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# A COMPARATIVE SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF K-POP BORROWINGS IN SPECIALIZED AND GENERAL ENGLISH REGISTERS

*Abstract: K-pop's evolution from a niche interest to a dominant global force has resulted in the creation of a specialized linguistic ecosystem. This paper investigates the semantic shifts that occur when general English lexical items are borrowed into specialized K-pop discourse. Utilizing Halliday's Register Theory and the concept of Semantic Fields, this paper analyzes the divergence between general English and the specialized K-pop register. It examines how the unique configuration of Field, Tenor, and Mode has necessitated a functional adaptation of the English lexicon. The study provides a detailed comparative semantic analysis of terms such as "idol", "bias", and "stan", demonstrating processes such as semantic broadening and amelioration. It will also be touched upon how K-pop register resolves lexical gaps through borrowing of Korean words such as "maknae", "noona", "oppa", etc., which have recently been integrated into the Oxford English Dictionary. Our findings suggest that the connection between these two languages is solely driven by cultural proximity that is further facilitated by social media platforms. Their intermixing pushes linguistic boundaries and ultimately showcases English's openness and ability to absorb, remap, and expand through cultural influences.*

*Keywords: K-pop, Register Theory, Semantic Fields, borrowing, semantic analysis*

## 1. Introduction

The global music landscape was largely caught off guard by the rise of K-pop, a force that has since reshaped and redefined the industry through its innovative, hybrid identity. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, K-pop – short for Korean popular music – is a genre originating in South Korea that seamlessly fuses

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traditional Korean elements with diverse Western influences like pop, hip-hop, rock, R&B, etc. However, its impact goes well beyond the music, as it is also celebrated for its intricate choreography, cinematic music videos, and an intensely loyal global fan base. Another distinguishing trait of this success is the *idol system* – a highly structured model of training that meticulously develops performers into the world-class artists we see today.

However, K-pop's success did not happen overnight. Since the early 2010s, the genre has been steadily carving its path from a regional trend to a global powerhouse, one that not only dominates the music industry but also leaves a lasting mark on mainstream culture and language. The ecosystem is often referred to as the *Hallyu wave* (Korean: 한류), or simply the *Korean Wave*. It describes the surging popularity of South Korean culture, which first gained momentum among Chinese youth before spreading rapidly across East and Southeast Asia (Lee and Nornes, 2012: p.3).

The newfound influence of Korean culture is generally categorized into three major *Hallyu waves*, each representing a distinct era of its global expansion. The *first Hallyu wave* (1990-2000) was primarily driven by the export of Korean dramas and movies; however, it also laid the foundation for modern K-pop with the debut of the pioneering group Seo Taiji and Boys. The second *Hallyu wave* (2001-2011) is often called the *Golden Age of K-pop*, as the focus shifted from television to music, producing iconic groups and idols who dominated the Asian market. Finally, the *third Hallyu wave* served as the ultimate turning point, utilizing digital platforms to help K-pop break through regional boundaries and conquer the global music scene.

This wave produced two of the most influential K-pop groups in history—BTS and Blackpink. They were not just game changers for the music industry; their impact spread into almost every corner of mainstream culture, from fashion and skincare to global politics and the economy. Their massive success has effectively turned South Korea into one of the world's most formidable soft powers, wielding cultural influence on a truly global scale.

Because K-pop frequently uses English as a strategic tool to reach international audiences, it has created a unique linguistic ecosystem. With this space, certain English words undergo semantic shifts, taking on meanings quite different from their standard use. Terms like *Idol*, *Bias*, and *Stan* have long-standing definitions in everyday English, yet within K-pop fandoms, they have been completely repurposed. Without a clear understanding of these semantic boundaries, communication between the *specialized register* of the fandom and the *general register* of the public can lead to linguistic confusion and misunderstandings.

