

## Social Images Reflected through English and Korean Neologisms in the New Normal Era

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본인이 투고한 논문은 다른 학술지에 게재된 적이 없으며 타인의 논문을 표절하지 않았음을 서약합니다. 추후 중복게재 혹은 표절된 것으로 밝혀질 시에는 논문게재 취소와 일정 기간 논문제출의 제한 조치를 받게 됨을 인지하고 있습니다.

### ABSTRACT

*The Journal of Studies in Language* 39.4, 431-445. Employing qualitative analysis of online platforms and social media, this study explores the linguistic emergence of English and Korean neologisms during the COVID-19 pandemic's 'new normal' era, identifying contemporary terms that encapsulate shifts in social dynamics and communication practices. It categorizes these neologisms into six themes: Adaptation and Response, Digital Transformation, Health and Well-being, Social and Cultural Shifts, Economic Reshaping, and Language Evolution. The research captures how the pandemic has globally impacted language, revealing shared experiences and universal themes amidst the crisis. It concludes by discussing the resilience and adaptability of language, highlighting the ongoing evolution of pandemic-era neologisms. The paper also delves into the methodological approach, emphasizing the importance of comparative analysis in understanding linguistic changes holistically. It underlines the significance of these neologisms in reflecting societal transitions, emphasizing their role in shaping future linguistic trends and communication strategies. (Daejeon University)

**Keywords:** English and Korean neologisms, new normal era, pandemic-era neologisms, linguistic changes, societal transitions

### 1. Introduction

The rapid evolution of information and communication technology has dramatically changed our communication methods, shifting from traditional face-to-face interactions to predominantly digital mediums. This transformation has expanded our connection means and catalyzed the creation of new terms within internet and smartphone communities. However, concerns about potential communication barriers due to these newly formed lexicons remain.

Historically, linguistic creativity has flourished during significant social crises. For example, World War II introduced terms like *radar*<sup>1)</sup>, *fubar*, and *snafu*, while the Vietnam conflict brought *clusterfuck* and *fragging* into common parlance. The UK's departure from the EU coined *brexiteers*, *remoaners*, and *regrexit*, alongside concepts such as 'backstops', 'hard borders', and 'cliff edges' (Lawson, 2020 *The Conversation*). The coronavirus outbreak marked an unprecedented surge in new vocabulary. This increase, partly attributed to our heightened digital connectivity, differs from past crises like the 2002 SARS outbreak or the 2009 Swine Flu epidemic (Lawson, 2020 *The Conversation*).

The COVID-19 pandemic, with its profound societal impact over the last three years, has sparked significant interest in the evolution of language and the development of new vocabularies. Our increasing reliance on social media has been instrumental in facilitating the rapid dissemination of content and new terms, transcending local communities. This period of societal change has led to linguistic innovations that reflect and shape discussions on emerging challenges and contexts. Language, deeply intertwined with societal ethos and culture, is influenced by sociocultural factors, as noted by Alhumaid (2017), Eugene (2012), who discuss language's role in shaping social stereotypes and cultural norms, especially regarding gender and translation. Friedler (2020) advocates for a biocultural approach to understanding the pandemic's impact, considering sociocultural, behavioral, and political factors. These studies collectively underscore the pandemic's significant influence on language and societal culture.

This study embarks on an exploratory investigation to gather contemporary English and Korean terms that have emerged from online platforms and social media, aiming to unravel their connection with the evolving societal dynamics prompted by 'the new normal era'. Far from viewing these novel linguistic expressions as mere deviations from traditional language norms, this research acknowledges them as integral components of an expanding lexicon, essential for navigating our current socio-cultural landscape. By undertaking a comparative analysis, this work seeks to shed light on how societal transformations have influenced the creation and adoption of new vocabularies in English and Korean, reflecting a diverse range of social phenomena. The rapid spread of these neologisms, propelled by the COVID-19 pandemic and its digital dissemination channels, underscores the urgent need for a deeper comprehension of these linguistic developments to foster more effective communication strategies.

