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Phonological Variations of Korean Language Use in Online Contexts

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ABSTRACT

The Journal of Studies in Language **37.1, 063-074**. The purpose of this study is to examine phonological variations of internet-based Korean language use. A review of data revealed variations in the consonants and vowels, and the syllable structure of a word. First, online language users tend to employ a polite speech style ending with -yeo instead of -yo, and the diphthong, /wə/ was also monophthongized into either /ə/ or /o/. Second, the nasal consonants /m/ or /ŋ/ were added into a syllable final position of a CV syllable, yielding a CVC syllable It was also found that the nasal /m/ was used in the deferential speech style with the omission of the middle syllable of -*sup-ni-da*, resulting in -*sum-da*. It is suggested that online Korean language users employ those phonological variations to deliver solidarity and intimacy to the addressee, establishing specific linguistic forms in an online speech community. **(Sun Moon University)**

Keywords: Korean, online language, nasals, honorific speech styles, consonants and vowels

1. Introduction

The development of mobile technology and online social networks has made communication easy and convenient in everyday life. It is easily seen that people everywhere, at any time, use their mobile devices to interact with their online interlocutors. The online social world is becoming rapidly unlimited by the speed and frequency of communicative contact and the rise in the possibilities of socially connecting to anywhere. At the same time, communication via social networks has raised research questions of how linguistic forms used online have been changing for the online interlocutors to achieve their communication goals.

Research on the computer-mediated communication (CMC) has been dealing with variations of online language use in terms of politeness strategies (Ahn, 2019; Yoon et al., 2014), linguistic variations (Jung, 2019; Lee, 2012), and the language use according to the status of intra-group (Dino et al., 2009). For instance, Dino et al. (2009) found that the language use in online contexts clearly differed depending on the status between group members. They reported that messages

from low status members were rated as more conforming, ingratiating, and agreeing than those of high status members. Low status members also tended to use first person singular voice, affective words, and exclamation marks whereas the messages of high status members were rated as rather instructive containing second person references and welcoming language.

Conventionalized linguistic forms among online language users can also be frequently found. For instance, OMG stands for 'oh my god', 4U for 'for you', and UR for 'you are'. These are the versions of standard English writing which are normally accepted in online speech communities. A similar variation of linguistic form is also easily found in Korean. Online language users tend to use -*yeo* or −*yong* for -*yo* of the polite speech style in online communication (Park, 2010). Thus, it is understood that certain variations of standard linguistic form have already been widely used among the online communicators.

This study examines how online Korean language users establish certain norms in the use of written language; particularly, those kinds of phonological variations of Korean language that are being used and how those phonological variations accomplish the purpose of elocution in the online speech community. First, we review the studies on online Korean language use, and briefly describe the vowels and consonants of the Korean language in order to provide the background information about the variations of those phonemes in online communications. Second, we analyze phonological variations of the Korean language including the deviant vowel changes, the monophthongization of diphthong, the omission of consonants, and the addition of extra consonants, particularly across the various speech styles in a specific sentence type.

2. Online Language Use

Due to the limited ways of online communication such as a lack of visual access to interlocutors and the intonation contours from the messages, it seems that other accompanying methods were employed to achieve one's communicative purposes. So far, the research on the online Korean language use has documented particular linguistic variations in terms of characteristics of net-language transferred to everyday language (Kang, 2005; Lee, 2012), linguistic features in phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics (Shin, 2016), and politeness strategies (Ahn, 2019; Yoon et al., 2014).

Particularly, Shin (2016) discussed that Korean language users take various linguistic forms for fun and economical use of language. For economical use, language users tend to delete some phonemes (consonant and vowels) in words. For instance, only the first consonants (ㄱ ㅅ, k-s) of two syllable word *kam-sa* (감사, thanks) can be used without causing any misunderstanding between interlocutors. It shows that the vowel and consonant in a first word *kam,* and the vowel in a second word *sa* are deleted. Consonant, in another case, can be substituted with another consonant as in word *dda-rang-hae-yo* (따랑해요, love you) for s*a-rang-hae-yo* (사랑해요). It is easy to find linguistic variations online and seems that certain phonological variations already became standardized in a specific online speech community. This phonological variation of Korean needs to be understood in combination with other strategies such as politeness and intimacy between interlocutors in online contexts.