To analyze this phenomenon, this paper uses Halliday's Register Theory (1978) alongside *Semantic Field Theory*. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a *register* is 'a variety or level of usage, especially as determined by social context and characterized by the range of vocabulary, pronunciation, syntax, etc., used by a speaker or writer in particular circumstances.' On the other hand, semantic fields represent a set of words that share a related meaning within or across different contexts (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d.). By applying these frameworks, the primary goal of this paper is to compare the behavior and meaning of specific terms within K-pop subcontexts against their usage in general English.

This paper argues that the specialized K-pop register does not simply adopt English words; instead, it subjects general English terms to processes of semantic narrowing and amelioration. Through a comparative analysis, this study will demonstrate how these linguistic adaptations are essential for maintaining the distinct social identity of K-pop fandoms.

## 2. The Linguistic Ecosystems of K-pop and General English

Both K-pop and general English possess distinct and complex linguistic ecosystems that constantly interact with one another. This section of the study will explore these differences and the unique ways in which these two registers overlap and influence each other.

### 2.1. The Historical Flexibility of the English Lexicon: Borrowing Patterns

English has always been remarkably flexible and adaptable, a fact reflected in the estimate that nearly 80% of its lexicon is derived from other languages (Dictionary.com, 2018). One major reason for this fluidity is the absence of a formal academy to regulate the language; another is English's established status as a global lingua franca. Consequently, English frequently adopts foreign loanwords to fill lexical gaps when there are no equivalents of specific cultural concepts.

Brinton states that the majority of new English words from word-formation processes that involve combining existing morphemes (2000:p.85). Nevertheless, it should be noted that among all these word-formation processes, the most productive are derivation and compounding. Derivation creates new lexical units by adding derivational affixes (prefixes and suffixes) to a base word (Brinton, 2000:p.86), while compounding combines two or more independent lexical bases into a new lexical

unit (Brinton, 2000:p.93). However, English has heavily relied on borrowing to expand its vocabulary, and this dates back through Old English, Middle English, and early Modern English to Late Modern English (Durkin, 2014:p.7). This means that words are taken from other languages and phonologically, morphologically, and semantically adapted to integrate into English (Nordquist, 2025). These words are also known as borrowings or loanwords.

Therefore, it is not surprising that English is open to linguistic exchange with the Korean language, more precisely with K-pop niche terminology. As previously stated, K-pop has not only spread its influence to the global music industry but to the language as well, and with English being the global language, it is influenced by K-pop the most. Even the Oxford English Dictionary officially recognized South Korea's rapid cultural influence and added many new Korean K-pop and culture-related terms, such as *aegyo*, *manhwa*, *daebak*, *oppa*, *noona*, *unnie*, *skinship*, etc. and thereby confirming the influence of the Korean Wave (Salazar, 2021), that being said, the influx of K-pop registers into the English lexicon emphasizes the 'perilousness of elusive guard rails' in traditional linguistic standards (Muhić, 2024). This fluidity showcases English's ability to assimilate and transform foreign concepts in a way that is digestible for global audiences.

## 2.2. The K-pop Linguistic Patterns: Borrowing Back

Just as English borrows words from K-pop, K-pop likewise borrows from the English language, often repurposing words to suit its intricate subcontexts. Since K-pop's beginnings, artists have mixed English words within Korean lyrics; however, following K-pop's global breakthrough and the expansion of its fanbase around the world, English has become a crucial tool for connecting South Korean popular culture with predominantly Western mainstream popular culture. This shift has also stirred up linguistic changes in how English is used in song lyrics. Whereas sporadic, random usage of English words was once used merely as a hook to catch attention, following K-pop's global success, English has become more frequently merged with Korean lyrics and used even in the verses (Schneider, 2023). All of this has encouraged K-pop to borrow back from the English language, giving birth to what Yeo (2018:p.108) calls 'K-pop English' or 'non-native-like English.' On the surface, these words resemble the original English words; nonetheless, they have been totally redefined, and their meanings have changed significantly to represent K-pop fandom culture.

