

Linguistic constructions of modernity: English mixing in Korean television commercials

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the construction of linguistic modernity via English mixing in the discourse of Korean television commercials. Specifically, it is concerned with Korean-English bilinguals' linguistic construction of modernity as realized in three domains of advertising: technology, gender roles, and taste as a cultural form. Four hours of commercials were video-taped in Seoul, South Korea, during weekend prime time from August through October 2002. A total of 720 advertising spots were analyzed. The findings suggest that mixing English with Korean is a linguistic mechanism for the construction of modernity in contemporary South Korea. It is argued that knowledge and use of English in South Korea is a defining linguistic expression of modernity, and the conspicuous total absence of English is linguistically disassociated from modernity. (Modernity, advertising, English and globalization, South Korea)*

INTRODUCTION

English mixing in non-English-language advertising is one research area that has received increasing attention lately (Bhatia 1992; Cheshire & Moser 1994; Cook 1992; Haarmann 1989; Martin 1999, 2002a, 2002b; Piller 2000, 2001, 2003; Takashi 1990). The majority of previous studies on English use in advertisements deal mostly with European language contexts, with a few exceptions (e.g., Bhatia 1992, Jung 2001, Takashi 1990, Haarmann 1989). This study addresses what has been relatively ignored so far, bringing data from a non-Western language context to the focus on English mixing in advertising, in this case in South Korea. The evidence presented in this article will demonstrate that a “modern” identity in contemporary South Korea is virtually guaranteed through acquisition and use of English. In other words, my main argument is that the acquisition of English linguistic capital is the necessary means of indexing modern identity in that context.

I will focus on Korean television commercials to show how English is used creatively as a MEDIUM to present MESSAGES of linguistic modernity. This article, then, augments the empirical and theoretical scope of previous research that limited English mixing in advertising to symbolic uses (e.g., Cheshire & Moser 1994, Haarmann 1989). It also extends the empirical scope of studies on bilinguals' creativity, which has so far been limited to contact literatures (e.g., Kachru 1986a, 1986b, 1987). Creativity in the realm of popular culture intended for wide commercialized dissemination has not received much serious scholarly attention. The creative use of word play and hybrid linguistic forms in the discourse of Korean TV commercials draws specifically on bilingual copywriters' ability to create them and the viewers' ability to understand them. This study will examine (i) motivations for English mixing in Korean TV commercials, and (ii) how English mixing contributes to identity construction in close conjunction with reinforcing modernity.

PREVIOUS STUDIES: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Most research on codeswitching and codemixing¹ can be divided into two major categories: the formal/structural-linguistic approaches focused on structure constraints (e.g., Azuma 1993, Belazi, Rubin & Toribio 1994, Bhatt 1997, Bokamba 1989, Clyne 1987, DiSciullo, Muysken & Singh 1986, Pfaff 1979, Poplack 1980, Myers-Scotton 1993, Sridhar & Sridhar 1980), and the functional/social-pragmatic approaches centered on social motivations (e.g., Auer 1995, Blom & Gumperz 1972, Gross 2000, Heller 1988, Gal 1987, Li, Milroy & Ching 1999, Myers-Scotton 1997). The majority of these studies have been based predominantly on naturally occurring, spoken codeswitched utterances in interpersonal interaction.

Studies specific to English mixing in mass media, especially in advertising, have been relatively new (e.g., Bhatia 1987, 1992, 2001; Cheshire & Moser 1994; Cook 1992; Haarmann 1989; Martin 1999, 2002a, 2002b; Piller 2000, 2001, 2003). These studies can be categorized as focusing on the following areas: (i) symbolism in use (e.g., Cheshire & Moser 1994, Haarmann, 1989), (ii) identity construction (e.g., Gao & Pandharipande 2002; Piller 2000, 2001, 2003), or (iii) globalization (e.g., Bhatia 1987, 1992, 2001; Martin 1999, 2002a, 2002b; Myers 1999).

In order to attain a more nuanced understanding of the generalizations of English mixing in advertising discourse, I argue that the convergence of the last two – identity construction and globalization – is necessary. Specifically, I will argue that in the globalizing world, the tension between global discourses and local practices produces hybridity that is interlinked with modernity by its engagement with English, and that the linguistic expression of modernity in South Korea is guaranteed by English bilingualism.

One of the first studies specific to advertising in the Far East that discusses the functions of multilingual advertising is Haarmann's (1989) research on Jap-

anese television advertisements. He argues that English is used symbolically because there is no expectation that Japanese viewers understand English they see or hear. Simply put, English use in Japanese TV commercials is argued to have less to do with message conveyance and more to do with appealing to TV viewers. Haarmann claims that the use of English words in Japanese advertising is primarily meant to appeal to the public's positive feelings toward internationalization, and not for practical communication. His account, however, cannot be generalized to English mixing in Korean TV commercials because the latter contain various instances of English mixing that rely on bilingual viewers' understanding of what they hear and see.

If English mixing in Korean advertising is, in fact, intended to serve merely as an "attention-getter" (Jung 2001) or simply to create positive "feelings" about modernity and internationalization and has little to do with actual understanding of a message, we would not expect Korean advertisers and copywriters to use English expressions that deviate from the so-called canonical use of Standard English. If the Korean case were similar to what Haarmann argues for the Japanese case, where the public neither understands nor uses English for practical communication, what difference would it make if Korean advertisers simply used Standard English rather than Koreanized innovations? In fact, English use in Korean commercials indicates that English is not used simply to create the impression of a modern, fashionable style. If the public's understanding of TV commercials that contain English mixing were not an issue at all, as Haarmann seems to suggest, it is not clear why Korean bilingual copywriters would opt for Koreanized English (such as *moving bra* in place of Standard English forms such as *underwire bra* or *push-up bra*)?

Notice that this is not an example of localization of international ad campaigns; rather, it is domestically constructed strictly for domestic viewers. Labeling this type of Koreanized English in advertising as an indication of interference or incomplete acquisition would be somewhat misleading and simplistic. As Blommaert (2003:616) suggests, "'good' and status-carrying English in the periphery may be 'bad' and stigma-carrying English in the core of the world system." As far as the meaning-accessibility of the message is concerned, *push-up bra* is equally as intelligible to Korean viewers as *moving bra*. This is not to say, however, that there is a total absence of inequalities in English proficiency across creators and consumers of commercials in South Korea.

What needs to be recognized is that the trend of mixing English in non-English advertising may be globalized, but the kind of innovative English that works is highly localized. For instance, hybridized English in Indian advertising might evoke an image of modernity, but its message is not necessarily intelligible to South Korean consumers. In order for their ads to make sense, Korean advertisers customize their English in domestically aired advertising in such a way that it can target a wider range of viewers in Korea across stratified levels of English proficiency.

As Hill (1999: 546) asserts, “The sphere of the market is an important zone for mixing and crossing.” In this sense, commercial discourse such as advertising becomes a pertinent sociolinguistic site in which to investigate crossing and mixing. The linguistic practices of “styling the other” and “crossing,” which refer to the use of outgroup linguistic styles, are empirically documented in Bell 1999, Bucholtz 1999, Cutler 1999, and Lo 1999. However, building one’s own identity by styling the other is not without a risk. In fact, Hill (1999: 552) argues that “this constructed self will be rejected as ‘inauthentic’” and that “the crosser will be rejected as, in Cutler’s words, ‘a “wannabe”’ by peers of both ‘own’ and ‘other’ group.”

As for identity construction in advertising, Piller (2001:153) proposes to view mixing as a compilation of hybrid social identities that are shifting “from political to economic” ones. She argues that this identity change influences a shift “from monolingual practices to multilingual and English-dominant ones.” Piller discusses multiple orientations in identity constructions. There are *International*, *Future*, *Success*, *Sophistication*, and *Fun* orientations. English is used to address the reader as an international, career-oriented worker. The use of lexical items such as *tomorrow* and *future technologies* indicates that the reader is portrayed as future-oriented. Professional executives are often featured in English-mixing advertisements in Germany, and they are depicted as being “endowed with wealth” and leading a “desirable lifestyle.” These linguistic attitudinal creations are the ideological work of English in the globalizing world and find support in the present study.

Piller 2001 suggests that the aforementioned five orientations “emerge from” her bilingual advertisement corpus. In order to make this claim, she should have contrasted German-only ads, which constitute 26.6% of her corpus, with mixed ones to see whether these characteristics are in fact unique to bilingual ads. Without the presentation of a comparative analysis of “narratees” orientations in German-only advertising versus those in bilingual advertising, her theoretical claim about the characteristics of bilingual narratees would not provide an accurate account. Thus, the present study attempts a comparative treatment of Korean-only commercials versus English-mixed commercials to validate the theoretical claim that English mixing achieves a certain goal that is not sought in Korean-only commercials – that is, the linguistic construction of modernity.