Politeness in the Korean language is quite straightforward since Korean is a typical honorific language, where patterns are systematic, recognizing the elevated social status of participants with respect to the subject of discourse

and/or the hearer (Kim and Sells, 2007). That is, the language use in Korean represents the relationship between interlocutors in terms of differences in their social status or age, in which the honorific speech styles are usually employed by the lower status speaker to converse with the higher status addressee. However, Ahn (2019) reported that in most anonymous online communication network, the honorific address '*nim*'(님) and the personal honorific '*pwun*' (분) are used to express politeness regardless of the differences in age or social status. Even the formal deferential style '-*pnita*' (-ㅂ니다), which is not frequently used in face-to-face conversation, is often used as a politeness strategy in internet discourse. Korean honorifics are derived from an array of lexical and morphosyntactic markers such as honorific pronouns, honorific address terms, titles, vocative suffixes, verbal infixes, honorific lexical items, as well as a set of honorific verbal suffixes (Sohn, 1981). Korean language users are often forced to choose one or more of these honorifics in both internet-based communication, where the status of interlocutors is unclear and face-to-face conversation where the status of interlocutors is easily identified as well.

In addition to the honorifics for politeness strategies in internet-based language, there are also other methods used to save one's face and build solidarity between interlocutors. Golato and Taleghani-Nikazm (2006) examined how politeness and face are negotiated in web chats using conversation analytic methodology. They found that particular features of online polite requests were the use of smiley faces and other emoticons to express gestures and other embodiments. In particular, positive emoticons play a role in mitigating the imposition of the request by displaying their orientation to somewhat dispreferred actions which they have already done or are about to perform to their addressee. Similarly, emoticons, slangs, and many non-standard internet jargons were used to build rapport among online conversation participants (Ahn, 2019; Yoon et al., 2014).

Yoon et al. (2014) reviewed the conversations through mobile messaging applications (MMA) on how people managed MMA conversations not to be misunderstood with regard to their intended messages. They found that people made use of a wide range of stylistic variations, from very formal written style to non-standard casual style in order to regulate the atmosphere of the conversation, that collaborative tokens such as back channelling, and onomatopoeic and mimetic expressions were used to express solidarity between interlocutors, and that MMA users tried to avoid imposing a quick response on others; a lack of response and the omission of opening or closing remarks seemed understandable. Lee (2012) also reviewed the variations of net-language used in social network services (SNS) such as Twitter and Facebook. It was suggested that a clear-cut distinction of online language from face-to-face language is no more necessary since the boundary between them in language use is much unclear. Some linguistic features used in smartphone (e.g. neologism and abbreviation) became a daily language in which the characteristics of internet language were transferred to everyday language.

It is necessary to examine the linguistic features of internet language which become extremely various with the development of mobile communication. The following section describes the vowels and consonants of Korean language in order to serve as background information about the variations of phonemes used in online communication.

3. Consonants and Vowels in Korean Language

Korean has 19 consonants including four tensed stops (/k'/ㄲ, /p'/ㅃ, /t'/ㄸ, /c'/ㅉ) and one tensed fricative (/s'/) (see Table 1 for details). For each stop, there is a three-way contrast in unvoiced segments which are distinguished as lax,

aspirated, and tensed. Particularly, the aspirated stops /pʰ/, /tʰ/, /cʰ/, and /kʰ/ are produced with a strong puff of air with no vibration of the vocal cord (voiceless). There are three nasals in Korean; bilabial /m/, alveo-dental /n/, and velar /ŋ/. Each nasal can be placed in either syllable initial or syllable final position in accordance with the rules of the Korean writing system. Some dialectal zones lack a few of the consonants and/or vowels that appear in the overall inventory.

