

Evaluating English Loanwords and Their Usage for Professional Translation, Focusing on News Texts

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Abstract

As globalization has accelerated, the use of English loanwords is increasing in South Korea. In this paper, we have analyzed news stories from four Korean quality newspapers-Chosun Ilbo, Dong-A Ilbo, KyungHyang Sinmun, and Chung-Ang Ilbo to investigate the usage of English loanwords in news texts. Thirty-eight news stories on life, politics, business and IT were collected from the four newspapers and then analyzed based on the five types of loanwords-Direct, Mixed Code Combination, Clipping and Neologism and Double Notation, partly following Lee's and Rudiger's classification. As a result, the followings were revealed: first, the use of the category Direct was overwhelming the others with 90%, indicating that English loanwords were not translated from its source language and introduced into Korean directly with little modification; second, the use of English loanwords was significantly higher in the sections of business and IT than in other sectors, implying that English loanwords function in a similar way as a lingua franca does within those fields. Furthermore, the linguistic trends can provide a basic guide for translators to make an informed decision between the use of English loanwords and its translated Korean version in English-into Korean translation.

Keywords: *English Loanwords, Korean, Translation, Lexicons in News Texts, Lingua Franca*

1. INTRODUCTION

There have been an increasing number of loanwords in our daily life in Korea. Loanwords are words adopted by the speakers of one language from another language. This is one of common phenomena across countries. However, as globalization has become predominant, more loanwords are introduced in other languages globally. In particular, loanwords from English as an international language are widely used in most countries. South Korea is not an exception. English loanwords are pervasive in South Korea. We often encounter the English loanwords. So, we closely analyzed Korean texts of thirty-eight news stories from four qualities newspapers in order to examine the usage and distribution of the English loanwords. The news texts were chosen because the language of news stories use a standard language to the extent that they are used for language education[1]. This can be supported by van Dijk (1989)'s statement that the language of the media function is clear and concise and functions as a means of influencing the perception of the population and make them understand a certain idea[2]. News stories on life, politics, business and IT sectors were collected and analyzed based on the categorical classifications of English loanwords. Moreover, a thorough analysis of

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the usage of English loanwords might help translators to make a choice between English loanwords and their Korean version, in translating texts from the source language to the target language.

2. ENGLISH LOANWORDS

Loanwords (or borrowed words) are words coming from one language and then incorporated into another language's lexicon list. These words are often pronounced in the same way they are pronounced in their original language. That is, they aren't translated from the original language, but during the process, lexicons usually undergo some changes such as phonetic, phonological or morphological changes. Among them, this paper takes a close look at the morphological modifications of English loanwords only, because such modifications are manifest in written texts. The followings show the categories of English loanword which are introduced into Korean language (Kim, 2012, Rudiger 2017)[3][4]. In the following examples, syllables are separated by hyphens and the pronunciation of each word is shown in italics.

- | | |
|------------|--|
| (1) Direct | a. <i>o-ren-ji</i> (오렌지; from English 'orange' [fruit])
b. <i>dei-ta</i> (데이터; from English 'data') |
| (2) MCC | a. <i>gam-ja-chip</i> (감자칩: Korean for 'potato' +English 'chip'=potato chip)
b. <i>an-jeon-belt</i> (안전벨트: Korean for 'safety'+ English 'belt'=safety belt) |
| (3) CLIP | a. <i>in-fra</i> (인프라; Clipping of English 'infrastructure')
b. <i>sel-ka</i> (셀카; Clipping of English 'self-camera' to <i>sel-ka</i>) |
| (4) NEO | a. <i>a-i-syo-pig</i> (아이쇼핑; from English 'eye shopping'= 'window shopping')
b. <i>baek-mi-reo</i> (백미러; from English 'back mirror' = 'rearview mirror') |

The data above show the four categories in English loanwords. The first 'Direct' denotes that there is little or a little modification between English loanword and its original English in pronunciation and meaning. The second 'Mixed-Code Combination(MCC) refers to a compound word which consists of one Korean word and one English word. The third 'Clipping' refers to the shortening of a longer word, often reducing it to one or two syllables. The last Neologism (NEO) refers to the process creating a new word based on the part of the meaning associated with the original English word. As shown above, the window shopping refers to the activity of spending time looking at the goods on sale in stores without any intention to buy them. But here instead of rearview, the Korean word *a-i* (*eye*) is incorporated to create a new word called *a-i-syo-ping*.