Similar to Piller 2001, the present study makes a connection between language and its associated identities. This connection is treated as an essential component in understanding identity construction and its interface with modernity. Piller (2001:153) contends that advertisements in Germany “valorize German-English bilingualism and set it up as the strongest linguistic currency for the German business elite.” Her findings, however, do not suggest that there exists an age-related language subgroup association within the same business elite class. Interestingly, my study indicates that among identities indexed with modernity that hinge on the use of English, age turns out to be a critical variable. For in-

stance, a successful business executive in Piller's study is identified as someone who is bilingual in English and German and who values quality, tradition, and authenticity. In contrast, I argue that if the successful executive is a middle-aged male, then only Korean or Sino-Korean² is used, whereas if he is a young man, English mixing is used. An individual who "values tradition" in this study is not indexed as modern; therefore, there is a clear absence of English in those types of commercials.

Identities represented in the form of orientations in Piller's study seem to overlap with one another. For instance, properties of success orientation can intersect with those of sophistication orientation. In order to deal with this intersecting quality of identities, I propose that the MODERN IDENTITY be viewed as a superordinate identity that encompasses all of the above; that is, being modern subsumes being international, progressive, futuristic, and fun-loving. This is not to claim that all of these orientations are present simultaneously at all times. For example, a combination of being successful and fun-loving could be perceived as being modern, without the element of being futuristic.

More importantly, an understanding of identity construction work in Korean TV advertising discourse requires the addition of one critical subordinate identity to those that identity construction-oriented researchers such as Piller have proposed: language skills. The findings of the present study demonstrate that being a Korean-English bilingual is arguably the most determining identity required for one to claim membership in modernity. Being an English-knowing and English-using Korean is one of the most significant characteristics of "being modern" in contemporary South Korea.

What is meant by "modernity" in this study is based on an overview of research conducted by scholars who worked specifically on the notion of modernity in connection with GLOBALIZATION (e.g., Bilton 1996; Flowerdew 2002; Giddens 1990; Hall 1996; Hall, Held & McLennan 1996; McGrew 1996a, 1996b; O'Brien, Penna & Hay 1999; Robertson 1992; Waters 1995).

Hall et al. (1996:432) argue that "the direct result of increasing globalization is a sense of VARIETY of values and customs and people become more attached to their LOCALITY as the appropriate forum for self-assertion" (emphasis added). In their discussion of the impact of globalization and the resultant tension between the "global" and the "local," they argue that modernity accelerated the pace of cultural innovation, the production of new languages, and the pursuit of novelty and experiment as cultural values.

McGrew (1996a:273) proposes that globalization has two dimensions: "scope (or stretching) and intensity (or deepening)." In another article, McGrew (1996b:470) warns that the popular use of the term "globalization," which is often associated with people's awareness that "modern communication technology has shrunk the globe," is inaccurate. This so-called common-sense understanding of the term "globalization" often neglects to deal with its multiple consequences. For McGrew, globalization is "a process through which events, decisions, and

activities in one part of the world can become significant in distant parts of the globe” (1996b:470). The multiplicity of linkages and interconnections that transcend nation-states which is represented in the form of globalization “reinforces social and cultural boundaries while simultaneously creating ‘shared’ cultural and social spaces in which there is an evolving ‘hybridization’ of ideas, values, knowledge, and institutions” (1996b:479). One instantiation of this hybridization he identifies is advertising.

Similarly, Hall (1996:623) notes that these contradictory tendencies between the global and the local are the very dynamics of globalization. Hall claims that the tension between the global and the local lies in the transformation of identities. That is, there is a tension “between particularistic forms of attachment or belonging and more universalistic identification.” In his discussion of cultural identities, Hall (1996:619) proposes that “compression of distances and time-spaces are among the most significant aspects of globalization affecting cultural identities.” He presents three consequences of globalization on cultural identities: national identities are being eroded; other local particularistic identities are being strengthened; and national identities are declining but new identities of hybridity are taking their place. In Hall’s view, globalization exploits local differentiation. This is not to say that the global replaces the local; rather, a “new articulation,” in Hall’s term, emerges between the global and the local. Another critical point Hall argues is that “globalization is unevenly distributed ‘between different strata of the population’ with regions” (1996:624). This point, in particular, bears empirical significance for Korean TV commercials, because younger and older generations are linguistically addressed differently in these commercials.

Arguments made by scholars in the area of modernity and globalization resonate with what is discussed by Giddens 1990. Since Giddens makes specific reference to advertising, his theorization of modernity and globalization will serve as a main point of reference for understanding these two concepts, which are essential to the present study. Giddens writes that “modernity is inherently globalizing” (1990:63). Globalization is claimed to entail an unprecedented degree of interpenetration between the global and the local. His argument specific to advertising is that it increasingly transcends particularities of one place and comes to be usable irrespective of time and place. As a consequence, commonalities of discourse practices rise above linguistic differences. Giddens (1990:64) views globalization as the “intensification” of social relations linking “distinct localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles away and vice versa.”

Then, how is globalization manifest in social life? Waters 1995 claims that economy, polity, and culture are three areas in which people become aware that geographical constraints on social and cultural arrangements are decreasing. He argues that material, political, and symbolic exchanges are quite relevant to globalization. In particular, advertising is listed as one of the most prevalent examples of symbolic exchange.

Studies of globalization generally focus on one of the following facets: cultural imperialism, the local, and “glocalization” (Machin & van Leeuwen 2003). English mixing in advertising draws on this very concept of globalization, which suggests that mixing allows success in many different markets and at the same time requires an adaptation to a local market. In her study of English mixing in French advertising, Martin 2002a asserts that English is a preferred language among other foreign languages in French advertising when one wants to globalize the product’s brand image.

Myers 1999 also discusses advertising in connection with globalization. He argues that there is a competing strategy between creating advertising that will be successful in many markets and adapting advertising to its local market. Myers stresses that without careful consideration of its potential impact in a given cultural setting, an ad campaign might end up being unsuccessful. One example Myers provides is an ad for shampoo that stresses its “naturalness.” The way “naturalness” is depicted varies across cultures from “a mountain meadow to a boat on a pond” (1999:61). This example hints that a common concept such as “naturalness” needs to be expressed in a subtly different way to appeal to viewers and consumers in a particular market.

Similarly, Bhatia 2001 addresses the issue of globalization in advertising and stresses the notion of “glocalization,” which is also extensively discussed by Robertson 1995. Bhatia focuses more on the innovative and creative aspects of mixing, an emphasis which resonates with empirical findings in this study of Korean advertising. The “positive approach” claims that “language mixing in advertising satisfies deeper innovative and creative needs of advertisement writers to create desired effects of persuasion, naturalness, and other socio-psychological effects in their language” (Bhatia 2001:197). The local adaptation of English is demonstratively in process in Korean TV commercials, as this study will show. The innovative use of English in Korean ads is not merely an ad hoc attention-getter. It is used to express Korean-English bilinguals’ engagement with modernity. For these bilinguals, English is not an alien language but part of their socially active verbal repertoire. These bilinguals are not passive consumers of so-called canonical Standard English varieties, but active interlocutors and participants in the process of creating localized uses of English. The use of English with the attendant innovations allows a space for hybridity where the global uses of English are compromised to create local effects (Bhatt 2003).

In his discussion of globality and locality, Bhatt (2003:17) argues that English allows “language consumers to glide effortlessly among local, national, and international identities” through hybridity. He further asserts that this hybridity “produces and reproduces identity positionings that link the global to the local” (2003:17).

In fact, as Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999 have argued, modernity necessitates less clear boundaries between global and local. They argue that ever-increasing interaction across different linguistic and cultural boundaries leads to

prevalent hybrid discursive practices; bilingual advertising in South Korea turns out to be a paradigmatic example of such practices.

Prevalent use of localized English across different genres in popular culture such as music, TV shows, movies, magazines, and advertising is an indication of the development of bilingualism in public domains in South Korea, although it is still in the incipient stage. The combination of visible availability of English use in public domains and improved accessibility of English in schools via newly implemented English education policies enables Koreans to participate in the sociolinguistic process of modernity, accessible through the acquisition of English.

The subsequent sections first present a brief history of English education in Korea to situate the status and presence of English in contemporary South Korea. In the remainder of the article, how English-knowing and English-using bilinguals in Korea flex their creative linguistic muscles in the construction of modernity will be demonstrated through specific examples from TV commercials.

ENGLISH IN KOREA

An overview of English in educational as well as commercial institutions in South Korea reveals three major characteristics of the powerful influence English exercises in contemporary Korean society: (i) the pervasiveness of the ideology that English is associated with modernity, (ii) its heightened visibility in public sociolinguistic domains in Korea, and (iii) its improved accessibility – in terms of recently implemented English language programs at the primary school level – and the great potential that this represents for improved English proficiency among young Koreans.

It has been claimed that formal English education has existed in Korea for 120 years, since the establishment of the first English school, Dongmoonhak, in 1883 (Kwon 1995). English education through the modern public school system began with Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945). However, English textbooks offered grammatical accounts in Japanese during this period. The teachers spoke either Korean or Japanese as their first language (Kwon 1995). By the end of World War II, after the liberation of Korea from Japanese rule, English became a required subject in all secondary schools (Choe 1996, cited in Shim 1999).