Table 1. Korean Consonants (adapted from Sohn, 1999)

Manner \ Place		Bilabial	Alveo-dental	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop	Lax	/p/ (ㅂ)	/t/ (ㄷ)	/c/ (ㅈ)	/k/ (ㄱ)	
	Aspirated	/pʰ/ (ㅍ)	/tʰ/ (ㅌ)	/cʰ/ (ㅊ)	/kʰ/ (ㅋ)	
	Tensed	/p'/ (ㅃ)	/t'/ (ㄸ)	/c'/ (ㅉ)	/k'/ (ㄲ)	
Fricative	Aspirated		/s/ (ㅅ)			/h/ (ㅎ)
	Tensed		/s'/ (ㅆ)			
Nasal		/m/ (ㅁ)	/n/ (ㄴ)		/ŋ/ (ㅇ)	
Liquid			/l/ (ㄹ)			

The syllable is an important unit in Korean, but its syllabic structure is simpler than that of English. The Korean letters are written as clusters, not as a linear string as in English and each cluster represents one syllable. Syllables can take the forms of V, VC, VCC, CV, CVC, and CVCC structures. For example, one CVC syllable word in Korean can be shown as 밤 (meaning 'night'): consonant ㅂ(/p/), vowel ㅏ(/a/), and consonant ㅁ(m). There are no initial consonant clusters in Korean syllables, and final consonant clusters are limited.

Table 2. Korean Vowels (adapted from Sohn, 1999)

	Front		Back	
	Unround	Round	Unround	Round
High	/i/ (ㅣ)	/y/ (ㅟ)	/ɨ/ (ㅡ)	/u/ (ㅜ)
Mid	/e/ (ㅔ)	/ø/ (ㅚ)	/ə/ or /ʌ/ (ㅓ)	/o/ (ㅗ)
Low	/ɛ/ (ㅐ)		/a/ (ㅏ)	

The Korean language has 10 different vowels including /y/(ㅟ) and /ø/(ㅚ). Table 2 displays 10 monophthongs of modern standard Korean in terms of the positions of the tongue (front and back), lip rounding, and the height of the tongue. The unrounded back vowels are more forward than their corresponding rounded ones. The distance between two front mid and low vowels, /e/ (ㅔ) and /ɛ/ (ㅐ) are so close that many Koreans may not distinguish them from each other. There are also two semi-vowels (glides, /w/ and /j/). These semi-vowels are considered to be elements of rising diphthongs rather than separate consonant phonemes. There are 12 diphthongs in Korean (e.g., /je/ ㅖ, /jɛ/ ㅒ, /ja/ ㅑ, /wi/ ㅟ, /we/ ㅞ, /wɛ/ ㅙ, /wa/ ㅘ, /jo/ ㅛ, /ju/ ㅠ, /jə/ ㅕ, /wə/ ㅝ, /ɰi/ ㅢ), and some variations of these diphthongs are easily found in online interactions.

The following section discusses phonological variations focused on the vowels and consonants, and the syllable structure of Korean language. It examines how online Korean language users are making certain variations of standard

written language in order to accomplish their communicative purpose in online speech community. Data both from previous studies and personal online chats were used for analysis. Data of personal chats were obtained through researcher's personal interactions with other people in KakaoTalk chat room.

4. Consonants and Vowels in Korean Language

It seems that some vowel phonemes in Korean are easily changing for some reasons in online contexts. Main changes in vowels can be categorized into two points: a diphthong can be replaced with another diphthong, and it can be monophthongized for the simplification in some cases. First, the diphthong replacement can be found in a polite speech style. It is normal that people need to express their opinions politely using one of the polite speech styles in Korean. Park (2009) found that the polite form ending with −*yeo* has been widely used across four basic classifications of sentence types in Korean: declarative (making a statement), interrogative (asking a question), propositive (issuing a proposal), and imperative (making a command). Example 1 illustrates a declarative sentence excerpted from one of the chat-rooms. It represents the polite form ending with -*yo* in *moreugetne-yo* has been changed into -*yeo* in *moreugetne-yeo*.

(1) ningneim-ul bakkugo sipeun-de bakkuneun bangbeob-eul moreugetne-yeo.
     nickname-OM change want-but change   way-OM   don't know-POL
     'I'd like to change my nickname, but I don't know how'
     OM: Objective Marker, POL: Polite speech style

(Park, 2010:32)

It is also found that some diphthongs can be monophthongized. Example 2 shows that *mweo* /mwə/ (what), a standard written form, is monophthongized into meo /mə/. This vowel replacement was also easily found in multi-syllable words such as /mən-de/ for /mwən-de/ (what's that) and /mə-ja/ for /mwə-ja/ (what). The diphthong /wə/ can also be replaced with /o/ as in /mo-hɛ/ (what are you doing?) for /mwə-hɛ/. It is assumed that in the process of monophthongization, semi-vowel /w/ simply can be omitted preserving vowel /ə/, which makes it easy to be pronounced. Alternatively, a preserved monophthong /ə/ can be replaced with the round back vowel /o/, which is more likely to deliver intimacy to the addressee.

