouns, lexical verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. These words are essential for conveying the core message and content within any given text.

In contrast, functional words provide the grammatical structure necessary for constructing coherent sentences. This category includes determiners, pronouns, auxiliaries, prepositions, interjections, coordinators, and subordinators. Although functional words do not carry substantial meaning on their own, they play a crucial role in connecting lexical words and ensuring the grammatical integrity of the sentence.

This classification provides a useful framework for analyzing the types of English words used in ATEEZ's lyrics, supporting the study's investigation of code-switching patterns.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods design with a primary focus on quantitative content analysis to investigate the presence of English in the lyrics of ATEEZ's songs, the patterns of code-switching, and their potential role in attracting audiences. Twenty songs—the top 20 most–viewed ATEEZ music videos featuring English code-switching as of March 1, 2025—were selected, all of which are title tracks promoted via official music videos.

Creswell (2009) notes that combining quantitative frequency counts with qualitative examples can provide both breadth and depth in understanding linguistic phenomena.

A total of 20 songs were selected for analysis, focusing specifically on title tracks promoted through music videos. These songs were chosen because title tracks serve as the primary promotional tools for K-pop artists and are widely accessible to global audiences through platforms like YouTube. For example, *Wonderland*, one of ATEEZ's title tracks, played a pivotal role in establishing their presence in the K-pop industry, garnering numerous awards such as the Worldwide Fans' Choice Award at the Mnet Asian Music Awards in 2019 and 2023. The track also achieved significant streaming success on Spotify and appeared on various global music charts. By analyzing the English-mixed lyrics in these selected songs, this study aims to explore the different functions of English usage in ATEEZ's music and how such integration contributes to their global recognition and audience engagement.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of Korean pop songs that feature code-switching. Purposive sampling was employed, relying on the researchers' knowledge and expertise in the field. As Patton (2002) describes, purposive sampling focuses on selecting information-rich cases that provide deep insights into the subject under investigation.

The sampling process began with the selection of ATEEZ's title tracks, promoted through music videos from their debut in 2018 up to 2024. From a total of 106 Korean-language songs (excluding Japanese releases), 20 songs were selected based on their popularity, measured by YouTube views. The decision not to include all album tracks was intentional, as non-title tracks are often tailored to dedicated fanbases and not promoted to the broader global audience. Title tracks, by contrast, receive the most promotion and exposure worldwide, making them more suitable for examining the role of English code-switching in reaching international listeners.

3.3 Research Instrument

In line with the qualitative nature of this study, the researchers themselves served as the primary research instruments. Sugiyono (2011) states that in qualitative research, human instruments play a central role, performing tasks such as data collection, evaluation, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. Sugiyono (2024), further argues that human instruments are fundamental in naturalistic inquiry.

The researchers in this study demonstrated the essential characteristics of effective qualitative instruments, as outlined by Nasution 2021 (cited in Sugiyono, 2024):

1. Sensitivity to environmental stimuli relevant to the research.
2. Flexibility to adapt to varying situations and data collection needs.
3. Holistic understanding of research contexts beyond quantitative measurement.
4. Active human participation that extends beyond mere data gathering.

5. Ability to interpret and make evaluative judgments based on collected data.

6. Capacity for drawing meaningful conclusions from qualitative evidence.

7. Emphasis on responses and findings that are not purely statistical but contextual and nuanced.

In addition to the researchers' active role, printed song lyrics were used as supporting tools to ensure accuracy during the data collection and analysis processes.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection involved a systematic process focused on ATEEZ's songs promoted through music videos. The researchers first identified all music videos listed on ATEEZ's official YouTube profile. Next, they retrieved the corresponding song lyrics from reliable online sources to determine which songs contained instances of Korean-English code-switching. Only songs featuring such code-switching were selected for further analysis, ensuring alignment with the study's research questions.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis followed a structured process comprising five steps to address the research questions and ensure the credibility of findings:

1. Selecting the target data

The researchers compiled a list of ATEEZ's songs and identified the extent of code-switching in each title track.

2. Identifying the types of code-switching

Using Poplack's (1980) framework, the researchers classified instances of code-switching into inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching categories. Additionally, they employed the word class classification system by Biber, Conrad, and Leech (2002) to categorize the English words found in the lyrics.

3. Identifying the types of words

After classifying the code-switching types, the researchers analyzed the English words based on their grammatical categories to answer the second research question. This process relied on established linguistic frameworks rather than subjective judgment.