Excluding the years of English education during the Japanese colonial period, Korea's autonomous and modern English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education now has a history that spans more than 50 years. English education was offered until 1997 from the seventh grade upward. In 1997, the Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development implemented a new English education policy which reinforces the introduction of EFL at the beginning of third grade.³ In order to expand foreign language education, English has been taught as a part of the regular curriculum one to two hours a week, beginning with third grade, since 1997. In 2002, a total of 856 native speakers of English had been invited by the government from the United States, Canada, Australia,

New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Ireland and placed in elementary, middle, and high schools. In elementary schools, homeroom teachers are in principle made responsible for teaching English, but new methods such as exchanging classes and team teaching are also available to suit the individual schools. For the implementation of English education, native speakers have been assigned to middle schools since 1995.

In another recent and ongoing effort to promote English education, the Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development has maintained a policy to promote the establishment of close relationships between Korean schools and those in other countries, especially in the United States. Approximately 147 Korean universities and colleges have established sister-school relations with 584 U.S. universities and colleges.

The English Program in Korea (EPIK)⁴ is a government program sponsored by the same ministry. EPIK invites foreign university graduates to enrich their lives and build a professional teaching career while sharing knowledge and culture with students and teachers throughout the Republic of Korea. In 1995, EPIK was implemented with the participation of 150 members to improve the English-speaking abilities of Korean students and teachers, to develop cultural exchanges, and to reform teaching methodologies in English. In 2002, the EPIK commission recruited approximately 120 new native-speaking English teachers. Anyone can apply for EPIK who has completed at least six years of secondary education and four years of college leading to a bachelor's degree, and who is from one of six major English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Those selected for the program generally teach English in public secondary schools, train Korean English teachers, or assist provincial offices of education.

Shim observes, "In South Korea, English has become not only the most important foreign language, but also an essential tool for education, power, and success" (1994: 225) and further notes that "the ability to speak it well is often associated with higher and therefore desired social status" (1994:238). She estimates that at least a half of the younger generation (aged 15–40) are Korean-English bilinguals, since "all Korean children are exposed to at least three years of formal English education during the mandatory education period, and since more than 60 percent of middle school graduates also finish high school education" (1994:237). Whether Shim's observation that 50% of the younger generation are bilingual has empirical bearing on their daily English use is debatable and is dependent on how one defines "bilingual." Nonetheless, differences in acquisitional patterns and pedagogical concerns regarding English in South Korea are not irrelevant to generational issues.

This keen and robust interest in English is evident not only in pedagogical institutions but also in private sectors and government agencies.⁵ More than 700 major Korean companies, including conglomerates⁶ such as Samsung, Hyundai, LG, and Daewoo, require English on their new-hire recruiting exams. After these

employees are hired, they need to attend in-house foreign language programs run by either a human resource department or a training center to improve their conversational skills and TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) scores. If employees do not satisfy a minimum score requirement on their English test, they are excluded from company-wide overseas training and promotion (e.g., for assistant manager and manager positions).

For instance, LG gives an additional monthly bonus of \$50 to employees who score 730 or higher on the TOEIC. Ssangyoung excludes employees who scored lower than 600 on the TOEIC from the annual company-wide promotion. Since there is a two-year time limit for the official TOEIC scores to be considered valid, employees are required to retake the test once every two years. However, employees who score 850 or higher on the TOEIC are exempt from this requirement. Thus, in order for employees to be free from the hassle of taking the test on a regular basis, this kind of policy gives them extra motivation to score as high as they can.

According to the Samsung public relations department, "A good score on the TOEIC guarantees additional bonus points for their job performance. The company does not have to force the employees. They themselves try to score high." However incipient and unstable societal bilingualism is in Korea, no one can deny that the presence of English in the areas of education and employment is robust.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on qualitative data taken from a total of four hours of videotaped Korean TV commercials. The corpus includes 720 advertising spots. These commercials were broadcast on the major Korean television stations – Korea Broadcasting System (KBS), Munwha Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), and Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS) – during prime time on weekends in August through October 2002.

The rationale for choosing weekend prime time for collecting data was to ensure the maximum number of viewers. A TV rating survey conducted by TNS Media⁷ indicates that the commercials analyzed for this study were aired for TV shows that ranked in the top twenty on the rating list. Ratings for these shows ranged from 18.7% to 33.2%. These rating statistics suggest that these advertisements were presented when a large number of TV viewers were tuned in.

This study investigates how English mixing is used and what it is used for in Korean TV commercials. Previous studies of TV commercials have highlighted the multimodal nature of TV commercials and have stressed the importance of incorporating not only linguistic but also visual and auditory means of communication in them (e.g., Cook 1992, Geis 1982, Piller 2000). Following their argument, analyses presented in this article include not only linguistic features but also visual and sound effects, such as characters and music featured in each com-

mercial. Therefore, whenever paralinguistic description is necessary for clear understanding of a given commercial, a detailed illustration of audio-visual effects will be provided.

Two major categories, Korean-only (KO) and English mixed (EM), will be contrasted. KO includes commercials aired in exclusively Korean as well as Sino-Korean (Hanca, or Chinese-character-based Korean). There was such a paucity of TV commercials with mixed second languages other than English that they were not included in the data. English-only commercials constitute only a fraction of the corpus, and therefore they are not discussed in this article. The analysis centers on EM, which constitutes the majority of the data, and its comparison with KO. This dichotomous treatment of KO and EM is critical in establishing evidence for my major argument that EM commercials are designed to engage viewers and consumers in the process of constructing identities of modernity, whereas KO commercials are not.

The corpus of 720 advertising spots was first classified according to which language code was used, KO or EM. Then each category was investigated further regarding what product was featured. Since this study essentially draws on comparative aspects of KO and EM commercials, only the categories of products that were advertised in both KO and EM, found in a total of 267 advertising spots, were subject to further investigation in terms of their endorsed messages and featured characters.

Three subcategories common to KO and EM emerged from the corpus. I call these TECHNOLOGY, GENDER ROLES, and TASTE⁸ AS A CULTURAL FORM. Technology includes any industrial mechanical or electronic products, such as cars, computers, or cellular phones. Gender roles include commercials that contain statements or messages regarding gender differences and representations of males or females by using gender-related lexical items such as *woman* or *man*. Taste includes beverage commercials such as those for coffee and alcoholic drinks. Some commercials might fall into more than one category. For example, a gas oven commercial with female spokespersons can be classified in both technology and gender roles simultaneously. When this occurred, the decision was made based on the main advertising copy or voice-over. That is, if the main copy of a commercial for gas ovens made specific reference to female roles, it was classified as gender roles rather than technology. This occasionally arguable classification does not pose a threat to the main theoretical claim that knowledge and use of English in South Korea is a defining linguistic expression of modernity, since the association of English mixing with modern identity construction is maintained across all three domains of advertising discussed.

Before delving into an individual discussion of the three domains (technology, gender roles, and taste as a culture form) of advertising discourse, I analyzed contrasting characteristics between KO and EM commercials, first in terms of the identities featured in each category. This overview of dissimilar identities

serves as critical supporting evidence for a connection between language codes and their promoted identities.

After establishing the general dissimilarities between KO and EM commercials, they were further compared according to the products advertised. To achieve a more or less fair comparison between KO and EM, only the ones that advertised the same product were contrasted. In the following discussion KO commercials will be introduced first, immediately followed by comparable EM commercials. Each sample is given first in the original orthographic representation (e.g., Hangeul ‘Korean’ and/or Hanca ‘Sino-Korean’), followed by its roman transliteration and English translation. English mixing – regardless of whether it is presented in the Korean orthography (e.g., 엔지니어드진 ‘engineered jean’) or in roman script – is in boldface. All relevant observations about audiovisual effects are included in the discussion of each example.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the literature review section, I proposed integrating two approaches in the study of advertising discourse. The proposed merging of identity construction and globalization approaches will yield a sociolinguistically significant generalization about English-mixing advertisements in South Korea in which linguistic modernity is expressed via acquisition and use of English. In this section, I will demonstrate how modernity is indexed via English use in the following domains: (i) modernity and technology, (ii) modernity and gender, and (iii) modernity and taste as a cultural form. In each section, I will show how modernity is crucially interlinked with the use of English. There are certainly cultural forms to express modernity other than the use of English (e.g., clothing, hairstyle). However, what I argue in this article is that Korean TV commercials employ the English-mixing strategy as a main linguistic cultural form to index modernity. This type of discursal hybridity is one key aspect of globalization (Bhatt 2003, Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999). My theoretical claim is that the use of English – however proportionately insignificant it might be in a given advertisement – is indexed to modernity. A specific prediction of the claim is that any conspicuous absence of English use must be unassociated with modernity.