(2) annyung hase-yeo, meo hase-yeo.
     Hi,   do-POL, what do-POL.
     'Hi, what are you doing?'

(Park, 2009:24)

Park (2009) discussed that pronunciation-based writing can be one of the ways to express one's intimacy to the addressee in online interactions. In a face-to-face interaction, people can employ strategies such as smiles, gestures and intonations to express one's solidarity (degree of intimacy) toward the addressee. Golato and Taleghani-Nikazm (2006) found that smiley faces, emoticons for expression of gestures, and other embodiment were employed in the negotiations

of politeness and face in online interactions. However, it is impossible to deliver those strategies in online interactions of limited channels for communication. Online Korean language users seem to employ the writing style *−yeo* instead of *−yo,* in order to express one's solidarity to the addressee because polite speech style *−yo* sounds more like *-yeo* in the actual colloquial conversation.

In the same vein, the monophthongization of diphthongs can be explained in two aspects. First, in Korean, the monophthong is easier to produce than the diphthong, and in colloquial expressions, the diphthong /wə/ is produced more like the monophthong [ə] even if conventional written form suggests a difference between these two vowels. Online Korean language users might employ this easiness of production in their online written interaction. Secondly, this vowel simplification might be caused by the reduction of keyboard typing. Technically, the diphthongs require twice of the typing effort compared to the monophthong requiring just one key press on a Korean keyboard. For this reason, people online would choose a simpler way to deliver their message. The reduction of typing is also found in other expressions.

The syllable final consonant /h/ can be omitted in online interactions. Example 3 shows that /h/ glottal fricative in *manh-i* /manh-i/ (많이, many), a standard written language, changed into *ma-ni* /ma-ni/ (마니) in an online written language, in which the syllable final /h/ (glottal fricative) is omitted and /n/ (alveo-dental nasal) moves into the following syllable. Similar cases such as /si-rə/ (시러) for /silh-ə/ (싫어, dislike), /co-a-yo/ (조아요) for /coh-a-yo/ (좋아요, It's good) are easily found in the online interaction.

(3) sago − na-myun an-doenika younghoon-si-ka   moniteoring mani hae juse-yo.
    accident-happen-if not-become younghoon-address term-SM monitor much do give-Polite.
    'To avoid an accident, please monitor well, Younghoon'
    SM-Subject Marker

(Kang, 2005:5)

The alveo-dental fricative /s/ in a syllable final position can be omitted. Example 4 shows that /s/ alveo-dental fricative in *eops-ta* /əps-ta/ (없다, none), a standard written language, changed into *eom-tta (엄따)* /əm-t'a/ in an online written language, in which syllable final /p/ (bilabial stop) and /s/ (alveo-dental fricative) are replaced with /m/ (bilabial nasal). It should be noted that this consonant replacement simply did not follow pronunciation-based writing which retains only /p/. Instead, bilabial nasal /m/ was used for both /p/ and /s/ in the syllable final position.

(4) na-nun nihante chul don hana-do   eom-tta.
    I-SM you-to give money one-even nothing-DC
    'I have no money to give you'
    DC-Declarative

(Personal Chat)

For the simplification of a word, the alveo-dental fricative tensed /s'/ tends to be replaced with the alveo-dental fricative aspirated /s/. Example 5 shows that the standard predicate *iss-eo-yo* (있어요, is) is replaced with *is-eo-yo* (잇어

요) in (5a) and *haess-eo* (했어, did) with *haes-eo* (햇어) in (5c). This simplification is also found in other expressions such as *isa was-da* (이사왓다) for *isa wass-da* (이사왔다, moved in), *gas-da* (갓다) for *gass-da* (갔다, went). It is assumed that people employ this simplified writing during online interaction to either save typing keyboard one time or deliver a prompt response to the interlocutor. Although those expressions do not comply with the standard Korean writing, it seems natural to use those simplified writings, especially between friends.