### 3. Method: Defining the Analytical Registers – A Framework for Comparison

In order to analyze the linguistic differences between K-pop terminology and standard usage, this study establishes a comparative framework based on the concept of registers. As stated earlier, a register is a variety of language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d.). To pinpoint these differences and examine how meaning shifts, this study will delve into the concepts of the *general English register* and the *specialized K-pop register*.

#### 3.1. The General English Register

The general English register is frequently defined as the standard, non-specialized vocabulary used in everyday professional and social contexts. It encompasses different aspects of the language, from accents, idioms, and slang to both spoken and written forms used in everyday situations (Biyani, 2023). The main goal and trait of the general English register is accessibility; it is crucial that most speakers can understand, or at least infer, the meaning of a word, regardless of their specific interests or hobbies. This type of register can be polysemous and broader or more vague than its specialized counterparts. For example, the word *pupil* can refer to both 'a child or young person in school' and 'the contractile aperture in the iris of the eye' (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.).

Furthermore, because the general English register is regulated by official dictionaries, such as the Cambridge Dictionary, the Oxford English Dictionary, and Merriam-Webster, new words are not as easily accepted into the standard lexicon. This contrasts with the specialized K-pop register, where terms can emerge and disappear rapidly alongside passing music trends.

#### 3.2. The Specialized K-pop Register

A specialized register, as opposed to a general one, describes a variety of language used in specific domains, professions, or communities. It is characterized by unique and specific vocabulary, jargon, and grammatical structures (Basturkmen, 2025).

Specifically, the K-pop specialized register refers to specialized terms, in both Korean and English, used to describe niche K-pop contexts and idol culture. This register is primarily used within K-pop fandoms among fans who share the same passion for Korean popular culture and music (Evans, 2022). Contrary to the general

English register, this variety focuses solely on a smaller group of people expressing their identities through mutual hobbies and interests; consequently, this terminology is frequently unknown to the general public outside of the K-pop community. As Muhić (2025) argues, human cognition operates through 'reality-carving perception mechanisms' that influence how cultural phenomena are deciphered. In the context of the K-pop register, these mechanisms allow fans to convert standard English words into specialized meanings that the general public cannot understand.

However, the K-pop specialized register sometimes overlaps with the general English context. More precisely, it often fills lexical gaps for concepts that do not have a defined meaning in general English. For instance, a concept such as a *bias wrecker* simply does not exist in general English, and its meaning is acquired entirely from K-pop specialized terminology. Another important aspect of this fandom culture is its influence on social media platforms, which are often used to propel this type of vocabulary to the broader masses through social media engagement. Therefore, this register can easily reach non-K-pop fans, as K-pop fans are quite passionate and dedicated to their favorite groups' or idols' success (Williams, 2021).

## 4. Theoretical Framework: Register Theory and Semantic Field Theory

This study is grounded in two linguistic theories: *Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics*, specifically *Register Theory*, and *Lexical Semantics*, focusing on *Semantic Fields*. These theories allow us to categorize the K-pop lexicon not as incorrect English, but as a structured, functional adaptation.

### 4.1. Register Theory

Halliday's *Register Theory* describes register as a language variation within certain contexts and situations; the main focus of this theory is to discover which factors govern these variations (Halliday, 1978:p.32). In order to determine these factors, he identified three variables: *field*, *tenor*, and *mode*.

*Field* refers to the subject matter and what is happening in the discourse; specifically, what activities are taking place and what the language is being used to discuss. *Tenor* focuses on the relationship between the participants of the discourse, as well as their status and roles. *Mode*, on the other hand, pertains to the role of the language in the discourse—whether it is spoken, written, planned, or spontaneous. It focuses on how communication flows during the discourse (Halliday, 1978:p.62).