Following an adapted version of Piller’s (2001) typology, a total of 720 TV advertising spots were analyzed. The proportion of Korean-only (KO) versus English-mixing (EM) in the corpus is summarized in Table 1.

A total of 603 EM commercials were further classified into the categories shown in Table 2. The largest segment in the EM corpus is realized in the linguistically mixed mode – that is, a combination of written and spoken modes. The ads in this category are presented both as a voice-over – either uttered by a main spokesperson or by a narrator – accompanied by the orthographic presentation of English mixing. A very small number of advertising spots rely

LINGUISTIC CONSTRUCTIONS OF MODERNITY

TABLE 1. *Proportion of KO and EM in a corpus of 720 Korean TV commercials.*

720 TV advertising spots	
Korean only (KO)	English mixed (EM)
117 ads 16.25%	603 ads 83.75%

TABLE 2. *Different types of mixing in a corpus of 603 ads in EM TV commercials.*

Non-linguistic only (e.g., music and/or Western characters)	Brand name and/or product name only	Spoken mode only (Voice-over or main copy)	Written mode only (Main copy in Roman script or Korean orthographic presentation of English)	Linguistically mixed mode (Both written and spoken)
12 ads 1.99%	121 ads 20.06%	13 ads 2.15%	29 ads 4.8%	428 ads 70.97%

exclusively on nonlinguistic tokens such as Western pop music and/or Western characters.

Table 3 presents the top five products advertised in the KO category, in descending order. Food is an item mostly advertised in Korean only. Some products are spicy instant noodles, rice, and seasonings essential for Korean cuisine, such as soybean paste, hot pepper paste, and soy sauce. KO commercials for financial institutions frequently use lexical items such as *wuli nala* ‘our nation’, *Tayhanminkwuk* ‘Republic of Korea’, or *wuli kacok* ‘our family’. It is notable that the first person singular possessive *nay* is absent from the data. Instead, the first person plural possessive *wuli* represents a collective entity, whether it refers to a nation or a family.

The top five products advertised in the EM category demonstrate an order different from that of those in KO. In order to establish a connection between English mixing and its role in fostering and reinforcing modernity in TV commercials, it is necessary to examine how EM commercials differ from KO commercials. In particular, the following questions are worth investigating: (i) What kinds of consumers do these commercials target? (ii) What kinds of identities associated with characters or spokespersons are featured? And (iii), what kinds of messages do they endorse or convey?

TABLE 3. *Top 5 products advertised in KO commercials.*

Product type	Number of ads	Percentage	Representative examples
Food	47	40.17%	Spicy instant noodles, rice, and oriental seasoning
Medicine	22	18.80%	Medicine for hangovers, stamina, and fatigue that often contain oriental herbs as main ingredients
Finance	20	17.09%	Financial institutions that heavily rely on <i>wuli</i> ('we' in Korean) or <i>Tayhanminkwuk</i> ('The Republic of Korea' in Korean)
Cellular phone	12	10.25%	Cell phones offering inexpensive rates
Non-profit	5	4.27%	Anti-excessive consumer culture campaign Pro-environment or environment friendly campaign

TABLE 4. *Top five products advertised in EM commercials.*

Product type	Number of ads	Percentage	Representative examples
Cellular phone	143	23.71%	Cell phones featuring advanced functions (e.g., camera phone, <i>coloring</i> [assigning different dial tones for major frequent callers], limitless text-messaging)
Beauty products	112	18.57%	Cosmetics, hair products, body care products, feminine hygiene products
Cars	89	14.75%	Mid-compact size sedans, sports cars, SUV
Apparel	78	12.93%	Jeans, T-shirts
Drinks	65	10.77%	Soda, beer, coffee

First, I will discuss general properties of KO commercials, then EM ones. General properties are the identities of characters presented and products featured. Then I will discuss contrasting examples from each category, KO and EM, a dichotomous treatment of typology that was justified earlier in the discussion of how to overcome some of the limitations of Piller 2001. Contrasting examples from the two categories advertise the same type of product (e.g., cellular phones), and yet their associated identities and endorsed messages are drastically different. I argue that the main contributing factor to this contrast has to do with which language code these commercials utilize. In other words, whether a commercial is in KO or EM predicts what kind of consumers it caters to and what kinds of identities are indexed with these consumers.

*Language and identity in KO commercials*⁹

The use of linguistic features associated with a group to identify with that group (termed “referee design” by Bell 1999) is relevant to English use in Korean TV commercials. The notion of “audience design” discussed by Bell (1984, 1991, 1992, 1997) also provides a theoretical underpinning for the argument that “linguistic features associated with a group can be used to express identification with that group” (Bell 1997:248).

In particular, Bell’s differentiated typology¹⁰ of audience is critical for us to understand at whom a given commercial is targeted. There are audience members, who are known, ratified, and addressed, called “addressees”; those present, known and ratified within the group but not directly addressed, called “auditors”; those who are not ratified as part of the group, called “overhearers”; and last, those whose presence is not even known to the speaker, called “eavesdroppers.” As far as TV commercials are concerned, ADDRESSEES and AUDITORS can be viewed as target consumers who are identified with spokespersons and characters featured in advertisements. The notion of OVERHEARERS is equivalent to viewers who are not directly targeted consumers because they are not acknowledged as “part of the group” by advertising agencies. What this entails is that addressees and auditors for KO commercials differ from those for EM commercials. Following Bell’s argument, I classify target audiences – addressees and auditors – according to the characters featured and language code used in the commercials.

KO commercials target the following consumers/TV viewers: (i) elderly citizens, (ii) financially stable middle-aged males, and (iii) Korea as a nation. This is evident from the spokespersons or characters featured in these KO commercials, who include old grandmothers, middle-aged *salarymen*,¹¹ well-established older businessmen, and a group of Koreans depicted with a distinct Korean national identity (e.g., with the national flag). Whenever Korea, the nation, is mentioned as a whole, especially in nonprofit, public announcement-type advertisements (e.g., fighting unemployment), only Korean is used.

Age appears to be a critical variable in language use patterns in TV advertisements. When commercials cater to older generations, Korean and/or Sino-Korean¹² is used, whereas when commercials are geared toward younger generations, English is generally mixed with Korean. For instance, in an ad where a middle-aged, upper-middle-class businessman is featured, Sino-Korean is used. On the other hand, when a young businessman with more or less the same socioeconomic status is featured, English mixing is used. There seems to be a connection between Sino-Korean and *Kisengseytay*¹³ versus English and *Sinseytay*.¹⁴ Sino-Korean is not expected to be used in commercials for the new generation. English is not expected to be used in commercials for the older generation. If this alliance between language and generation is violated in a given commercial, this “marked” choice invites implicature. For instance, English

mixing could be exploited as a linguistic representation of youthfulness and techno-savvyness “unusual” for the older generation. Conversely, Sino-Korean might be used without English to indicate traditional values that need to be restored in the younger generations.

Certain categories of products are advertised in Korean-only commercials.

First, there is Korean food (e.g., rice, Korean plum drink, Korean noodles, Korean meat) or home appliances for preparing Korean food (e.g., a specialized refrigerator for kimchi¹⁵). TV commercials for refrigerators specifically designed for storing kimchi present interesting linguistic evidence of the association between English and modernity. Although kimchi is truly unique to Korea, if a spokesperson is a middle-aged male, only Korean is used. However, if the character featured is an attractive young housewife with a professional career, English mixing is used.

Sponsors whose company names are in Korean or/and Sino-Korean tend to advertise their products only in Korean. Examples include 農協 (Nonghyep, Farmers Association), 人熊製藥 (Taywung Ceyak, Big Bear Pharmaceutical, 牧牛村 (Mokwuchon, Cow Breeding Village), 東洋火災 (Tongyanghwacay, Oriental Fire Insurance), 풀무원 (Phwulmwuwen, Green Grass Pasture), 밍그래 (Pingguley, Korean mimetic word for ‘grin’), and 부채표 (Pwuchaypyo, Asian Paper Fan).

Language and identity in EM commercials

In this section, I discuss commercials in EM in contrast with those in KO in terms of featured identities and endorsed messages. I argue that modernity is associated with these identities, and English is a linguistic mechanism that allows this modernity to be expressed. EM TV commercials included in the corpus analysis represent the following classes of people: rebellious teenagers, college students with an unconventional mindset, young, stylish career women, *Misicok*¹⁶, self-reliant elementary school children, fun-loving, young male office workers, and looks-conscious young “metrosexuals.”¹⁷

I argue that these representations demonstrate what modernity is intended to mean for Korean TV viewers/consumers. First, it means having the younger generations’ work ethic, “work hard and play hard,” which differs from the older generations’ “work only, no play.” EM TV commercials feature young *salarymen* in button-down shirts and khakis talking about weekend leisure activities. This sharply contrasts with older *salarymen* in business suits with leather briefcases, who look serious and tired from overwork. In an EM commercial about a credit card, young office employees discuss their fun weekend activities. Their idea of shopping is to buy bikinis for their girlfriends. Shopping is an alien concept for the older-generation males who are featured predominantly in KO commercials. Buying a bikini for a spouse would be inconceivable. The young office employees’ idea of playing sports is to surf or to play tennis. When the voice-

TABLE 5. *Comparative summary of KO vs. EM associated identity.*

KO	EM
Elderly citizens	Rebellious teenagers and college students
Middle-aged businessmen	Young male office workers
“Conventionally masculine” males	Metrosexuals
Middle aged housewives (<i>Acwumma</i>)	Young stylish married women (<i>Misicok</i>)
Full-time homemakers	Career oriented single women
Korea as a nation in non-profit ads	Korea as a nation in international market-targeted ads

over says “sports,” thinking bubbles appear over their heads, and they daydream about surfing while vacationing on a tropical island.