(5) a. juso-ga   yeokiro doeo   is-eo-yo?
       address-SM here   become is?
       'Do you have an address here?'
    b. ung.
        'yes'
    c. ipkumhwakin haes-eo.
       confirmation of money transfer do.
       ' I confirmed the transfer of money'

                                                                                        (Personal Chat)

In contrast to the omission and the simplification of the vowel, online language users are also likely to add extra phonemes in the syllable final position. Particularly, the addition of nasal sounds either /m/ or /ŋ/ is quite common in online interaction. The syllable structure of Korean letters consists of either V, VC, VCC, CV, CVC, or CVCC, shaping a square-like block from which the distinction of syllabication is quite straightforward. This syllabication is well maintained in an online interaction, but extra nasal consonants such as /m/ or /ŋ/ tend to be added in CV syllable.

First, the extra consonants in coda are easily found in the honorific speech styles, both deferential (-*(p)nida*) style and polite (-*yo*). The honorific speech styles, polite (-*yo*) and deferential (-*(p)nida*) style, are employed by a lower status speaker to converse with a higher status addressee, especially when the speakers are younger than the addressee. They are also prototypically used among nonintimate adults of relatively equal rank (Lee and Ramsey, 2000; Sohn, 1999). However, among the online language users, it is very common to add the nasal consonants /ŋ/ or /m/ to the end of the final word in order to presumably express one's solidarity to the addressee. For instance, the syllable structure of -*(p)-ni-da* is -CV-CV, but at the end of the vowel of a final word, online language users tend to add one more nasal consonant *ng* /ŋ/ as in 6, constructing the syllable structure of CVC in deferential speech predicate. It shows an extra /ŋ/ in deferential speech style -*ipnida*, resulting in -*ipnidang*.

(6) Jejudo-nun kocsosik-i   is-suljirado jeongmal koc-i   kuriun
    Jejudo-CM flower news-SM is-although   real flower-SM miss
    chunsamweol   umdongsulhan ipnidang.
    spring march   winter cold   is.
    'Although there is a news of flower in Jeju island, it is still very cold hoping real flower'
    CM: Case Marker

                                                                                        (Lee, 2012:192)

Example 7 shows additional *ng* /ŋ/ or *m* /m/ was also added in polite speech style as well, ending with either *-yo* (7a) and *-yeo* (7b, 7c). Online language users added one more nasal consonant either /ŋ/ in (7a) or /m/ in (7b) to the final word *-yo/-yeo*, constructing the syllable structure of CVC in the polite speech predicate. Interestingly, it was also found that the omission of a word occurred while adding an extra consonant /m/ in (7c). The formal sentence would be *chuk-ha-hae-yo*(*yeo*) and it could be used as *chuk-ha-hae-yong* (축하해용, with extra ng) or *chuk-ha-hae-yom* (축하해용, with extra m). But in example 7, only the noun *chuk-ha* (congratulation) is maintained, adding extra consonant /m/ to the polite predicate *-yeo*. It could be *chuk-ha-hae-yeom (축하해염)* but verb *hae* (meaning 'do') was omitted, replacing the vowel *-yo* with *-yeo*. These additional nasal consonants of /ŋ/ and /m/ at the end of the syllable are easily found in many other expressions during the online interactions. For instance, the nasal /ŋ/ can be used in the following words; [was'-nun-deŋ] 'came', [ba-du-se-joŋ] 'take', [con-bʌn-cwʌ-pwaŋ] 'give me phone number', and the nasal of /m/ in the following words; [baŋ-ga-jʌm] 'nice to meet you', [tu-lʌ-juse-jʌm] 'please play (the song)', [nɛ-ka-pul-s'aŋ-hɛ-po-i-ciŋ]? 'do I look poor?'.