#### 4.1.1. K-pop through the lenses of Register Theory

As the K-pop register is considered a language variant, it can also be analyzed through these three variables:

##### (1) Field

Compared to general English, where the field is broad and covers many diverse topics, the field in the K-pop register refers to the highly structured ecosystem of South Korean music industry. This includes nuances such as the idol training system, promotional periods, and digital charting. Due to the technical nature of this field, it is often considered a technical register or industry; this is one of the reasons why certain words shift their meanings to match the dynamics of K-pop fandom culture. For example, the word *comeback* has two distinct meanings depending on whether it is used in the general English or K-pop specialized register.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, a *comeback* is 'a situation in which someone or something becomes popular, famous, or successful again after a period of being much less popular, etc.' It combines the verb *come*, which means 'to move toward something' or 'to move or journey to a vicinity with a specified purpose' (Merriam-Webster Dictionary) and the adverb *back*, meaning 'in, into, or towards a previous place or condition, or an earlier time' (Cambridge Dictionary). Still, *comeback* has been standardized in K-pop as a group's or an idol's new music release regardless of an actual hiatus because they do not have to be inactive for so much time to have a comeback. Comeback usually indicates a change in the concept and marks the new musical era of a group or an idol (KCC Supporters Blog, 2016).

##### (2) Tenor

Tenor in K-pop contexts refers to the relationships between participants, particularly fan-to-fan and fan-to-idol interactions. K-pop fandom relationships are built not only on solidarity and a mutual passion for an artist but also on unique parasocial interactions. These relationships are based on mutual respect; fans support their idols to help them reach the global stage, while idols showcase their gratitude through music and 'fanservice'.

Consequently, these relationships demand terminology that expresses intimacy, loyalty, and a sense of belonging. That is why we again witness general English words being redefined. Using words like *bias* instead of 'favorite member' creates a

sense of familiarity and camaraderie among fans. However, this terminology often excludes outsiders who do not share the same linguistic code.

### (3) Mode

As stated above, mode refers to the channels of communication. In the case of K-pop, the primary method is digital. The K-pop register is almost exclusively digital, relying heavily on social media platforms like TikTok, X, and YouTube. Due to character limits on these platforms, fans frequently use acronyms for group names, as well as memes and emojis, as primary means of communication. The digital nature accelerates the spread of the K-pop register among non-fans, slowly bridging the gap between the two registers. Additionally, the K-pop community is generally welcoming to newcomers, often taking time to explain the 'lore' and terminology to new fans (Yellowbrick, 2023).

## 4.2. Semantic Field Theory

Another theory of equal importance upon which this research is based is *Semantic Field Theory*. This theory was first proposed by numerous German and Swiss scholars, but it was primarily developed by Jost Trier (Lyons, 1977:p.250). Trier views words and their meanings as interrelated parts of a language and examines how lexemes are organized in relation to one another based on their semantic relationships (Lyons, 1977:p.267). This theory argues that words cannot be understood in isolation; instead, they must be observed in relation to other words within the same conceptual domain. Trier also posits that the relations between these lexemes evolve over time. He suggests that if the broadening of one lexeme occurs, its neighboring lexeme will experience narrowing. This implies that if one word's meaning shifts or if a new word is added, all neighboring words undergo certain adjustments to maintain the semantic balance (Lyons, 1977:p.252).

Taking all this into account, we can see how the K-pop specialized register has rearranged and remapped general English words, thereby creating its own semantic space where terms are defined based on K-pop's complex ecosystem. The most notable example is the word *stan*, which was coined by American rapper Eminem back in 2000; it was used in his song 'Stan' as a cautionary tale about a man whose obsession with his idol became suicidal. It has been debated that *stan* is a portmanteau of 'stalker' and 'fan'; regardless, it was primarily used to describe dangerously obsessed fans (Madden et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, K-pop has repurposed this word, and in the K-pop context, *stan* refers to a fan who is very passionately devoted to a K-pop group or idol, but not in an obsessive way but more as a symbol of respect, support, and admiration (Social Cat, 2025).

Still, as noted earlier, because we observe the K-pop community as a semantic field, when one word undergoes certain changes, neighboring words are also remapped. Hence, terms such as *soft stan*, *hard stan*, *multi-stan*, and *solo stan* have emerged as a result of the shifting meaning of the word *stan*. A soft stan refers to fans who are protective and appreciative of their favorite idols' wholesome traits, whereas a hard stan describes fans who view their idols in a more sexualized manner (Morin, 2019). Multi-stan, on the other hand, refers to a person who follows multiple K-pop groups or genres, in contrast to solo stan, who supports only one particular group or individual (The Idol Cast, n.d.).