In doing so, the study not only compiles and scrutinizes neologisms from English and Korean in the context of the 'new normal' but also endeavors to uncover their roles in mirroring and influencing societal changes. Central to this investigation is the examination of the dynamic relationship between linguistic innovations and the social phenomena they encapsulate. By exploring the genesis and assimilation of these terms into everyday language, this research aims to highlight the underlying social currents propelling their emergence. This approach offers a detailed insight into the linguistic shifts occurring in both languages, emphasizing the critical importance of understanding these changes to enhance our grasp of communication's evolving nature in a world that continues to change at an unprecedented pace.

The scarcity of linguistic research on COVID-19, highlighted by Lee et al. (2022), reveals a critical gap; only 4 out of 1,879 KCI studies focus on linguistics, primarily on language education. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing English and Korean neologisms during the pandemic, offering insights into linguistic adaptations and societal shifts. Our research addresses an overlooked area, underscoring the need for further exploration in linguistics during crisis periods and contributing to understanding language evolution in response to global challenges.

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1) In this paper, new words are highlighted in italics, and concepts are marked with single quotation marks.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Emergence of Neologisms during the New Normal Era

The advent of ‘the new normal era’, catalyzed by the COVID-19 pandemic, has been a fertile ground for the emergence of numerous neologisms and new words. These linguistic innovations reflect significant shifts in daily life, behavior patterns, and challenges brought about by the pandemic. Expanding upon this, Nabila and Abdulrahman (2021) specifically address how these neologisms have evolved in English, noting that they are the result of morphological processes in language, creating new vocabulary for novel phenomena and redefining concepts within a cultural context. The pandemic has accelerated the evolution of English, leading to words that encapsulate aspects of globalization, digital influence, and the interplay between English and other languages (Ivanova and Merkulova, 2021; Liaojie, 2019). Harutyunyan (2022) further delves into these developments, examining the emergence of neologisms in the post-COVID era as tools for societal governance and shaping global narratives, including terms reflecting societal changes and global elites’ efforts to establish a “New World Order”. The study of these new words reveals a diversity of word-formation processes, including compounding, blending, and stylistic innovations (Cannon, 2012; Ivanova and Merkulova, 2021).

Language change, propelled by users’ needs and innovations, is significant. Birner (2020) highlights the necessity of new vocabulary to succinctly encapsulate emerging technologies and experiences. Following the exploration of diverse word-formation processes, the societal and cultural impacts on language are crucial. Complementing this perspective, Nabila and Abdulrahman (2021) emphasize the significant role of cultural acculturation in language transformation. They highlight how immersion in new cultures leads to the creation of novel dialects, words, and syntactic structures, influenced by factors such as immigration, media, and education (Harya, 2016; Strongman, 2017).

Furthering our understanding of these dynamics, Crystal (2014) and Wang and Wu (2017) offer contrasting yet insightful views on neologism formation. Crystal (2014) describes neologism as a response to evolving societal conditions, while Wang and Wu (2017) view it as the creation of entirely new words or expressions, extending existing linguistic elements. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has spawned a plethora of new English words and terms, observed across various mediums such as social media, articles, news, and literature. These linguistic additions not only invigorate the language but also highlight its morphological dynamism, portraying a language in flux, adapting to change (Nabila and Abdulrahman, 2021).

### 2.2 Classifying New Linguistic Expressions in English and Korean

Nabila and Abdulrahman (2021) observe that the new English words coined during COVID-19 vary in formality, with some being formal and others less so. They note that these neologisms arose to describe previously unnamed entities, ranging from individuals and objects to the virus itself. The creation of these terms filled linguistic gaps, providing specific meanings and applications relevant to the pandemic context. Nabila and Abdulrahman (2021) add to this narrative by identifying 19 new English words, examining their acceptance and integration into daily use, indicative of a shift in the linguistic landscape caused by the pandemic. This research focuses on the linguistic impact of COVID-19, specifically on the emergence of new English words. Utilizing discourse analysis within a descriptive

qualitative research framework, it gathers data from various sources like social media, books, articles, and news. The study identifies 19 new English words, such as *Covidiot*, *WFH*, *Blursday*, and *Quaranteam*, that gained popularity during the pandemic, analyzing their meanings and societal impact. It discusses the word formation process and the widespread use of these terms across different mediums, underscoring their significant influence on English language teaching, learning, and general social communication.