(7) a. Nalla: yeolopun-tulto saehae bok mani patuse-yong
          you-Plural also new year fortune much take-POL
          'happy new year to all'
    b. Peponeupcang: kulko-poni-ka Kul-nim pang cang   toeseossne-yeom
                      and-see-then Kul-Honorific room leader   became-POL
                      'well, Kul became a leader'
    c. Peponeupcang: chukha-yeom
                      congratulation-POL
                      'congratulations'

(Park, 2009:165)

Regarding the extra /ŋ/ or /m/ in the final word of the sentence, however, it is worthy of pointing out that there might be some restrictions when those are applied in honorific speech styles online. It seems that /ŋ/ can be used in both deferential and polite speech styles. For instance, it is acceptable among the online language users that *toeseossne-yeom* of (7b) can be replaced with *toeseossne-yeong/yong*, and *chukha-yeom* of (7c) with *chukha-yeong/yong*. But, it seems impossible to add extra /m/ in the deferential speech style, resulting in ipnidam (8).

*(8) Jeongmal koc-i kuriun chunsamweol umdongsulhan ipnidam
     real   flower-SM miss spring march winter cold is.
     'It is still very cold hoping real flower'

It is worth investigating the nasals /ŋ/ and /m/ with non-honorific speech levels such as blunt, familiar, intimate and plain styles, in order to gain better insight into the use of these extra consonants in the online communication (Strauss and Eun, 2005). Example 9 illustrates six speech levels including honorific speech levels in the declarative sentence type which were excerpted from Sohn (1999: 269-270), and also provides testing of /ŋ/ or /m/ for each speech level. It

seems that /ŋ/ can be widely used more than /m/ across six speech levels; /ŋ/ can be used in all speech levels but the blunt style while /m/ could be used only in the polite speech level. It is assumed that the nasal /ŋ/ is more popular and common than the nasal /m/ in delivering solidarity and intimacy to the addressee among the online language users. It requires further investigation using data used in the online communication in order to confirm this tendency.

(9) Declarative sentences (adapted from Sohn 1999: 269-270)

    a. bi   ga on-da [plain] / on-dang, / *on-dam

       Rain NM come-IN-DC

       'It is raining'

    b. bi ga wa [intimate] / wang, / *wam

       Rain NM come-INT

       'It is raining'

    c. bi ga o-ne [familiar] / o-neng, / ?o-nem

       Rain NM come-FML

       'It is raining'

    d. bi ga o-o [blunt] / *o-ong, / *o-om

       Rain NM come-BLN

       'It is raining'

    e. bi ga wa-yo [polite] / wa-yong, / wa-yom

       Rain NM come-POL

       'It is raining'

    f. bi ga op-ni-da [deferential] / op-ni-dang / *o-p-ni-dam

       Rain NM come-DEF

       'It is raining'

       NM: Nominalizer, IN: Indicative, INT: Intimate, FML: familiar, BLN: Blunt

In addition, not all nasals in Korean can be used to deliver one's solidarity to the addressee. We discussed that the extra nasals such as bilabial /m/ and velar /ŋ/ could be added to the syllable final position of the word in order to express one's solidarity, but it is hard to find expressions employing the alveo-dental nasal /n/ in a syllable final position. It also seems that /n/ does not conform with all speech levels of the declarative sentence in example 9: *biga op-ni-dan*, *biga wa-yon*, *biga o-on*, *biga o-nen*, *biga wan*, and *biga on-dan*. Further research examining nasal sounds in all speech levels across various sentence types such as declarative, interrogative, propositive, and imperative is necessary in order to find a more consistent tendency for the use of those nasal phonemes.

In contrast to the addition of extra nasal phonemes to the syllable final in CV syllable structure, the omission of the second syllable in deferential speech style *-p-ni-da* is quite common in online interactions. In example 10a, deferential style *du-russ-sup-ni-da* (give) is changed into *du-russ-sum-da* in which the middle syllable of *-sup-ni-da* is deleted and in the syllable final position of *sup* (습), bilabial lax /p/ is replaced with bilabial nasal /m/, resulting in *sum-da* (슴다). The deletion of syllable with the addition of nasal /m/ in deferential speech occurred in *alges-sum-da* (10c) and could

occur in various verbs such as *haess-sum-da* (did), *bulruss-sum-da* (called), *gass-sum-da* (went), and *wass-sum-da* (came). It is assumed that the bilabial nasal /m/ can be applied to the deferential style speech form with the omission of *-ni*, the middle syllable of *-p-ni-da*. It might be possible to say *bi ga om-da* [deferential] for *bi ga op-ni-da* [deferential] (example 11). Although it is impossible to add extra /m/ to the end of predicate *-p-ni-da* (*-*p-ni-dam*), the nasal /m/ in the first syllable with the deletion of the second syllable *-ni* could play a role of delivering solidarity to the addressee.