4. Establishing reliability in analysis

To enhance reliability, six classmates familiar with the theoretical frameworks reviewed the sample analyses. Their feedback helped verify the accuracy and consistency of the coding.

5. Summarizing the findings

Finally, the researchers summarized the analysis results to directly address the study's two research questions, providing a clear and coherent presentation of the findings.

4. Findings

This section presents the analysis undertaken to address the two research objectives. The findings are reported in two main parts: (1) the types of code-switching found in Korean pop songs, and (2) the identification and categorization of English word classes used in these songs.

4.1 Analysis of Code-Switching Types in Korean Pop Songs

4.1.1 Code-Switching Types

The analysis of 20 selected songs revealed a total of 503 instances of code-switching, which were categorized into three types (see Table 1). As shown in Figure 2, intra-sentential code-switching emerged as the most frequent type, with 281 occurrences, accounting for 55.86% of the total instances. Tag switching followed, with 162 occurrences (32.21%), indicating the common use of English exclamations or short phrases to add emphasis and stylistic variation to the lyrics. Inter-sentential code-switching was the least frequent, appearing 60 times (11.93%), which suggests that full English sentences were less commonly used, likely to maintain the lyrical flow and rhythm of the songs. Overall, the high frequency of intra-sentential switching shows that songwriters often integrated English words or phrases within Korean sentences to create smooth and natural-sounding lyrics.

Table 1 *Frequency and Percentage of Code-Switching Types in ATEEZ's Lyrics*

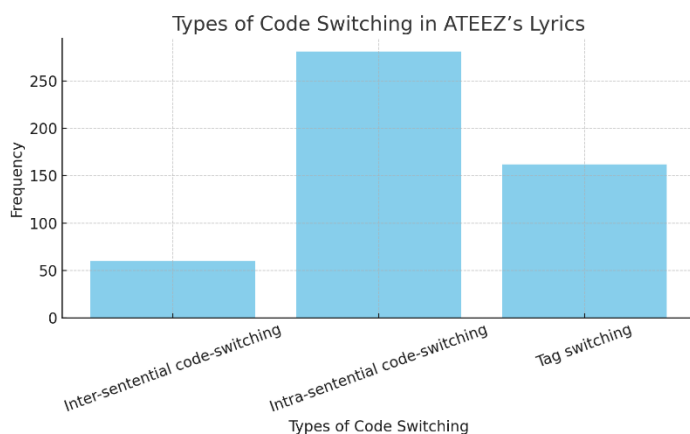| No.	Types of Code Switching	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Inter-sentential code-switching	60	11.93
2	Intra-sentential code-switching	281	55.86
3	Tag switching	162	32.21

Figure 2 *Types of Code Switching in ATEEZ's Lyrics*

4.1.2 Examples of Code-Switching in Korean Pop Song Lyrics

Detailed examples of each type of code-switching identified in the lyrics are provided below.

Inter-sentential Switching

This refers to full sentences in English inserted between Korean sentences. A total of 60 instances (11.93%) were identified. For example, in the song *Deja Vu*:

"기억하고 있는 것 같아 I know you get déjà vu."

(Translation: Remembers you, I know you get déjà vu.)

Intra-sentential Switching

This involves switching within a sentence, often embedding English phrases into Korean structures. A total of 281 instances (55.86%) were found. For example, in *Say My Name*:

"더 이상을 better than better"

(Translation: Evermore better than better.)

Tag Switching

Tag-switching includes exclamations or phrases inserted from one language into another. A total of 162 instances (32.21%) were observed. For example, in *Firework*:

*"Hey! 불놀이야."*

(Translation: Hey! Fireworks.)

4.2 Identification and Categorization of English Word Classes in Korean Pop Songs

4.2.1 Overview of Word Class Occurrences (Frequency)

The analysis of the lyrics found a total of 1,466 English words, which were grouped into different word classes (see Table 2). As shown in Figure 3, interjections were the most common, appearing 369 times, or 20.93% of all English words. Verbs and nouns were also frequently used, with 309 occurrences (21.08%) and 297 occurrences (20.26%) respectively. These three categories together accounted for over 60% of the total, showing the energetic and active style of K-pop songs. On the other hand, less frequent categories like coordinators and subordinators made up less than 1%, suggesting that K-pop lyrics tend to use simpler and more direct expressions rather than complex sentence structures. Overall, this distribution shows how English is used in K-pop lyrics to attract listeners and make the songs more engaging and rhythmic.