Building on this, further studies reveal the global impact of these changes. Ivanova and Merkulova (2021), Kriauciuniene and Sangailaitė (2016) describe the emergence of new words as a byproduct of globalization, with the English language adopting various word-formation processes. Schmid (2008) delves into the cognitive aspects of this evolution, emphasizing the role of frequency and clarity in the adoption of these new terms. This body of work suggests a significant shift in linguistic consciousness, shaping how societies communicate in the new normal.

In the context of Korean language research, Kim (2022) analyzed new Chinese and Korean words based on classifications by Song (2016). This analysis systematically categorized these words from a social perspective, examining their creation circumstances. In Song's (2016) research, modern Korean neologisms were categorized into four primary groups: 'Politics and Economy', 'Society and Life', 'Science and Knowledge', and 'Art and Senses', as illustrated in Figure 1. Figure 1 represents the classification outlined by Song (2016) and Kim (2022) in English<sup>2)</sup>. As depicted in Figure 1, Kim (2022) investigated the creation and utilization of language across these different domains, aligning with Song's (2016) classification shown on the left side of the figure.

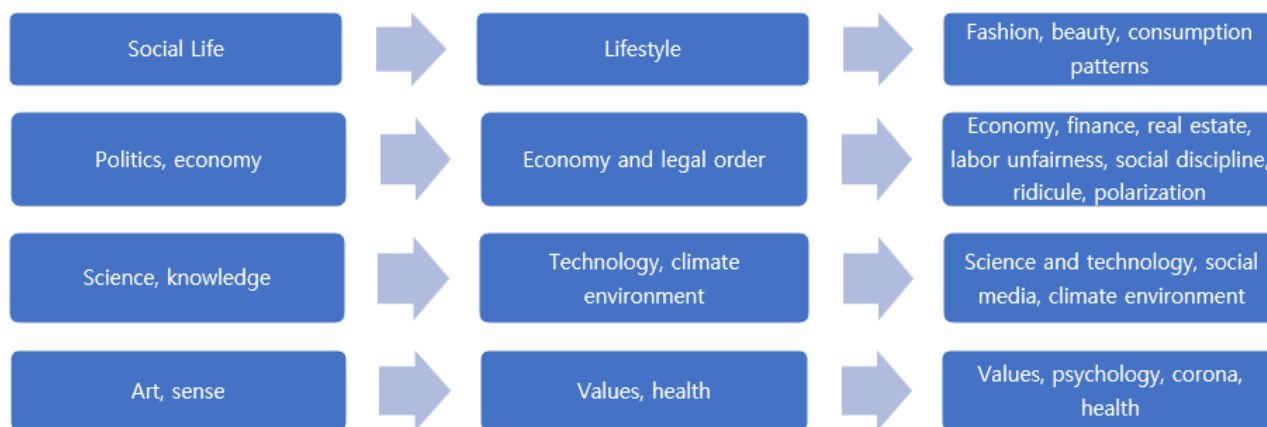


Fig. 1. Classification of New Word Types (Kim, 2022: 1696)

Building on the classifications from previous research, this study conducts comparative analyses of the origin and etymology of newly coined terms in both the English and Korean languages. This approach, which emphasizes diverse social factors, significantly enriches the field of linguistic research. It not only expands on existing knowledge but also introduces a novel perspective by examining linguistic changes in two different languages within the same global context.

2) As indicated, Figure 2 in Kim (2022) is presented in Korean; for ease of understanding, it is represented in English in this paper.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Framework for Research Analysis

The study adopts a qualitative analysis approach, drawing from a compendium of prior research and studies. Qualitative methods empower researchers to delve into the intricacies of human experiences, offering insightful explorations into nuanced questions and implications (Williams et al., 2020). This approach emphasizes a profound comprehension of the interplay between analyzed concepts. This study aimed to uncover social factors influenced the creation of new words and gain a comprehensive understanding to extract meaningful results.

Data were sourced from various websites, dictionaries, and digital platforms, providing a rich linguistic landscape. This analysis aims to examine societal factors contributing to the genesis of new terms in both English and Korean, extending beyond individual words to phrases. The methodology revises and supplements Kim's (2022) classification of new words, based on Song's (2016) framework, to explore linguistic innovation within this timeframe.