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper aims to figure out the usage of English loanwords in South Korea by looking at the usage of the loanwords based on the news texts. So, in order to investigate the usage of English loanwords in a standard language community, a total of 38 news articles from four quality newspapers-*Dong-a Ilbo*, *Chung-Ang Ilbo*, *Kyung-Hyang Sinmun*, and *Chosun Ilbo* were chosen. But, assuming that globalization has affected the use of loanwords, we divided news articles into two categories. The first is news stories that focused on domestic events, and the second is news stories that are connected to the international community. For the former, news stories on life and politics and for the latter, news stories on business and IT were selected. In the selection process, news stories dealing with a similar or the same topic as well as with almost equal length of news stories were selected. So, a total number of words in each newspaper were around 2500 words. Then they were analyzed partly in terms of Lee's (2011) and Rudiger's(2018) classification[5] [6].

4. FINDING AND ANALYSIS

With the evolving outlook for globalization, the use of loanwords in everyday life is on the rise and it becomes common to see English loanwords on news texts. So, this study aims to investigate how frequently

English loanword are used in news texts by looking at news texts in the four sectors: life, business, IT, and politics. Here, IT includes machines manufacturing. As shown in Table 1, the number of news articles per sector from each newspaper was almost same with two or three.

Table 1. News sectors and word count

Newspaper	Word Counts/ News Sectors (number)
Chng-Ang Ilbo	2554/ Life (2), Politics (2), IT (2), Business (2)
Dong-A Ilbo	2512/ Life (2), Politics (3), IT (3), Business (3)
Kyunghwang	2572/ Life (2), Politics (2), IT (2), Business (2)
Chosun-Ilbo	2534/ Life (3), Politics (2), IT (2), Business (3)
Total	9281/ Life (9), Politics (9), IT (9), Business (10)

Table 2 shows the English loanwords shown in the news stories. Here, the sectors of ‘Life’ and ‘Politics’ reported domestic news stories. For example, the news stories on the general election in April 10, 2024, South Korea were included in the category ‘Politics’ and in the category ‘Life’, news stories on the public servant’s exodus, complaints, and the online crime were included. On the other hand, news coverages related with e-commerce business were included in the ‘Business’ sector and the ‘IT’ sector includes news stories related with international transactions such as e-commerce business, EV manufacturing, High Bandwidth Memory.

Table 2. Loanword category and expression

Category	Expressions
Direct	<i>lend-mark</i> : 랜드마크 from English ‘network), <i>me-il</i> : 메일 from English ‘mail) <i>ka-te-go-ri</i> :카테고리 from English ‘category’),
CLIP	<i>in-fra</i> (from English ‘infrastructure),
MCC	<i>rou-ket-bae-song</i> (from English ‘robot + Korean ‘delivery)=fast delivery <i>che-ting-bang</i> (from English ‘chatting’ + Korean ‘room) =chatting room
NEO	<i>haen-deu-pon</i> (from English ‘hand’ +English ‘phone)=cell phone <i>hwaiting</i> from English ‘fighting’ =do well! cheer up!

As shown above, the four types of English loanwords were easily found in news stories. However, except for the four categories, both Direct and its corresponding Korean word are displaced for specific entities at the same time, which is so called ‘them Double Notation’. The newly emerged category refers to the use of double notation by writing loanwords and showing Korean in parentheses.