(10)　a. keyakseo melro bonae du-russ-sum-da.
　　　　　contract　email　send　give
　　　　　'I emailed you a contract'
　　　　b. kamsahapnida. Youngsujung-do putak duripnida.
　　　　　thank　　　receipt-too　favor give
　　　　　'thanks, please send me a receipt, too'
　　　　c. ne alges-sum-da.
　　　　　yes. know.
　　　　　'yes. I will send it'

(Personal Chat)

(11)　bi ga op-ni-da [deferential] /op-ni-dang/ */op-ni-dam/ /om-da/
　　　Rain NM come-DEF
　　　It is raining.
　　　DEF: Deferential

It is suggested that the nasal phonemes /n/, /m/, and /ŋ/ in the Korean language use could play a role in delivering speakers' attitudinal factors to the address such as solidarity, but the degree to which it can be used is different. As discussed, the nasal /n/ used as an online interaction is rarely observed, but some cases of /m/ in the familiar and polite speech style were found. However, the nasal /ŋ/ can be used across all types of speech styles. Further research investing nasal phonemes in six different speech styles across four sentence types (declarative, interrogative, imperative, propositive sentence) is necessary in order to provide a more clear understanding on the use of nasals in the online interactions.

5. Conclusion

This paper reviewed the phonological variations of Korean language among the online interlocutors. First, there were some vowel replacements and simplifications. The polite speech style ending with *-yeo* /jə/ instead of *-yo* /jo/ (formal standard writing), has been widely used across four basic classifications of sentence types in Korean. The diphthong /wə/ was also monophthongized into either /ə/ or /o/ for the ease of typing or delivering solidarity to the addressee. As for the simplification, it has also been discussed that some phonemes were omitted; the syllable final consonant /h/ (glottal fricative) in *manh-i* and /s/ (alveo-dental fricative) in *eops-ta*, could be deleted. The alveo-dental fricative tensed

/s'/ was found to be replaced with the alveo-dental fricative aspirated /s/; is-eo-yo for iss-eo-yo and haes-ku-yo for haess-ku-yo etc.

Second, the extra nasal consonants were often added into the final position of syllable CV(C) in order to deliver solidarity to the addressee but some limitations for each nasal phoneme were found. First, the nasals such as /m/ and /ŋ/ could be limited when applied to the honorific speech styles: the polite -yo and the deferential speech style -p-ni-da. It seemed that /ŋ/ could be used in both deferential and polite speech style, but /m/ might be possible only in the polite speech style. When those are applied to the six speech levels of Korean language, it was assumed that /ŋ/ could be used all speech levels but the blunt style while /m/ could be used only in the polite speech level. When nasal /m/ was used in the deferential speech style for the solidarity purpose, it seemed that the omission of -ni, the middle syllable of -sup-ni-da, was necessary resulting in -sum-da. The alveo-dental nasal /n/ did not occur in the online interaction and seemed unusual to employ /n/ in the syllable final position in all speech levels: *biga op-ni-dan*, *biga wa-yon*, *biga o-on*, *biga o-nen*, *biga wan*, and *biga on-dan*.

The phonological variations discussed in this paper are quite common in online interaction and rarely cause any misunderstanding between online interlocutors. It is assumed that the online Korean language users have already established these phonological variations as specific linguistic forms and those can be more diverse in the future. In a face-to-face communication, it is natural for people employ smiles, body gestures with their message and the intonations within language as strategies to express their attitude toward the addressee. But in the limited channels of online communication, extra nasal consonants, the omission of syllable with the replacement of consonant, the deviant vowel change, and the pronunciation-based writing are some of the ways to express attitudinal factors to the addressee.

Further research focusing on the nasal phonemes in six different speech styles across four sentence types is worthy of investigation to provide better insight on their use between online interlocutors. It would be also interesting to discover whether the phonological variations were related to gender, age, or specific online speech communities.

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