Another important point Lyons (1977:p.236) argues is that, historically, cultures have borrowed from one another, and languages have naturally followed suit. By importing words from other languages, certain lexical gaps can be fulfilled. For instance, the word *maknae* has been imported into general English to fill specific gaps. First, culturally speaking, *maknae* means 'the young person in a family or group; (now) spec. the youngest member of a K-pop group' (Oxford English Dictionary). Since there is no single word in general English that serves as a direct counterpart, *maknae* fills this cultural gap. The second gap fulfilled is linguistic; the word *maknae* is often treated as an official position within the K-pop industry. Thus, upon entering the English semantic field, it settles alongside terms such as leader, vocalist, and a dancer, which describes the various roles held by members of a group (Brozovsky, 2026).

## 5. Comparative analysis: Case Studies in Register-Specific Semantics – Idol, Bias, Stan

This part of the research will dive deeper into a comparative analysis of specific words used in both the K-pop and general English registers. The main focus of this paper will be the analysis of the words *idol*, *bias*, and *stan* through the lens of the theories mentioned in the previous chapters. The researcher will also utilize internet articles from notable K-pop websites as a corpus to examine the semantic divergence and distance between these words, focusing on their usage in the general English register as opposed to the K-pop specialized register. Having already covered the

methodological and theoretical foundations of this research, the focal point of this chapter will be the application of these theories through practical examples.

Yet, it is important to emphasize once again that the main driving force behind these differences is the notion of semantic shift. According to Nordquist, semantic shift or semantic change refers to any change in the meaning of a word over a certain period of time (2025). There are different types of semantic shift, but we will focus on the two most common and represented ones within the Kpop register. The first one is *amelioration* – a type of process where words with negative connotation develop more positive meaning, for example: "nice" used to mean "foolish" before meaning "pleasant" (Nordquist, 2019), and the second one is *broadening* – a type of process where words get assigned more inclusive meanings than they used to have before, for example word "cool" has been broadened and used in more general contexts (Nordquist, 2020).

### 5.1. Case Study: Idol

In general English, *idol* refers to 'a person who is loved, admired, or respected a lot' or 'an object or picture that is worshipped as a god' (Cambridge Dictionary).

Nevertheless, in the K-pop context, *idol* refers to an artist in the K-pop industry who undergoes intense training in singing, dancing, etc., in order to become the best performer and entertainer (Toyryla, 2025).

The semantic shift the word *idol* went through is semantic *broadening* with a focus on cultural jargon. The word retained some of the original meaning because the idols in K-pop are admired and loved; however, the meaning is broadened and more specialized to suit the intricate cultural contexts of the K-pop music industry. *Idol* is not used to refer to other musicians and artists outside of K-pop, therefore, it is not a part of general English except for the already mentioned explanations stated by the English dictionaries:

' The *idol* was spotted attending the major American sporting event, making him one of the few K-Pop stars present this year. While many CARATs were thrilled to see Joshua at such a high-profile global event, online reactions quickly became divided.' (Koreaboo, 2026)

We can also notice that the word *idol* is only used as a noun in K-pop and has no forms, such as the verb *to idolize*, in general English. Also, the word *idol* is oftentimes preceded by the word 'K-pop' to avoid confusion among regular speakers of English:

'When most people think of *K-pop idols*, they picture impressive dance routines, catchy vocals, and rap skills. However, there's other musical talent among some *idols* that extends far beyond singing and dancing. Many of these *idols* possess exceptional skills in playing various instruments, adding a new dimension to their artistry' (Allkpop, 2025).

## 5.2. Case Study: Bias

As the Cambridge Dictionary states, *bias* can be used as a noun to describe 'the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because allowing personal opinions to influence your judgement' or as a verb 'to cause someone or something to have a bias'. The word *bias* in general English usually carries a negative meaning as it is often related to racial biases or some other types of politically based influences.