Table 2 *Frequency and Percentage of English Word Classes in Korean Pop Song Lyrics*

English Words	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Interjection	369	20.93
Verb	309	17.53
Noun	297	16.85
Pronoun	284	16.11
Adjective	142	8.05
Adverb	140	7.94
Preposition	76	4.31
Auxiliary	57	3.23
Determiner	49	2.78
Others	23	1.3
Coordinator	14	0.79
Subordinator	3	0.17
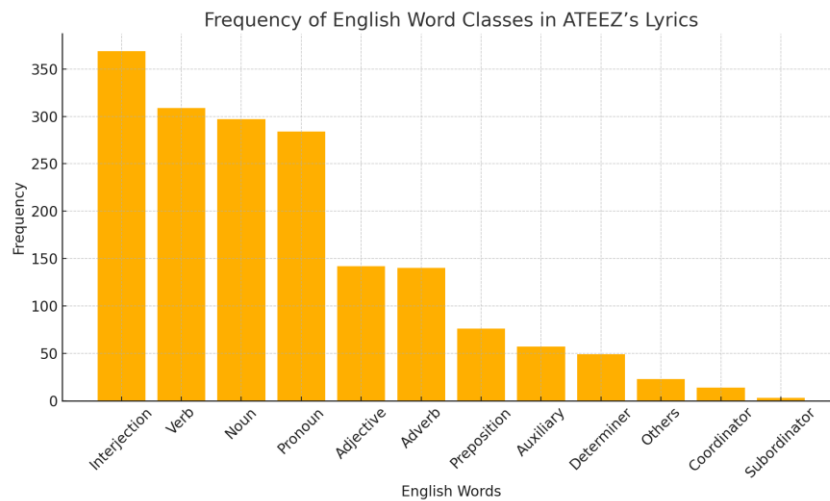
Figure 3 *Distribution of English Word Classes in ATEEZ's Lyrics*

4.2.3 Examples of Word Classes in Korean Pop Song Lyrics

Detailed examples of each identified word class are presented below.

Interjections

Interjections are expressive words conveying emotions or exclamations. A total of 369 instances (20.93%) were identified. An example from *Halazia*:

"Mm, 소리를 잃은 작은 파랑새야."

(Translation: Mm, the little blue bird that lost its voice.)

Verbs

Verbs indicate actions or states. A total of 309 instances (17.53%) were recorded. For example, in the song *Wave*:

"다 던져버려 drink."

(Translation: Throw it all away, drink.)

Nouns

Nouns represent people, places, objects, or concepts. A total of 297 instances (16.85%) were found. For example, in the song *Hala Hala*:

"그치 변신해 가치는 God 씌운 이 scene에 어쌔신 같지 난."

(Translation: That's right, values transform, I'm like an assassin in this god-covered scene.)

Pronouns

Pronouns replace nouns to avoid repetition and maintain the flow of speech or writing. The analysis identified 284 instances (16.11%) of English pronouns in the selected lyrics. For example, in the song *Thanxx*:

"각자의 속도는 다 달라, we are all another, baby."

(Translation: Everyone goes at a different pace, we are all another, baby.)

Adjectives

Adjectives describe or modify nouns, providing additional information about qualities or quantities. There were 142 instances (8.05%) of adjectives in the lyrics. For example, in the song *Treasure*:

"점점 더 눈이 멀어 crazy."

(Translation: Going more and more blind, crazy.)

Adverbs

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs, indicating manner, time, place, or degree. The findings identified 140 instances (7.94%) of adverbs in the lyrics. For example, in the song *Answer*:

"두려운 것도 anymore."

(Translation: We're not afraid anymore.)

Prepositions

Prepositions indicate relationships between nouns or pronouns and other words in a sentence. A total of 76 instances (4.31%) were found. For example, in the song *Inception*:

"Where you at? Where you at? 너는 어디에."

(Translation: Where you at? Where you at? Where are you?)

Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary verbs assist the main verb to form tenses, voices, or moods. The analysis found 57 instances (3.23%) in the lyrics. For example, in the song *Pirate King*:

"이제 닻을 올려라 어두운 맘을 걷어라 어디든지 we can go."

(Translation: Raise the anchor, put away your dark hearts, wherever it is, we can go.)

Determiners

Determiners introduce nouns and specify them as known or unknown, definite or indefinite. The findings recorded 49 instances (2.78%). For example, in the song *Eternal Sunshine*:

"약속할 게 I'll get you a star."

(Translation: I'll promise you, I'll get you a star.)