Qualitative research employs diverse methodologies for data collection. The data collection process involved sourcing newly coined English words and terms stemming from the COVID-19 context through social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, as well as from sources such as recent research findings from Harutyunyan (2022) and Nabila and Abdulrahman (2021). Additional data were gleaned from various reputable sources, including The New York Times, Vox, Pressherald.com, The Guardian, The Washington Post, and The Conversation. Similarly, Korean data was sourced from Kim (2022) and several online platforms, social media channels, and reputable newspapers. Specific platforms and sources for Korean data include Naver News, Daum, and notable Korean social media platforms such as KakaoTalk and Naver Blog. Renowned newspapers such as Dong-A Ilbo and JoongAng Ilbo, along with on-line newspaper like Media Today and Digital Times, provided insights into the evolving linguistic landscape. These sources were instrumental in identifying and analyzing new Korean words and phrases, reflecting societal changes and cultural shifts within the specified timeframe.

#### 3.2 Domain Distribution of English and Korean New Words

This study aims to classify and analyze newly emerged English and Korean terms during the new normal era, drawing from the typologies established by Song (2016) and Kim (2022), with a focus on dissecting these words based on their association with social factors. Building upon the frameworks provided by Song (2016) and Kim (2022), this research proposes a new classification by revising and supplementing the existing categorizations of new words. The study then mapped the newly coined English and Korean words to these categories, providing a comprehensive analysis of language evolution during this transformative period. This new approach, which will be discussed in Chapter 4, analyzes the new words based on a reimagined categorization. This categorization is designed to capture the multifaceted impact of the new normal era on language, reflecting societal changes, technological advancements, and individual experiences. The study proposes a nuanced framework for analyzing English and Korean words in this era, potentially introducing new categories or modifying existing ones to better capture the evolved linguistic landscape.

This research not only extends previous work by conducting comparative analyses of the genesis and etymology of newly coined terms in both English and Korean but also innovates by introducing new categorizations of these terms.

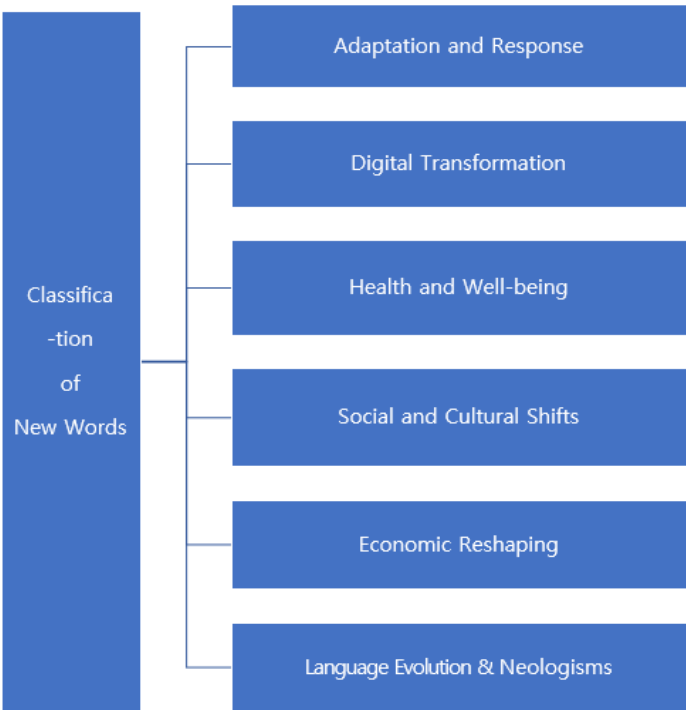
This novel approach enriches the study by examining the influence of diverse social factors on linguistic evolution in both languages. By simultaneously focusing on English and Korean neologisms within the context of the pandemic, this paper significantly contributes to the understanding of linguistic changes across different cultural landscapes, highlighting the unique yet interconnected nature of language evolution in a global context.