As noted, this word can be used as both a noun and a verb in general English register:

'Two recent controversies show how supposedly neutral journalists deny their biases. The Washington Post's factchecker gave Bernie Sanders a "mostly false" rating for claiming that there are half a million medical-related bankruptcies a year' (Robinson, 2019).

'Most people distrust the media, and most people are right. It's healthy to question what you're being told – that's the mark of an intelligent and independent populace. And the media in the United States are, in fact, "biased" in many ways' (Robinson, 2019).

In K-pop, however, *bias* refers to a favorite member of a K-pop group. Even though there is no set meaning, the closest one is 'favorite'. The term is used by both Korean and international fans (Fanlore, n.d.). In this case, *bias* has undergone amelioration as the meaning of bias in K-pop is more positive and not frowned upon within the community, as it is usually when used in general English. In comparison to the use in general English, where *bias* can act as both a noun and a verb, in K-pop, bias is solely used as a noun:

'Back on June 28, rapper Lee Young Ji finally met her K-pop *bias*, NCT's Mark! During her 'School Rapper' days, Lee Young Ji revealed that she was a fan of NCT, and that her favorite member was Mark. Even among NCT fans, Lee Young Ji is a well-known NCTzen herself!' (Allkpop, 2021).

### 5.3. Case Study: Stan

We briefly brushed upon the meaning of *stan* in Chapter 4. In general English, this word is oftentimes considered derogatory and it is used to refer to 'an extremely or excessively enthusiastic and devoted fan' (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

This word is a really interesting case, for it has gone through different semantic shifts. When it appeared for the first time in pop culture, it had a predominantly negative meaning and was used pejoratively to describe a delusional fan with unhealthy and stalkerish tendencies often bordering on harassment. Furthermore, during the 2010s, it became more naturalized and even leaned towards positive connotations as the term became synonymous with fandom culture in America. The most popular artists of this period, such as Justin Bieber, Lady Gaga, Beyonce, Nicki Minaj, etc., had the biggest fandoms who were so dedicated to them to the point of shifting the power dynamics in the music industry (Madden, et al., 2019).

Just as Muhić (2023) identifies a 'conceptualisation of personable villainy' where negative archetypes are reimagined through more sympathetic lenses, the K-pop register performs a similar semantic amelioration on terms such as *stan*. By shifting the conceptual focus from obsession to dedication, the register transforms a formerly negative meaning into a positive one that deeply reflects the K-pop fandom.

However, this word has undergone the process of amelioration, where the meaning of *stan* completely shifted and was stripped of its negative connotation. As stated previously, *stan* in K-pop describes an overly passionate and dedicated fan who supports their favorite K-pop group or idol.

*Stan* was originally used as a noun; however, in the K-pop community, it is used as both a noun and a verb:

'On April 9th, a post on an online forum gained attention for casting a question about solo stans. Originally titled, "I can never be a solo *stan*. So I'm intrigued by them.", an anonymous netizen wrote, "I always end up *stanning* the group even if I start *stanning* as a solo *stan* of that group – unless that group has a certain member that has ended up on society page in a newspaper"' (Allkpop, 2022).

### 6. Conclusion

It is a widely known fact that, among all languages, English is the most inclined and open to borrowing from other languages. However, English does not only absorb words; it transforms them to fill specific roles that general English cannot

accommodate. This study vividly showcases the evolution of the English language through its interaction with the global Hallyu phenomenon. K-pop's global breakthrough has affected many aspects of mainstream culture, and with English being the primary means of communication worldwide, it is susceptible to these changes as well.

Therefore, the main purpose of this paper was to conduct a comparative semantic analysis of the three most commonly used words in the K-pop contexts and examine how their meanings differ from those in general English. By applying Hallyday's register Theory, we have demonstrated that the divergence between the general English register and the specialized K-pop register is a functional adaptation driven by a shift in Field, Tenor, and Mode.