Others

This category includes English tokens that could not be clearly classified into conventional grammatical categories, such as numbers or ungrammatical expressions. There were 23 instances (1.3%) found. For example, in the song *The Real*:

"발걸음은 not dum-di-ri-dum, dum-di-ri-dum-dum."

(Translation: The steps are not dum-di-ri-dum, dum-di-ri-dum-dum.)

Coordinators

Coordinators connect words, phrases, or clauses of equal grammatical rank. The analysis identified 14 instances (0.79%) in the selected lyrics. For example, in the song *Guerrilla*:

"지겨, 지겨워, sick and 지끈지끈 또."

(Translation: Boring, boring, sick, and tired again.)

Subordinators

Subordinators link clauses by making one clause dependent on another. Only 3 instances (0.17%) were identified. For example, in the song *Bouncy*:

"비켜봐 'cause we need some air."

(Translation: Move aside 'cause we need some air.)

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

This study aimed to address two research questions:

(1) What code-switching patterns occur in the selected songs?

(2) What English word classes are incorporated into the selected songs?

The analysis was based on Poplack's (1980) framework for code-switching types and Biber, Conrad, and Leech's (2002) classification of English word classes.

The phenomenon of code-switching reflected the blending of language and culture, as speakers incorporated elements of a foreign language into their native discourse. In Korea, especially within the entertainment industry, code-switching was widespread. The global popularity of Korean pop culture, often referred to as the "Korean Wave," has led to widespread enjoyment of Korean music and television worldwide. This study examined code-switching within Korean pop songs, taking into account typical song structures, including intro, verses, chorus, pre-chorus, post-chorus, bridge, outro, and refrains.

5.1.1 Types of Code-Switching in Korean Pop Songs

The findings revealed that all three types of code-switching proposed by Poplack (1980) were present in the selected ATEEZ songs. However, the distribution varied across songs. For instance, "Hala Hala" and "Say My Name" showed a higher frequency of intra-sentential code-switching, followed by tag switching, with inter-sentential switching occurring least. In contrast, "Firework" displayed a different pattern, where tag switching was the most frequent, followed by intra-sentential, and again, inter-sentential was the least common.

Interestingly, this finding diverges from Daoh's (2016, as cited in Rusli et al., 2018) study, which reported inter-sentential switching as the most frequent type. Contrary to Jocelin and Tryana's (2019) research, where tag-switching was the least common, this study found inter-sentential switching to be the least employed across the selected songs.

Additionally, code-switching appeared predominantly in the chorus, pre-chorus, and bridge sections of songs, aligning with the observations of Lawrence (2010). However, exceptions were found, such as the use of code-switching in the intros of "Answer" and "Wave," the outros of "Deja Vu" and "Halazia," and the hooks of "Thanxx" and "Say My Name." These results support Lauren's (2018) and Sea's (2018) findings, which emphasize the enduring use of code-switching as a strategy to attract global audiences.

Unlike previous research, this study observed a higher number of individual English words rather than full sentences, suggesting that inserting single English words or phrases may be a deliberate stylistic choice to capture listeners' attention. Notably, full English sentences often appeared in rap sections of the songs, such as in "Wonderland" and "Bouncy."

5.1.2 English Word Classes in Korean Pop Songs

The analysis further indicated that interjections were the most frequent English word class in the selected songs, followed by verbs, nouns, and pronouns. This contrasts with previous research by Kannaovakun (2001), Samingkaew (2001), Amornsupornsart and Chitladaphitak (2004), Preechaamornkul (2005), Kotchasit (2006), and Janhom (2011), which reported nouns as the most common word class in English–Thai code-mixing studies.

In the context of Korean pop songs, the prevalence of English interjections likely reflects their ease of use and their effectiveness in energizing the lyrics. These exclamatory words contribute to the lively atmosphere of songs and are especially useful for engaging listeners. Verbs, ranking second in frequency, serve to highlight or intensify actions within the lyrics, aligning with the dynamic themes commonly found in K-pop.

The use of nouns, while not as frequent as interjections or verbs, adds to the playfulness of the lyrics. Given that lyrics are a hybrid of written and spoken forms, often enhanced by rhythm, melody, and instrumental accompaniment, nouns in English may be chosen for their playful or catchy quality. This characteristic use of nouns supports the notion that K-pop lyrics are crafted not just for semantic meaning but also for musical effect.