The data collection process for this study was thorough, beginning with the identification of new words and phrases from a variety of sources such as social media and news outlets that emerged during the pandemic. Each item was diligently recorded and organized to ensure a structured analysis. The subsequent categorization in a detailed table allowed for a nuanced examination of linguistic form and societal meaning. The analysis sought to identify thematic patterns, leading to a final comprehensive review that yielded significant insights into the linguistic impact of the COVID-19 era.

## 4. Findings

### 4.1 New Classification of New Words in New Normal Era

Building upon the foundation established by prior research, this study introduces a nuanced classification system, capturing the linguistic undercurrents of the new normal era. As illustrated in Figure 2, this system divides neologisms into six thematic categories, each reflecting a distinct aspect of the societal transformation triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic.



**Fig. 2.** Classification of New Word Types

These categories are ‘Adaptation and Response’, ‘Digital Transformation’, ‘Health and Well-being’, ‘Social and Cultural Shifts’, ‘Economic Reshaping’, and ‘Language Evolution and Neologism’. Developed to capture the broad spectrum of societal changes and their linguistic manifestations, this classification system offers a comprehensive and structured analysis of the linguistic landscape during the new normal era. By grouping vocabulary into specific thematic domains, this approach systematically organizes and presents the evolution of language. These categories encapsulate the diverse aspects of societal, technological, economic, health-related, and linguistic transformations observed in the lexicon, facilitating a nuanced exploration of language adaptation and response to this unprecedented period. In the ‘Adaptation and Response’ category, the focus is on immediate linguistic reactions to global changes, including terms that have become synonymous with new living and working paradigms.

‘Digital Transformation’ addresses the vocabulary necessitated by the swift transition to digital platforms, highlighting the influence of digital technology on new societal norms. The ‘Health and Well-being’ category underscores the response of the lexicon to public health challenges, with terms like *long COVID* and *vaccine passport* illustrating the centrality of health in public discourse and personal priorities. The fourth category, ‘Social and Cultural Shifts’, reflects the linguistic shift mirroring evolving social consciousness. Terms such as *cancel culture* and *BIPOC* underscore dialogues around social justice and identity, while *allyship* and *virtue signaling* indicate a deeper awareness of and engagement with equity and representation issues. ‘Economic Reshaping’ captures the language of an evolving economic landscape, with terms like *gig economy* and *digital nomad* reflecting shifts in work and consumer behavior.

Finally, ‘Language Evolution and Neologisms’ focuses on the creativity and evolution of language itself, with terms such as *coronacoaster*, *maskne*, and *doomscrolling* highlighting the blend of humor and reality in linguistic innovation. Together, these categories create a comprehensive lexicon of the new normal, offering insights into how English and Korean have adapted and evolved in response to the pandemic. The words and phrases that have emerged are not just linguistic artifacts; they embody our collective experience, encapsulating the zeitgeist of an era marked by profound change. This study’s framework provides a means to understand these shifts, exploring the interplay between language, culture, and society in a period of significant global transition. This framework’s goal is to cover various aspects of the new normal era and the associated language changes in a more comprehensive manner. The new categories are crucial for analyzing the English and Korean words collected in this research.

## 4.2 New Words in New Normal Era

We will now delve into an in-depth examination of the social and cultural contexts, as well as the etymology, of each category of new English words identified in this study. Certain terms present categorization challenges and may appropriately fall under multiple types due to their multifaceted nature. In conducting data collection, this study did not endeavor to match each new word with its equivalent in the other language. Instead, the focus was on gathering a comprehensive list of new words pertinent to the designated categories, emphasizing the evolution of language within the context of the new normal era rather than direct linguistic equivalence.

### (1) Adaptation and Response

This category comprises terms related to the adaptations necessitated by the pandemic’s changing environment,



including remote work, social distancing measures, and lifestyle adjustments. Table 1 presents the new words categorized under Type 1. The table lists neologisms in English alongside their Korean counterparts or equivalents, reflecting the linguistic adaptations to the pandemic's challenges.

*Social distancing* became a common term to describe maintaining physical space between individuals, a practice universally adopted as a public health strategy. *WFH* (Work From Home), or *원격근무* (Won-gyeok-geun-moo) in Korean, highlights the shift towards remote work practices globally recognized and adopted. *Remote workcation*, a combination of 'remote work' and 'vacation', typically refers to a working arrangement where an individual combines work and vacation, suggests a blend of work and leisure, in contrast to the more straightforward Korean *재택근무* (Jae-taek Geun-mu), reflecting cultural variations in the experience of working from home.