The main point of the analysis was to examine the semantic shifts that occur when the same words are used in two different contexts, as well as how K-pop rearranges semantic fields according to Semantic Field Theory. The remapping of semantic fields for terms such as idol, bias, and stan reveals that English is not a static set of rules, but a living system capable of absorbing and repurposing foreign concepts to fill specific lexical gaps. The remapping has been made possible by dedicated fans who navigate the technical complexities of the Korean music industry and possess the linguistic competence to use these terms properly within their required contexts. This process is further accelerated by digital media, which serves as the primary means of spreading these terms to the global stage, therefore shifting the geographical boundaries of linguistic contact.

One more pivotal factor is the official recognition of these terms by the Oxford English Dictionary. This recognition demonstrates that the K-pop specialized register is an essential and sophisticated sociolect that does not corrupt general English but rather enriches it. It reinforces how flexible, adaptable, and open the English language is, and how deserving it is of its status as a *lingua franca*.

The cornerstone of this research was, as previously mentioned, the comparative semantic analysis of the words idol, bias, and stan. By using prominent K-pop internet sources such as Allkpop and Koreaboo as a corpus, we explored how these words change semantically when used in K-pop contexts compared to general English, while also briefly touching upon their morphological changes. These words have undergone various semantic shifts, such as broadening and amelioration, which have helped them find a place in the English lexicon as specialized technical terms. These terms describe an entirely new linguistic world and community; at the same time, they serve to bring non-K-pop fans closer to this community, as K-pop fandoms are known to be welcoming of new members.

Hence, the paper confirms that the assimilation of the K-pop register into general English is not merely a transient trend – it is a deliberate development. All of these factors play an equal role in securing its place and longevity within the English lexicon, illustrating how a cultural phenomenon can leave a lasting mark on global languages. Nevertheless, since linguistic trends are constantly evolving, K-pop terminology may require even stronger foundations to fully solidify its permanent presence in English. Ultimately, it is going to be really interesting to see how K-pop continues to shape the English language moving forward. As the genre's global footprint only gets larger every year, its influence on the English vocabulary is almost certainly going to grow along with it.

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## KOMPARATIVNA SEMANTIČKA ANALIZE K-POP POZAJMLJENICA U SPECIJALIZOVANIM I OPŠTIM REGISTRIMA ENGLESKOG JEZIKA

*Rezime*

Evolucija K-popa iz specifičnog interesovanja u dominantnu globalnu silu rezultirala je stvaranjem specijalizovanog lingvističkog ekosistema. Ovaj rad istražuje semantičke promjene koje se dešavaju kada leksičke jedinice opšteg engleskog jezika pozajmljuje specijalizovani K-pop diskurs. Koristeći Halidejevu (Halliday) teoriju registra i koncept semantičkih polja, rad analizira divergenciju između opšteg engleskog jezika i specijalizovanog K-pop registra. Ispituje se kako je jedinstvena konfiguracija polja (Field), tenora (Tenor) i moda (Mode) uslovila funkcionalnu adaptaciju engleskog leksikona. Studija pruža detaljnu komparativnu semantičku analizu termina kao što su „idol”, „bias” i „stan”, demonstrirajući procese kao što su semantičko širenje i amelioracija. Takođe, rad se osvrće na to kako K-pop registar popunjava leksičke praznine pozajmljivanjem korejskih riječi kao što su „maknae”, „noona”, „oppa” i slično, koje su nedavno uvrštene u Oksfordski rječnik engleskog jezika (Oxford English Dictionary). Rezultati sugerišu da je veza između ova dva jezika isključivo vođena kulturnom bliskošću, koju dodatno olakšavaju društvene mreže. Njihovo prožimanje pomjera lingvističke granice i u krajnjoj liniji prikazuje otvorenost engleskog jezika i njegovu sposobnost da upija, da se remapira i širi pod uticajem različitih kultura.

► *Ključne riječi:* K-pop, teorija registra, semantička polja, pozajmljenice, semantička analiza.