5.1.3 Motivations for English Code-Switching in K-Pop

The findings suggested that code-switching and the incorporation of English elements in K-pop are largely driven by marketing strategies. English phrases, particularly catchy hooks, could make songs more memorable and appealing to international audiences. Simple, easily understood English words contribute to the accessibility and catchiness of the songs, enhancing their global reach.

Moreover, the primary target audience for K-pop includes teenagers and young adults, who are often familiar with basic English expressions. The use of English aligns with their preferences for trendy, globally connected content. Additionally, English words often fit the rhyme and rhythm of the music better than Korean, due to their brevity and flexibility, making them an attractive choice for songwriters.

Beyond stylistic considerations, English words are sometimes chosen for their ability to convey deeper meanings succinctly or to align more naturally with the song's melody. However, the researchers recognize that language alone does not guarantee international success. Other crucial factors include rhythm, melody, performance, and the overall image of the artists.

5.2 Conclusion

This study concluded that intra-sentential code-switching is the most prevalent form of code-switching in ATEEZ's songs. Songwriters often embedded English words or phrases within Korean sentences, seamlessly blending languages to enhance the lyrical flow. Tag-switching ranked second, typically involving exclamatory expressions or brief English insertions for emphasis and stylistic flair. Inter-sentential switching was the least common, likely due to the challenges of maintaining grammatical coherence and rhythmic alignment in songs.

The frequent use of English interjections reflects their role in energizing the music and fostering listener engagement. Verbs serve to amplify action, while nouns contribute to playful

and memorable lyrical content. This pattern underscores the integration of language with musical elements such as rhythm and melody, shaping the overall aesthetic of K-pop.

Moreover, the study highlights the strategic use of English in K-pop as a tool for global marketing and audience connection. Songwriters leverage English expressions for their brevity, expressiveness, and compatibility with musical composition, thus broadening their appeal to international audiences. Nevertheless, the research acknowledges that language is only one facet of K-pop's global success, with other elements like melody, rhythm, and performance playing equally vital roles.

An important observation from this study is the prevalence of natural sound imitations in the lyrics, such as animal sounds or instrumental effects. These features, not fully addressed by existing frameworks, suggest the need for expanded analytical models that incorporate non-lexical elements in musical texts.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Building on these findings, future research could explore the functional roles of English code-switching in a broader range of K-pop genres or among newer generations of artists, such as those in the fifth generation of K-pop. Comparative studies across different genres or artists may reveal evolving patterns or new functions of code-switching.

Additionally, researchers could examine the impact of English usage on audience engagement using measurable indicators, such as trends in YouTube viewership before and after song releases. Investigating other forms of Korean entertainment could also provide a more comprehensive understanding of English's influence in Korean pop culture.

Authors

Nawat Sriautarawong A fourth-year undergraduate student majoring in English at Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science, Kasetsart University.

Napapach Wattanapanich A fourth-year undergraduate student majoring in English at Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science, Kasetsart University.

Tanaporn Chokkeaw A fourth-year undergraduate student majoring in English at Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science, Kasetsart University.

Wisut Jarunthawatchai Assistant Professor at Department of English, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science, Kasetsart University.

References

Amornsupornsart, P., & Chitladaphitak, R. (2004). **A study of English–Thai code-mixing in Thai stars** [Unpublished master's thesis, National Institute of Development Administration].

Auer, P. (2004). A postscript: Code-switching and social identity. **Journal of Pragmatics**, *37*, 403–410.

Berliana, A. D., & Anjarningsih, H. Y. (2022). "Such a good night": Analyses of Korean-English code-switching and music-video comments of ASTRO's songs. **Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics**, 12(2), 293–307. https://doi.org/10.21009/ijal.12.2.293

Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Leech, G. (2002). **Longman student grammar of spoken and written English**. Pearson Education.

Bokamba, E. G. (1988). Code-mixing, language variation, and linguistic theory: Evidence from Bantu languages. **Lingua**, 76, 21–52.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). **Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches** (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Crystal, D. (1987). **The Cambridge encyclopedia of language** (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Daoh, N. (2016). **An analysis of code-switching in the lyrics of Bird Thongchai McIntyre's songs** [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim].

Gardner-Chloros, P. (2009). **Code-switching**. Cambridge University Press.

González, G. (1989). Review of *Bilingualism: Basic principles* by H. Baetens Beardsmore. **Studies in Second Language Acquisition**, 11(1), 92–94.

Hamers, J. F., & Blanc, M. H. A. (2000). **Bilinguality and bilingualism** (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Hoffman, C. (1991). **An introduction to bilingualism**. Longman.