Second, modernity means that people care about product appearance or packaging as much as they care about functions. For instance, the main copy and voice-over for a cell phone named *Cyon* in an EM commercial says “Looks good” rather than “Works well.” Third, anything high-tech, fast, and efficient has to do with modernity. Fourth, a “fusion” of global and local – a “hybridity” of some sort – is viewed as “hip,” and this hipness is often an indication of modernity and connected with young people. Fifth, being rebellious, edgy, and unique are typical characteristics of modern youthfulness featured in EM commercials. Sixth, powerful and successful young career women represent a subpopulation of modern Koreans. Table 5 presents a comparative summary of identity elements associated with KO and EM commercials.

In the following subsections, the linguistic construction of modernity in Korean TV commercials, in particular in the domains of technology, gender roles, and taste as a cultural form – will be empirically discussed in terms of how the interface between identity constructions and modernity is linguistically deployed.

Modernity and technology

In the domain of technology, commercials about cellular phones, cars, computers, and home appliance electronics are included. Interestingly, contrasts between conservative and progressive, traditional and modern, and old and young are clearly represented. Each of these dichotomies is correlated with the presence or absence of English use. A case in point is presented in example (1), a KO commercial:

- (1) 부모님을 위한 요금. 부모님 전용 휴대폰.孝¹⁸
Pwumonimul wihan yokum. Pwumonim cenyong hyutayphon Hyo.
 ‘A special rate for your parents. Cellular phone specially designed for your parents *Hyo*.’

This commercial advertises a cellular phone specially designed for elderly people. The name of the phone is the Sino-Korean word 孝 (*Hyo*) ‘filial piety’, which is orthographically presented in Hanca (Chinese characters). *Hyo* is a concept from Confucianism which stresses the importance of sons’ and daughters’ lifelong devotion and reverence to their parents. The main character featured in this commercial is an old lady in a rural area. She is saying goodbye to her children who reside in the city. The voice-over is: “She says she doesn’t need a cell phone, but . . .” The ad offers a cheaper rate for parents who have a rather tight, fixed income and promises that the functions are not too complicated for senior citizens to handle. As the name of the product indicates, buying this cell phone for one’s aging parents is part of one’s duty or obligation toward them.

In contrast, the same company advertises a cellular phone aimed at teenagers, as in EM example (2). Orthographically, the main copy is exclusively in English.

(2) **Let’s KT. Bigi KTF**

KT is a company name, an acronym for Korea Telecommunications. In this commercial, the novel use of the noun *KT* as a verb is similar to the tag line of a Yahoo TV commercial in America: “Do you Yahoo?” In addition, notice the product name *Bigi*, which is the root form of the Korean verb ㅂㅣ ݢㅣ ㄷㄹ (*bigita*) ‘to end in a tie’ or ‘to come out even.’ Even the Korean root of the verb is chopped off and written in roman script, not in Korean. Technically speaking, roman script is not associated exclusively with English but with the West. However, orthographic representations in roman are frequently called *yenge*, which refers to the English language.

This is a cell phone promotion that allows a couple or two friends to share their unused number of text messages. Two teenagers in school uniforms are featured. One has many white balls, intended to symbolize text messages, and the other has fewer white balls. The one with more balls digs out white balls with a shovel and dumps them into the other’s empty plastic container. The idea is that two consumers have their accounts connected, and the one who sends more text messages than he or she is allowed does not have to pay extra if his or her partner has some unused text messages left. Teenagers and other young consumers use the text-message function more than the older generations do. One has to be familiar with how to send text messages and be quick with the fingertips on the keyboard. These skills are not easy to acquire for elderly citizens like those featured in example (1).

Examples (1) and (2) show that Sino-Korean is associated with older people who are not technologically sophisticated enough to deal with text messaging, whereas English is associated with younger people who are quick and up-to-date with the most current technology.

The three-way correlation among English, modernity, and youth is best exemplified in another commercial for a cellular phone, shown in (3). A young woman

in a tank top and baggy jeans screams into a microphone like a punk-rock pop star:

- (3) 쟁하고 해뜰날 돌아 온단다. **TTL** 이다. **Made in twenty TTL**
Ccaynghako hayttulnal tolaontanta TTLita Made in twenty TTL
 'There will be a day when the sun rises brightly (Things will get better). It is TTL. Made in twenty.'

The name of the cell phone is *TTL*. The main copy reads *Made in twenty* and the voice-over is also in English, read by the spokesperson herself. This commercial features a special cell phone promotional deal for which only consumers 20 years old or younger are eligible. Thus, the word *twenty* in *made in twenty* indicates the age limit for this deal. English is once again associated with youthfulness. This youthfulness often manifests itself in being rebellious, refusing to act the same as anyone else, and striving to be unique.

The younger generations are also as concerned with what cell phones look like as with their functions and quality. The TV commercial in (4) for a camera cellular phone, using more advanced visual technology, uses only English. In this commercial, a beautiful young woman lying on the grass on her back answers her phone, and her boyfriend appears on its screen:

- (4) **Looks good Cyon**

This phone, whose brand name is *Cyon*, has an advanced function which allows users to see each other while they are talking. The young woman in the commercial extends her beautiful long legs in the air to show them to her boyfriend and blows a kiss to him. Her nice-looking legs go well with the copy, which says that the phone itself looks good. It displays a young woman who is not self-conscious about revealing her best feature and is not afraid of making a public display of affection toward her boyfriend, which is incompatible with older generations' values regarding romance and courting. This is compatible, however, with the image of young, modern females who are honest about their feelings with their partners. This modern representation uses English as its medium.

Similarly, commercial (5) uses English in the copy. The name of the cell phone is in English, and the characters featured are young college students:

- (5) **Digital exciting AnyCall**

The scene is a party, and a number of female students are paying attention to one male student. He thinks that he is checking these women out by secretly taking pictures with his cell phone. However, it turns out that he is the one who is being carefully observed and photographed by all the women at the party. The copy certainly transmits the "exciting" and "always ready" party spirit of most young people. This commercial does not portray young females as passive objects of the male gaze. Rather, they are depicted as aggressive initiators in the "checking out" scene. These images project a reversal of traditional female and male roles in exploring romantic interests in Korea.

Although I have been arguing that linguistic modernity is expressed through the use of English and that commercials targeting older generations are shown to use Korean only and/or Sino-Korean, there are some interesting counterexamples. For instance, example (6) features a middle-aged male in a cell phone commercial in EM. What is interesting about this ad is that the middle-aged man is portrayed as more up-to-date with recent cell phone technology than a young female standing behind him in a long queue during the morning rush hour at a subway station. Thus, in this commercial, the older generation's "unusual" sophistication with technology is linguistically depicted via English mixing:

- (6) 난 **Kmerce** 로 탄다. 대한민국 **mobile commerce. KMerce.**
휴대폰 하나로 다하십시오.
Nan Kmercelo thanta. Tayhanminkwuk mobile commerce. KMerce. Hyutayphon hanalo tahasipsiyo.
'I ride with K merce. Korean mobile commerce. K Merce. Do everything with (your) cell phone.'

The idea is that this cell phone, named *KMerce*, provides total mobile commerce service: It replaces a subway pass, bus pass, train ticket, and so forth. Instead of purchasing a subway pass on a daily or monthly basis, *KMerce* cell phone users can scan their phone over the turnstile at the subway station. It is automatically connected with the commuter's bank account, which means that consumers do not have to be concerned with whether their bill payment is overdue every month. The young female subway commuter who witnesses what this middle-aged man does is portrayed as completely in awe of him. This commercial demonstrates that young people do not associate older generations with new high-tech products. What is significant about this commercial is the use of English in engaging the older generation with unexpected modernity. The convenient, quick, hassle-free total service deal with this cell phone is expressed in English.

