

**The Neologism Trend in the Korean Context: An Investigation into Attitudes
Towards “Konglish”**

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Abstract

English is an international language as known as the lingua franca used by native speakers of other languages all over the world. These native speakers of other languages use English as their common contact language for communication, historically due to political and commercial purposes. As for nowadays, other than solely for political and economic reasons, English is also considered a soft power for an individual as well as a country to develop and enhance its cultural and commercial statuses. Meanwhile, English’s immergence into different countries for years has been posing significant influences on these countries’ native languages themselves. Besides regions with a closer geographical relationship with English’s origin, Asian countries also have also been interacting with English under the implications of industrialization and globalization. Still, unlike several recognized varieties of new Englishes, there are types of spoken Englishes that are still regarded as non-legitimate Englishes, sometimes referred as emerging varieties of English. To name but a few, Japanese English, Hong Kong English, and Korean English are some instances of these emerging varieties of English.

As an increasing number of Hong Kong people are starting to learn South Korean in recent years, they may find some loanwords originated from English may help as English is Hongkongers’ second official language. While “Konglish” is characterized by its abundance of loanwords, it is still often stigmatized as wrong or bad English. To understand the reasons behind this phenomenon, this study aims at investigating into the blooming trend of neologism in the form of adapting/ nativizing English loanwords into the South Korean by looking into the origin and recent usage of English loanwords in South Korea along with analyzing the attitudes towards this variety of English as known as “Konglish”. Hence, this study hopes to discuss as well whether people’s attitudes towards “Konglish” pose any influences on the development of neologism and more broadly “Konglish” as a whole.

Reflection

After four years as an English major in the CUHK, I have acquired a wide range of knowledge concerning the interpretation, appreciation, and investigation of the English language and this capstone allows me to conclude a large part of it. I have been able to put to use the knowledge and skills I have learnt from previous courses and investigate into loanwords development in South Korea characterized with its growing popularity and of personal interest. It was eye-opening researching and interviewing people to study the engaging neologism trend, especially when I am born and raised in Hong Kong with a similar phenomenon of neologisms. In hope that this capstone project sheds light on the phenomenon of neologism in Korea and how people from both Hong Kong and Korea react to it, I hope to take this opportunity and thank my supervisor for this capstone project – Professor Hansen Edwards for her constant guidance and support throughout the course of the research.