Hymes, D. (1971). Ways of speaking. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), **Explorations in the ethnography of speaking** (pp. 433–451). Cambridge University Press.

Janhom, W. (2011). **English–Thai code-mixing in Thai health magazine** [Master's project, Srinakharinwirot University]. http://thesis.swu.ac.th

Jocelin, E., & Tryana, T. (2019). Code-mixing and code-switching in a Korean-song lyric. **Lexeme: Journal of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics**, 1(2). https://doi.org/10.32493/ljlal.v1i2.5127

Kannaovakun, P. (2001). **The mixing of English and Thai in Thai television programs: Characteristics, attitudes, perceptions, and motivations** [Master's thesis]. http://elibrary.trf.or.th

Kotchasit, T. (2006). **Code-mixing in Thai radio programs** [Master's thesis, Chiang Mai University]. http://tdc.thailis.or.th/tdc

Lauren, Y. R. C. (2018). **The commodification of English in K-pop: Globalisation and multiple markets** [Doctoral dissertation, National University of Singapore].

Lawrence, C. B. (2010). The verbal art of borrowing: Analysis of English borrowing in Korean pop songs. **Asian Englishes**, 13(2), 42–63. https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2010.10801379

Likhitphongsathorn, T., & Sappapan, P. (2012). **A study of English code-mixing and code-switching in Thai pop songs** [Master's thesis, Thammasat University]. https://digital.library.tu.ac.th/tu_dc/frontend/Info/item/dc:94956

Margaretta, W. E., & Rangkuti, R. (2024). Korean–English code mixing and code switching of NewJeans's song. **Bahtera: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra**, 23(1), 111–126. https://doi.org/10.21009/bahtera.231.10

McCormick, K. (1995). Convergence in Cape Town. In R. Mesthrie (Ed.), **Language and social history: Studies in South African sociolinguist**ics (pp. 193–211). David Philip Publishers.

McLaughlin, B. (1984). **Second-language acquisition in childhood: Preschool children** (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Muysken, P. (2000). **Bilingual speech: A typology of code-mixing**. Cambridge University Press.

Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). **Social motivations for code-switching: Evidence from Africa**. Clarendon Press.

Nasution, A. R. S. (2021). Identifikasi permasalahan penelitian. **ALACRITY: Journal of Education**, 1(2), 13–19.

Nyman, K. R. (2012). **English influence on Japanese popular music: A case study of language contact** [Master's thesis, University of Eastern Finland] https://erepo.uef.fi/handle/123456789/11055

Patton, M. Q. (2002). **Qualitative research and evaluation methods** (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Pedraza, P. (1978). **Ethnographic observations of language use in El Barrio** [Unpublished manuscript].

Preechaamornkul, T. (2005). **Code-mixing of English and Thai in Thai television music programs** [Master's thesis, Chiang Mai University]. http://tdc.thailis.or.th/tdc

Poplack, S. (1980). "Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español": Toward a typology of code-switching. **Linguistics**, 18(7–8), 581–618.

Poplack, S. (2000). **Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en Español: Toward a typology of code-switching**. Routledge.

Riehl, C. M. (2005). Code-switching in bilinguals: Impacts of mental processes and language awareness. In J. Cohen, K. T. McAlister, K. Rolstad, & J. MacSwan (Eds.), *ISB4:* **Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism** (pp. 1945–1959). Cascadilla Press.

Romano, A. (2018). How K-pop became a global phenomenon. *Vox.* https://www.vox.com/culture/2018/2/16/16915672/what-is-kpop-history-explained

Rusli, W. N. S. W., Shaari, A. H., Zainuddin, S. Z., Shi, N. L., & Amin, A. S. (2018). Intra- and inter-sentential code-switching phenomena in modern Malay songs. **3L: The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies**, 24(3), 184–205.

Samingkaew, N. (2001). **Code-mixing in Thai daily entertainment news** [Master's thesis, Thammasat University].

Sarkar, M., & Winer, L. (2006). Multilingual code-switching in Quebec rap: Poetry, pragmatics and performativity. **International Journal of Multilingualism**, 3(3), 173–192. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790710608668318

Sea, A. (2018). **Types and motivations of Korean to English code-switching in Taeyeon's album My Voice song lyrics** [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Sanata Dharma].

Sugiyono. (2011). **Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D**. Alfabeta.

Wardhaugh, R. (2000). **An introduction to sociolinguistics** (4th ed.). Blackwell Publishers.