The alliance between English mixing and younger generations is also present in car commercials. In those aimed at younger people, there is no trace of Sino-Korean orthographic representation. Instead, English mixing is used to reinforce a set of characteristics associated with modernity – powerful, edgy, and young. Proper nouns for the names of cars in examples (7)–(9), such as *Avante*, *Kalos*, and *Musso*, are written in roman script. Although they could be argued to be European language-based rather than exclusively English-based names, South Koreans perceive roman orthographic representations as English.¹⁹ Example (7) is a case in point:

- (7) 강자의 디자인 뉴-엣지 스타일 **Avante XD**
Kangcauy design new edgy style Avante XD
'A new edgy style design for the powerful. Avante XD'

This commercial advertises a compact car which is affordably priced for young consumers. The spokesperson is a female violinist in her twenties, pictured on a

foreign college campus. The young violinist presumably studies music abroad and is supposed to represent an independent, young, successful female artist. For this consumer to further her education, English is essential. She is seen as talented and recognized as a powerful person. This commercial also promotes a positive, strong young female role model. The use of English strengthens its association with modernity, which is equated with strong, adventurous, and young qualities.

The foregoing car commercial implies a connection between language code and the type of car or identity associated with potential buyers. Example (8) below makes this connection explicit by making specific reference to the relation between cars and generations. It is about the “generation shift” in the car industry. English mixing is used to represent this generation shift:

- (8) **Hi! Kalos** 소형차의 세대교체 **Kalos** 탄생
Hi! Kalos *sohyengchaury seytaykyochey. Kalos thansayng*
 ‘Hi! Kalos. Shift in generations for compact and economy cars. The Birth of Kalos’

This commercial shows a young female in the driver’s seat. She picks up a male in an astronaut uniform from the sidewalk and drives away. As the copy says, this is a compact economy car, reasonably priced for young owners. To convey the welcoming spirit for the birth or launching of this new car, the English greeting *Hi!* is used. This is an example of English being portrayed as the language of casual youth culture. *Hi!* is suitable for expressing an informal yet enthusiastic welcome, as the exclamation mark indicates.

In the next example, the concept of “generation” once again becomes relevant in the choice of language code. The sports utility vehicle (SUV) commercial in (9) specifically targets ‘the next generation’. As the copy demonstrates, *Chaseytay*, which literally refers to the ‘next generation’, refuses to be ordinary:

- (9) 평범한 것은 나의 것이 아니다. 차세대 레저 스포츠 **Musso pick-up sports**
Phyengpemanhan kesun nauy kesi anita. Chaseytay leisure sports Musso pick-up sports
 ‘Something ordinary is not mine (my style or me). *Musso* pick-up sports for the next generation leisure sports.’

This SUV is equipped to handle outdoor leisure activities in rugged terrain. The next generation is portrayed as active, and it needs an active sports utility vehicle. This generation refuses to settle for a “boring” sedan.

Modernity and gender roles

Another domain at the interface between identity construction and modernity in advertising discourse is closely connected with how gender roles and images are redefined and reinterpreted. In particular, the way that contemporary female identities are featured in EM commercials presents supporting evidence for the theoretical claim that English use is linked to modernity. I will now contrast how female identities are presented in KO commercials with those in EM. Example (10) is in Korean and Sino-Korean, with no trace of English:

- (10) 고추보다 매운게 韓國女子. 순창 고추장 화끈하다
Kochwupota maywunkey hankwukyeca. Swunchang kochwucang hwakkunhata.
 ‘Korean women are hotter than hot peppers. Swunchang hot pepper paste is extra spicy.’

In this commercial, a Korean mother runs a relay in her son’s school sports event. Children run first in this event, and then they give their batons to their mothers, who finish the race. This particular mother’s son falls down, but she picks him up and runs fast with determination to win the race. Biting her lips and staring firmly at the finish line indicate her resilience.

One of the criteria for good-quality hot pepper paste is spiciness; in other words, the hotter the better. *Kochwucang* is unique to Korean food, as quintessentially Korean as kimchi. To express “Koreanness,” Korean is used. The identity associated with this Korean mother in (10) is not that of a career woman in sophisticated business attire. Rather, she can easily be identified as *Acwumma*,²⁰ which refers to “middle-aged married women with kids – they are normally dead busy looking and sort of fierce with permed hair and shouty voices” (source: *Lost Seoul for foreigners in Seoul*: <http://lostseouls.com/a-d.html>). Most women who are highly educated and sophisticated with professional careers do not wish to be referred to as *Acwumma*. In particular, if someone refers to a single woman as *Acwumma*, this is considered a violation of social etiquette regarding address terms and is perceived as rude and offensive by the addressee. The word conjures up an image of a middle-aged full-time homemaker – not an image that is associated with modern career-oriented young women.

It has been argued that female images in advertisements create a fantasy world in which women’s power and independence are realized through sexuality and beauty (Machin & Thornborrow 2003, Machin & van Leeuwen 2003). The EM commercials in my study seem to project these images to young female consumers. Those in (11)–(17) portray women differently from the traditional one featured in KO ads. In (11), the role of women is seen as transitioning from traditional domesticity into career-oriented modernity.

- (11) **Rinnai** 여자를 위한 화려한 변신. **Revolution for the generations to come.**
Rinnai yecalul wihan hwalyehan pyensin. **Revolution for the generations to come**
 ‘Rinnai, a brilliant transformation for women. Revolution for the generations to come’

The women in this commercial are all dressed in black with impeccable makeup. The whole scene is similar to a runway fashion show. They pose like models, and each wears a hairpiece or hat ornamented with some objects associated with the kitchen, such as gas flames, a spatula, or a knife. What the commercial attempts to convey is the identity of a sophisticated career woman and wife, still looking great even after spending time cooking meals for her family, thanks to this revolutionary gas oven. This ad purports to revolutionize women’s work in the kitchen, reducing their household chores. Whether this revolution can ultimately result in setting women free from domestic obligations altogether is highly debatable. Nonetheless, this commercial reflects the

urgency of meeting the needs of modern career-oriented female consumers, who are sharply contrasted with traditional full-time homemakers. English mixing is used as a linguistic strategy to present the notion of a modern Korean woman demanding lifestyle changes through the use of modern technology. The conclusion that EM ads are linked with modern Korean women's identities finds further support from another ad for Vidal Sassoon shampoo:

- (12) 아무일 없던 것처럼 감쪽같이 돌아온다. **Exciting hair. Vidal Sassoon.**
 Amwuil epsten keschelem kamccokathi tolaonta. **Exciting hair. Vidal Sassoon**
 'It (your hair) comes back as if nothing happened. Exciting hair. Vidal Sassoon.'

In this ad, an attractive young Korean woman in a party outfit walks toward her girlfriend, waving at her on the street. There is an outdoor basketball court near her in which foreign guys are playing basketball. One of them drops the ball by accident, and it stops in front of this beautiful young woman. She does not hesitate and instantly joins the game and shoots a clean three-pointer. The men cheer for her, and she walks away confidently. The copy reads, *Exciting hair, Vidal Sassoon*. This copy stresses how healthy one's hair looks and how easy it is to keep tidy with Vidal Sassoon shampoo. The ad portrays a confident woman who is strong enough to handle physical competition with Western men without sacrificing her femininity or style. The male basketball players drop their jaws and are speechless. The woman smiles back at them confidently and walks away, which indicates that it is no big deal for her – she has done it before.

Other emerging aspects of the modern Korean woman appear to be that she is aggressive and unreserved, as seen in an ad for Nivea deodorant (13). Again, this ad portraying a modern female is linked with the use of English:

- (13) **Nivea Deodorant. Mind of change.** 뽀송뽀송한 자신감
Nivea Deodorant. Mind of change. Pposong pposonghan casinkam
 'Nivea Deodorant. Mind of change. Confidence with dry freshness'

In this commercial, a young male is reading the newspaper in which the enlarged message *Mind of Change* appears. The expression *mind of change* contrasts with Standard English *change of mind* not only in form but also in meaning. The former indicates a 'mind that is change-oriented and yearns for change', whereas the latter means to 'alter what you have in your mind.' The door opens and a young woman rushes in, but she looks at him and walks out instantly because she becomes self-conscious about her sweat. Then she uses Nivea deodorant and comes back confidently. Her gaze exudes her strong sexual attraction to him. She smiles and comes up to him. The man appears flattered by her interest, but at the same time surprised by her aggressiveness. The characteristics of young Korean women featured in this EM commercial are once again those of a woman who takes initiative in pursuing her love interest, knows what she wants, sets her heart on it, and gets it with great confidence.

Example (14) confirms my hypothesis that the use of English in Korean commercials is indexed with modern gender roles for women – intelligent, success-

ful, outgoing and single. It illustrates a modern single woman's lifestyle via English mixing:

- (14) **Extra Intelligent** 앞선 생활에의 초대 Xi
Extra Intelligent. *Aphsen saynghwaleyuy chotay Xi*
 'Extra Intelligent. An invitation to an advanced lifestyle. Xi'

In this apartment ad, a single woman in a casual outfit drinks coffee while listening to music quietly in her beautiful apartment. Later she is seen in a black formal dress and dines alone, drinking red wine at the dinner table in the same apartment. Her identity is that of a young successful woman who enjoys her single life. Essentially, the message is that she does not have to wait until she gets married to own a beautiful apartment like the one featured in this commercial. The apartment building, named Xi, enables a single woman to lead an intelligent, forerunner lifestyle. The ad suggests that this is a smart and *extra intelligent* choice for single women. This extra intelligent choice is represented with English mixing, not by the exclusive use of Korean or Sino-Korean.