(5) Double Notation

- a. feorst-mu-beor (선도자) = ‘first mover’ in English
- b. pul-fil-meont (통합문류) sen-teor = fulfillment center (FC)
- c. bellyu (가치) = value

As shown in (5) both notations were displayed at the same time. It is assumed that they undergo the process of adaptation of loanwords. That is, both notions coexist for a certain time until all the adaptation process is completed. So, in this paper the Double Notation is included as the last category in the classification of English loanwords. Given this, as shown in Table 3, it is clearly shown that the category Direct is most frequently used with 73 (76%), followed by MCC (9.4%), Double Notation (6.3), Clipping (4.2%) and NEO (1.2%). In particular, the category Direct is mostly used in Business and IT sectors.

Table 3. Distribution of loanword category

Sec./Category	Direct	Clipping	MCC	NEO	Double Notation
Life	9 (9.5%)	1 (1.2%)	5(5.2%)	1(1.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Politics	2 (2.2%)	1 (1.2%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1 (1.2%)
Business	34(36%)	3 (3.1%)	4(4.2%)	0(0.0%)	4 (4.2%)
IT	28(29%)	1 (1.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1 (1.2%)
	73(76%)	4 (4.2%)...	9(9.4%)	1(1.2%)	6 (6.3%)

Among the five categories, it is clearly shown that the category ‘Direct’ is most frequently used 73 times (76%) in news articles in each newspaper, even though the degrees differ per newspaper. Note that the frequencies of English loanword categories are not compared in terms of newspapers between newspapers because that is issue beyond the scope of this research. This hold true when we look at the distribution of the loanwords in terms of newspapers, as in Table 4.

Table 4. Distribution of loanword category

	Chosun	Chung-Ang	Kyunghayng	Dong-A
Direct	22(23%)	23(24%)	17(17.8%)	20(21%)
Clipping	2(2.1%)	1 (1.2%)	1(1.2%)	0(0.0%)
Mixed	0(0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4(4.2%)	0(0.0%)
CC	0(0.0%)	1 (1.2%)	1(1.2%)	0(0.0%)
DN	2(2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1(1.2%)	2(2.1%)
	26(27%)...	25(26%)	24(25%)	20(21%)

Here it is noteworthy to mention that the prevalence of the first category Direct is markedly shown especially in business and IT sector. Even more than English loanword under the category is displayed as shown below in the news story titled ‘GTP stores wither within two months’ (Nam, March, 20, 2024)[7]. Now take a look at following examples. The loanwords *sto-eor* (English word ‘store’), *chet-bot* (English word ‘chatbot’) and *web-sait* (English word for web site) in (6a) and *tre-fik* (English word for traffic), *lonchig* (English word for launching) in (6b) are predominantly used in South Korea society, even though the loanwords *sto-eor* and *lonchig* have their corresponding Korean words, *ga-gae* (가게) and *ge-si* (개시), respectively.

(6) a. GTP 스토어에 올라온 챗봇을 소개하는 웹사이트의 방문객수는 51 만명으로 떨어졌다.

Visitors surfing the web site showcasing the *chatbot* on the *GTP store* dropped to 510000

b. GTP 스토어의 트래픽 추이는 정식으로 론칭한 1 월 이후 급격히 떨어졌다.

Traffics of the *GPR stores* has dropped dramatically since its official *launch*

Here, the above findings come up with two research questions: The first is why English loanwords are so common in Korean news stories, even though there are absolutely corresponding Korean words; The second is why English loanwords are most frequently used in business and IT sectors. As for the first question, there might be several reasons for the prevalence of English loanwords. Tranter (1997) mentions that required education of English language since 1970s leads Koreans to use English outside the classroom setting[8]. This long-standing tradition of education in South Korea is part of the reasons why parents are still so obsessed with teaching their children English. Another reason can be that the socio-economic prestige given to English and English proficiency may be one of the main drivers for rapid adaptation of English loanwords

to Korean language (Shin 2007)[9]. The English loanwords are also often used in commercial advertisements, or in news headlines. This is closely linked with the statement that English has the connotation of being ‘cool,’ ‘stylish,’ and ‘modern’ (Lee, 2006)[10]. That is, the connotation leads advertisers to use the English loanwords in their advertisement as a commercial strategy to attract more people to watch their advertisement. Similarly, the use of English loanwords in the news headlines can be similarly explained in that they were used to get more attention from news consumers (Park, 2023)[11].