**Table 1.** Neologisms for Adaptation and Response

English	Korean
Social distancing, WFH (Work From Home), Remote workcation, Social bubble, Quarantine bubble, Zoom fatigue, Contactless delivery, Remote learning, Hybrid learning	사회적 거리두기 (Sa-hoe-jeok Geo-ri-du-gi: Social distancing), 집콕 (Jip-kok: Home staying), 원격근무 (Won-gyeok-geun-moo: Remote work), 재택근무 (Jae-taek geun-mu: Remote work/Home office), 줌 피로 (Zoom Pi-ro: Zoom fatigue), 언택트 (Eon-taek-teu: Untact - non-face-to-face or contactless interactions), 원격수업 (Won-gyeok-su-up: Remote learning), 혼합형 학습 (Hon-hap-hyung Hak-seup: Hybrid learning)

The term *Zoom fatigue* encapsulates exhaustion from excessive video conferencing, a sentiment echoed in the Korean *줌 피로* (Zoom Piro: Zoom fatigue), demonstrating its universal relevance. The phrase *contactless delivery* and the Korean *언택트* (Untact) both capture the move towards non-physical contact services. Similarly, remote learning and *원격학습* (Won-gyeok Hak-seup: Remote learning) reflect the pivot to online education, with *hybrid learning* and *혼합형 학습* (Hon-hap-hyeong Hak-seup: Hybrid learning) indicating a combined approach of in-person and virtual learning. Terms such as *quarantine bubble* indicate the development of safe social spaces, showcasing the resilience of individuals in adapting to new circumstances. These neologisms reflect a collective response to the pandemic, revealing the dynamic nature of language during this period. The analysis shows that Korean terms are frequently direct translations or adaptations of English terms, highlighting the global impact of the pandemic on language. The incorporation of English loanwords such as *줌* for *Zoom*, underlines the significant influence of English on Korean vocabulary related to digital technology and the pandemic.

## (2) Digital Transformation

The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital technologies, reflected in neologisms that describe advancements in online behaviors and the digital landscape. Table 2 outlines these terms, highlighting the rapid shift in societal norms and interactions within the digital sphere. The transformation includes everything from virtual meetings and cybersecurity to the burgeoning influence of social media platforms. *NFT* (Non-fungible token) and *Telemedicine* illustrate the intersection of technology with art, commerce, and healthcare, indicating significant shifts in how services are accessed and delivered.



**Table 2.** Neologisms for Digital Transformation

English	Korean
NFT (Non-fungible token), Telemedicine, Cryptocurrency, Algorithm bias, Deepfake, Zoom bombing	비대면 서비스 (Bi-dae-myeon Seo-bi-seu: Non-face-to-face service), 온택트 (On-tact), 클라우드 회의 (Keul-la-oo-deu Hoe-ui: Cloud meeting), 스마트 워크 (Seu-ma-teu Weo-keu: Smart work), 디지털 디톡스 (Di-ji-teol Di-tok-seu: Digital detox)

They signify the embrace of digital assets, blockchain technology, and remote healthcare services, prioritizing safety and convenience. The rise of *cryptocurrency* shows the growing acceptance of digital currencies, while *algorithm bias* and *deepfake* underscore the ethical considerations of advanced technologies in data processing and artificial intelligence, spotlighting the need for regulation. *Zoom bombing* highlights security challenges in virtual communication, pointing to the need for protective measures in digital platforms. It refers to disruptive intrusions into virtual meetings, an unintended consequence of the move to online platforms for communication.