The next example comes from a camera commercial. The use of English is once again indexed with the modern characteristics of a Korean woman – in control and assertive. A young female takes pictures with an Olympus camera. She zooms in on one particular male she finds attractive. Once she pushes the button on the camera, he gets lifted up in the air and cannot freely control his body movements. SHE is in control, and HE is controlled. The copy reads:

- (15) **Eye want. Olympus**

The identity of the young female in this commercial is not that of the dominated; rather, it is that of a dominating woman portrayed as reversing traditional gender roles. Another feature noticeable in this copy is word play: neither *An eye wants* nor *Eyes want* as would be expected in Standard English. The voice-over *Eye want* is an instance of word play attempting to yield another reading of the copy, based on the homophonic *I want*. This intensifies the main message that she knows what she wants and she is in control, which reinforces a modern identity for young Korean women. This type of word play is certainly constructed for and will be appreciated more by Korean-English bilinguals than by English monolinguals. English monolinguals might not be able to ignore what they perceive as grammatical mistakes regarding the use of articles and morphemes and thus might not value the pun *I/Eye want*.

Male roles in the EM commercials in this study do not rely on conventional notions of masculinity. Predominantly young, urban, single males are featured in the EM commercials, and they are often characterized as “metrosexual”; images of so-called alpha males are absent from these EM commercials. These metrosexuals readily participate in a discourse that is traditionally classified as

within the female domain of interest, such as skin care and fashion. The following ad is a case in point:

- (16) **Lotion 대신 color lotion.** 남자의 티를 감추는 **color lotion.**
Lotion taysin color lotion namcauy thilul kamchwunun color lotion
 ‘Colored lotion in place of plain lotion. Colored lotion that hides a touch of a man in your complexion.’

In the commercial about liquid foundation for men above, two men pass by each other in the locker room in slow motion. The voice-over in this ad is supposed to be an overt verbalization of one male’s “voice in the head” admiring the other male’s smooth, beautiful skin. It states, “I wonder what he uses to make his skin look that good.” The idea of facial beauty products for males in Korea has been so far limited to moisturizers and skin toners. No company in Korea – nor perhaps in other countries, for that matter – has marketed liquid foundation for males until now. Unlike moisturizers and skin toners, liquid foundation can be categorized as “true” makeup. This ad demonstrates that typically female-oriented consumer culture, such as putting on makeup, is no longer identified as exclusively female. It is highly unlikely that the current beauty-product market will start selling lipstick to male consumers, but at least liquid foundation has become acceptable to young metrosexual consumers in contemporary South Korea.

Modernity and taste as a cultural form

The third domain in which KO and EM commercials contrast in terms of expressing modernity or the lack of it is that of taste in foods and beverages. I will show evidence that EM represents modern taste, whereas KO represents traditional taste.

Example (17) contains only Korean and Sino-Korean. No English mixing is utilized. This ad is about a cold green tea drink:

- (17) 茶. 清風濃霧眞土. 어떤 차잎을 쓰느냐가 중요합니다. 차우린
Cha. Cheng phwung nong mwu cin tho. Etten chasiphul ssununyaka cwungyohapnita.
Chawulin.
 ‘Tea. Clear wind, thick fog, and good soil. What kind of tea leaves you use is important.
 Chawulin.’

An Asian woman with a straw hat is standing in the middle of a wide field in which tea leaves are grown. The copy stresses that good tea requires a good natural environment or ideal climate. Since green tea is considered to be of Asian origin, Sino-Korean is used to emphasize that green tea grows better in its original Asian climate – Asian wind, fog, and soil. The name of this green tea drink is 차우린 (*Chawulin*), a coined compound noun composed of the noun 차 (*cha* ‘tea’) and a verb stem with the perfect aspectual ending 우린 (*wulin* ‘soaked out’). It shows a clear absence of English. This commercial demonstrates that anything traditionally identifiable as Korean or Asian is advertised in Korean or Sino-Korean. On the other hand, TV commercials for coffee use a mixture of Western languages such as English, French, and Italian. The mixture of Western lan-

guages is frequently perceived as just English, just as any form of non-Asian orthographic representation is viewed as Western. Anything Western is synonymous with English, regardless of its source language. In other words, English is depicted as a representative of all Western languages.²¹ Here are a few examples from coffee commercials:

- (18) **Taster's choice original.** 커피로 기억되는 시간
Taster's choice original. *Coffee*lo *kiektoynun sikan*.
 'Taster's choice original. Time to be remembered with coffee.'
- (19) **Café latte espresso.** 사랑한다면 **café latte** 처럼
Café latte espresso. *Salanghantamyen café lattechelem*.
 'Café latte espresso. If you love someone, love like café latte.'

Example (19) stresses how strong and powerful espresso is and draws an analogy between strong coffee and the intense emotions involved in passionate love. Espresso and café latte refer to two different preparations of coffee outside Asia, in the American context, for example. Espresso is strong, dark-roasted, black coffee. Café latte is espresso served with plenty of steamed milk, which makes it smooth, light brown, and not bitter or harsh. An interesting twist in meaning of the product name *Café latte espresso* provides an instance of local adaptation and creativity, which successfully delivers what it means to be in love for Koreans – the *yin* (feminine) and *yang* (masculine) of the relationship. Thus, in this Korean TV commercial, the bonding of espresso with café latte is attempting to convey the masculine passion and feminine sweetness of love.

- (20) **French café.** 드디어 그의 방이다. 악마의 유혹.
French café. *Tutie kuuy pangita. Akmauy yuhok*.
 'French café. Finally I am in his room. Devil's temptation.'

In example (20), as soon as a young female character looks at the canned coffee drink named *French café*, it is transformed into a good-looking man with a devilish image. The copy explains that her wish to be in this man's room has finally come true and implicitly conveys her mounting sexual tension and anticipation, which goes against traditional Korean values regarding romance. It is difficult for her to resist him.

The linguistic strategy of selecting either EM or KO depends on the products advertised and the identities presented in each commercial. TV commercials about alcoholic drinks provide another set of good examples. Korean rice wine is advertised in Korean and Sino-Korean, featuring a group of middle-aged men in suits and ties, whereas beer commercials are in EM and feature young college students or young office employees in casual outfits vacationing on an exotic island or enjoying their happy hours after work.

Example (21), sharply contrasted with the beer commercials in (22)–(25), provides a prime example of the linguistic contrast between “old” versus “young.” Example (21) lacks English altogether and advertises a Korean rice wine named *Paykseycwu*, literally ‘100-year-old rice wine’. Its targeted consumers are *appa*

(‘dad’) as the main copy indicates, referring to married men with children. The *appa* is not single any more, unlike the young college students featured in beer commercials:

- (21) 좋은 술로 시작하는 아빠들이 자꾸자꾸 늘어납니다. 百歲酒
Cohun swullo sicakhanun appatuli cakkwucakkwu nulenapnita. Paykseycwu
 ‘Increasing number of dads start with good rice wine. Paykseycwu’

This wine is supposed to contain ingredients that are traditionally used in Asian herbal medicine. The name has a double meaning; it could mean that the rice wine itself is 100 years old with a long tradition, and/or that this wine has health benefits, and whoever consumes it will be healthy enough to live 100 years. The lexical item *appa* sums up the identity of married Korean males with children featured in this KO commercial. In terms of taste, they are associated with traditional Korean rice wine and linguistically, which is more interesting, with Sino-Korean. This is an age group who might arguably be most conscious of longevity. Younger generations do not have to be worried yet about getting old and having health problems.

Beer commercials are geared more toward the younger crowd. Their selling point is not that beer will help consumers improve their health, but how beautiful the bottle is. Characters featured in these commercials are college students in Hawaiian shirts enjoying a vacation on an exotic island, or young office workers enjoying a loud party in a beer garden.