The second question can be partly answered in terms of business ties. As globalization accelerates, doing business only domestically poses a threat for the survival in the business world. In this situation, the use of English loanwords just like a lingua franca can become common for effective communication between international traders (Li & others, 2022)[12]. So, we can easily assume that during the trading process in business and IT sectors, as English has been commonly used, its English loanwords has been naturally adapted to their mother language, Korean. Another reason is that some English words used in the sectors cannot be translated into its Korean version because of the lack of their corresponding Korean words. This is possible that since some areas in those sectors are recently developed at a fast rate, Korean words corresponding to the English used in those areas are not yet created. Such words as *tre-fik* (English word for ‘traffic’ in the IT sector”) and *chet-bot* (English word ‘chatbot’) are the cases.

5. ENGLISH LOANWORDS AND PROFESSIONAL TRANSLATION

English loanwords have been frequently used, especially in translating English texts of business and IT sectors into Korean versions. For translators, this arises an issue of the choice between English loanwords and its corresponding Korean words, because both words are commonly used. Translation involved the process to translate a source language into a target language. The followings are the examples which have proper terms in both languages.

Table 4. English loan word/Korean words

Words	English Loan word	Korean	Preference
battery	Be-ter-ri	Geon-geon-zj	Enligh Loanword
business	Bi-z-nis	Sa-eop	English Loanword
Solution	So-lyu-sheon	he-geol	English Loanword
e-commerce	i-keo-meor-se	Jeon-ja-sang-ge-re	English Loanword
mobility	Mo-bi-li-ti	i-dong-su-dan	English Loanword
machine	meoshin	gi-ge	English Loanword
link	link	gyeong-ro	English Loanword
node	noud	seon	English Loanword
socket	so-ket	... dan-ja	English Loanword

As shown above, a pair of words represents English loanwords and their corresponding Korean words. Both are used almost in an equal number in the society. However, English loan words are much preferred in translation work. Paradoxically, it looks much natural to use the English loanwords even though there are proper Korean words corresponding to the loanwords. Then this might require translators to make a wise choice between English loanwords and its corresponding Korean words. However, if the English loanwords are commonly used only in people in those sectors, translators should incorporate the English loanwords into their translated work. Some might say that the higher adaptation of English loanwords in translation is good for translators in that it could reduce the translation workload. However, this can rather give additional burden on translators in that they have to make a choice between the two types of words, when their translation works are about business, IT, machine, and other professional works. In this sense, this can be a

measure a translator's capability for translation because using proper English loanwords instead of its corresponding Korean can show whether he has some exposure and specialty in those areas.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study is to explore the usage of English loanwords in Korean society. So, considering that language in news stories is the standard for language learning, we have analyzed the usage of English loanwords based on news stories. In particular, we have analyzed thirty-eight news stories on the four sections-life, politics, business and IT were analyzed from four Korean quality newspapers, *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, *KyungHyang Sinmun*, and *Chung-Ang Ilbo*. The frequencies of the English loanwords per sector were compared based on the five types of English loanwords-Direct, Mixed Code Combination, Clipping, Neologism and Double Notation. As a result, the analyses and careful examination show that the first category 'Direct' is highly frequently used in news texts, specially in business and IT sectors. This can imply that English loanwords function in the similar way as a lingua franca work in that they might be shared within those communities. Furthermore, this indicates that translators need to take it seriously in the usage of English loanwords business and IT-related document translation because the English loanwords are regarded as a norm in those fields with globalization accelerating more in the future.

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