Example (22) defies the usual sensory appeal of beer – its taste – and instead appeals to its visual qualities. Younger generations are perceived to care as much about what the product looks like as about how it tastes. What is easy on the eyes is considered easy on the palate, too. This type of sentiment is not observable in KO commercials:

- (22) **Cafri** 눈으로 마시는 맥주
Cafri *nwunulo masinun maykcwu*
 ‘Cafri, the beer you drink with your eyes’

Another critical characteristic which is argued to be closely related to modernity and globalization is hybridization (Bhatt 2003, Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999, Giddens 1990, Hall 1996, Hall et al. 1996). In his discussion specific to language mixing in global advertising, Bhatia (2001:200) contends that “hybridization in compounding is another feature of divergence from advertising in the inner circle.”²² Example (23) contains an instance of hybridization in the form of English mixing, which succeeds in achieving the effect of whimsical word play:

- (23) 술맛이 올라 간다. **Hi Chu**
Swulmasi ollakanta. Hi Chu
 ‘The taste (quality) of alcoholic drink is rising (improving). Hi Chu’

The name of this alcoholic drink is a hybridized noun which consists of English *Hi* (short for *high*) and the English orthographic representation of the Ko-

TABLE 6. *Selected examples of hybridization.*

Hybridization	Morphological explanation	Product
Mini 요급체 Mini+ yokum+cey	Mini (E)+rate (K)+ plan or system (K)	Cell phone
무선 megapass mwusen+mega+pass	Wireless(K)+mega(E)+ pass(E)	Wireless computer
쑥쑥 Five Vegemil Sswuksswuk +Five+vege (table)+ +mil(k)	Korean mimetic expression indicating growth spur (K) + Five indicating age (E)+ vege(E)+truncation for milk (E)	Baby formula starting at the age of 4
짜+파게티+ 요리사 Cca+paghetti +yolisa	The initial syllable of the Chinese black bean paste noodles (K) + last three syllables of the English word 'spaghetti' (E)+ cook (K)	Instant black bean paste noodles

rean word *chu* 'alcoholic drink'. This alcoholic drink is unique because it comes in different fruit flavors. As the name indicates, this drink has "kicked the stakes up a notch" in the alcoholic beverage industry by introducing the first fruit-flavored beer in South Korea. The characters featured in this commercial are young Koreans in a trendy beer garden.

The example of hybridization discussed on page 85 is not unique. Table 6 illustrates some other examples of hybridization in Korean TV commercials. E stands for English and K for Korean.

Given the scripted and economy-driven nature of advertising discourse, linguistic hybridity in the form of English mixing in South Korean TV commercials is a carefully constructed exemplar of semiotic creativity with the marketing of modernity in mind.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that there is a correlation between language use and the expression of modernity. This connection between English use and modernity construction is empirically evident in three domains of TV commercials: technology, gender roles, and taste as a cultural form. Although these are three discrete domains in the discourse of advertising, a common theoretical claim can be made, supported by empirical evidence across these subdivisions of linguistic constructions of modernity. There is a language-code dichotomy representing "traditional" versus "modern," "old" versus "young," "conventional" versus "innovative," "conservative" versus "liberal." KO is connected with the first member of each pair, and EM with the second.

For instance, within the same domain, say technology, KO cellular phone commercials are associated with an old lady in the countryside who is not "up to

speed” with advanced modern technology, while EM cellular phone advertisements portray teenagers or young adults with unconventional mindsets. Age is found to be a major element in the linguistic construction of modernity. In EM commercials, an element of modernity is distinctly present, whereas KO commercials lack this element entirely. The noticeable absence of English in Korean commercials signifies tradition and not the construction of modernity.

However, this is not to say that the alignment between language use and modernity, which is often associated with age-sensitive subpopulations of Korean viewers and consumers, cannot be violated. In fact, when this alignment is broken, it poses an interesting sociolinguistic phenomenon. When EM is used for a normally old, traditional, conservative middle-aged adult in a commercial, it means that this individual possesses an unexpected element of modernity. Conversely, when KO is used alongside a normally new, progressive, revolutionary teenager in an advertisement, the message is understood to promote a traditional element that is believed to be lacking in younger generations.

EM is a representative example of linguistic hybridization that enables young Koreans to explore two linguistic codes at their disposal: Korean and English. Korean-English bilinguals express their linguistic dexterity and creativity through hybridization and localization. The use of English-mixing strategies reinforces modernity in the newly emerging population of young Korean-English bilinguals in contemporary South Korea. Being an English-knowing and English-using bilingual is one major exponent of modernity.

In his discussion of hybridity with respect to English in India, Bhatt (2003:18) asserts that “the linguistic convergence of its form and functions gives rise to possibilities for new meanings and, at the same time, presents a mechanism to negotiate and navigate between a global identity and local practices.” South Korea may not present a sociolinguistic context of language use as multilingual and polyglossic as that of India. However, this new hybridity allows younger generations in South Korea to enter globalized discourses about technology, pop culture, and gender through English, while enabling them to stay rooted in their ethnolinguistic histories through Korean. For modern Koreans, linguistic hybridity – codemixing in English – resolves the tension between global (i.e., dominant English and American culture) and local practices.

This type of linguistic hybridity is not scarce in other genres of popular culture. In particular, popular music presents abundant examples of linguistic hybridity in South Korea. Lee 2002 argues that English mixing allows young Korean-English bilinguals to freely express socially repressed feelings such as sexual desires, derogatory expressions, and anger. English mixing enables young Korean musicians to exercise their artistic freedom without being offensive to the conservative censorship board or older-generation audiences whose verbal repertoire is unlikely to contain English. Young Korean-English bilinguals’ revolutionary and anti-establishment spirit is expressed through English (Lee 2004). This claim is further empirically strengthened by the fact that one subgenre of

pop music called *Thulothu*,²³ which is specifically targeted toward older generations, does not contain English. Its lyrics are predominantly in Korean or Sino-Korean. This absence of English supports one of the main claims I have made: that age is a key factor that predicts language use and its implications with respect to modernity.

This comparative analysis of Korean-only and English-mixing commercials in the discourse of advertising reveals that there is a predictable correlation between a language code and constructions of modernity. TV commercials in South Korea present an interesting case of three-way sociolinguistic alignment among the elements such as generation, language, and modernity. English mixing is used to indicate younger generations' modern identities, whereas the absence of English use in the form of exclusive Korean and/or Sino-Korean signifies older generations' traditional identities. When this alignment is broken, the resulting marked choice generates a special meaning.

In terms of the interaction between identity construction and modernity, this sharp contrast between old and new generations exists across all three domains of advertising presented in this study. A product featured in the same domain of technology can be advertised either exclusively in Korean or in English mixing depending on which generation a given commercial aims to target, as well as whether or not modernity is being promoted. The same explanation is applicable to the remaining two domains of the advertising corpus for the present study, gender roles and taste in cultural forms. English mixing serves as a sociolinguistically optimal option for young Korean-English bilinguals to express their creative needs to identify with modernity and globalization.

NOTES

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¹ The distinction between codemixing and codeswitching is not made in the discussion on previous research.

² Chinese character-based Korean, both spoken and written.

³ Source: Education policy published by the Korean Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (<http://www.moe.go.kr/교육인적자원부>).

⁴ Source: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES/embassyforum/korea>

⁵ Information regarding how English skills are required in private sectors and government agencies is from the source <http://www.toeicclinic.co.kr>.

⁶ They include Daewoo, Keumho, Hyundai, Korean Air, Dacom, Lotte, Samsung, Dong-A, Asiana Airlines, Doosan, Anam, Korea Tire, Korea Heavy Industry, Hyosung, Ssangyong.

⁷ The source website is www.tsmk.co.kr. It is a TV audience research company. Its survey is based on remote pushbutton Peoplemeters; mains communication in the house; guest viewing with demographics; program appreciation scores (AI); picture matching for digital TV area.

⁸ It has to do with cultural traditions specific to food and cuisine.

⁹ They include well-established English loanwords due to a lexical gap.

¹⁰ Based on Bell's discussion and Figure 19.4 on page 247, "Persons and roles in the speech situation."

- ¹¹ A Koreanized English expression for a company employee who depends on a monthly salary.
- ¹² It refers to Chinese-character-origin Korean, especially in orthography.
- ¹³ This is a Sino-Korean expression for 'the older generation' (*Minjung Essence Korean-English dictionary* 1986:293). It is often associated with conservative middle-aged Koreans.
- ¹⁴ The 'new generation' (*Minjung Essence Korean-English dictionary* 1986:1259).
- ¹⁵ Korean fermented pickled cabbage.
- ¹⁶ Young married women looking and acting like single women. It has positive connotations.
- ¹⁷ "An urban male with a strong aesthetic sense who spends a great deal of time and money on his appearance and lifestyle" (Source: <http://www.wordspy.com/words/metrosexual.asp>). "Metrosexual is sort of a catch-all phrase for straight, urban men who like embracing activities usually associated with women – like shopping, pedicures and buying shoes – lots of shoes." (Source: *ABC News Live*, August 5, 2003.) (<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/GMA/Living/GMA030805Metrosexuals>).
- ¹⁸ Brand of cellular phone. This Sino-Korean word is presented in Chinese characters in the original copy.
- ¹⁹ A similar point is addressed in connection with example (2).
- ²⁰ A Korean expression for married housewives. This dictionary type of definition is inadequate to express its negative connotations.
- ²¹ For earlier discussion on a similar point, refer to the examples related to car commercials (7–9).
- ²² In his discussion of "Three Concentric Circles" based on types of spread, patterns of acquisition, functional allocations of English, Kachru (1992:356) defines the "Inner Circle" as "the traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English."
- ²³ 'Trot' in English. Japan also has a similar version called *Enka*.

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