In parallel, Korean terms such as *비대면 서비스* (Bi-dae-myeon Seo-bi-seu: Non-face-to-face service) and *온택트* (On-tact) echo the digital transformation, emphasizing activities and services conducted over the internet. *클라우드 회의* (Keul-la-oo-deu Hoe-ui: Cloud meeting) and *스마트 워크* (Seu-ma-teu Weo-keu: Smart work) reflect changes in work environments, with a transition from traditional settings to cloud-based and flexible arrangements. *디지털 디톡스* (Di-ji-teol Di-tok-seu: Digital detox) has emerged as a necessary practice to balance the increased screen time and digital engagement. These Korean terms complement their English counterparts, showing the universality of digital transformation across cultures. The shared global experience in adapting to the challenges of the pandemic is evident in the convergence of these terms, signifying how integral technology has become to daily life and work in the new normal era.

### (3) Health and Well-being

This category encompasses terms related to health, safety, and mental well-being, underscoring the pandemic's profound impact on public health discourse, vaccination, and awareness of mental health issues. Table 3 details these neologisms, reflecting the language that has evolved to address the health-related challenges presented by the pandemic.

In the realm of Health and Well-being, the term *Infodemic* encapsulates the struggle against misinformation during the pandemic while *mental health day* brings attention to the importance of psychological health. *Self-isolation* is the term used for measures individuals take to prevent virus spread. The term *self-isolation*, or *자기격리* (Ja-ga-gyeok-ri) in Korean, reflects a concept that has become universally recognized due to the shared experiences of the pandemic. This highlights the essential role of language in communicating public health policies effectively. The presence of this term within both the English and Korean columns of Table 3 exemplifies how crucial health-related neologisms have transcended borders, becoming embedded in the lexicon of societies worldwide as they navigate the challenges of COVID-19.

**Table 3.** Neologisms for Health and Well-being

English	Korean
Infodemic, Vaccine passport, Mental health day, Long COVID, Self-isolation, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), Covidiot, Vaccine hesitancy	코로나 블루 (Ko-ro-na Beul-lu, Corona blue), 홈트레이닝 (Hom-teu-re-i-ning, Home Training), 자가격리 (Ja-ga-kyeok-ri: Self-isolation) 방역패스 (Bang-yeok Pa-seu, Quarantine pass), 백신 접종 (Baek-sin Jeop-jong, Vaccine inoculation)

The phrase *long COVID* describes the enduring health effects some experience even after initial recovery from the virus, and *PPE*, which stands for Personal Protective Equipment, underscores the importance of gear like masks and gloves for infection prevention. *Covidiot* is a portmanteau of *COVID-19* and *idiot*, used colloquially to describe individuals who ignore public health advice or engage in reckless behavior related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also become part of the pandemic lexicon, reflecting its relevance in discussions about linguistic evolution. Interestingly, the term *Covidiot*, which distinctly captures behavior impacting public health in English, lacks a direct equivalent in Korean, underscoring the cultural specificity in the linguistic response to the pandemic.

The Korean equivalents for these terms reflect similar concerns and adaptations: *코로나 블루* (Corona Blue) expresses the depressive states linked to the pandemic's challenges, *홈트레이닝* (Home Training) mirrors the move to home-based exercise routines in the face of public gym restrictions, *방역패스* (Bang-yeok Pa-seu: Quarantine Pass) relates to the verification systems for individuals' health status in public areas, and *백신 접종* (Baek-sin Jeop-jong: Vaccine Inoculation) underscores the importance of vaccination in public health initiatives. These terms illustrate the shared global response to health and wellness challenges during the pandemic. The presence of these neologisms in both English and Korean indicates that the issues they represent are universally recognized and have significantly influenced both languages and cultures. They reflect a collective adaptation to unprecedented health challenges and a shift in both personal and systemic approaches to health and safety.

#### (4) Social and Cultural Shifts

In this category, new terms reflect the significant societal changes, inclusivity, and cultural dialogues that have come to the forefront during the new normal. This section delves into the shifts in social norms, activism, identity, and diversity, capturing the dynamic discourse on social justice, representation, and cultural awareness that has intensified in recent times. Table 4 lists neologisms that mark these shifts.

*Cancel culture* refers to the phenomenon of publicly calling out or boycotting individuals, companies, or entities due to perceived wrongdoings or controversial opinions, often leading to widespread social rejection or career impact. *BIPOC* stands for Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and is used to acknowledge and address the distinct experiences of systemic inequality and racism that these groups face. *Cancel culture* and *BIPOC*, for example, signal a growing conversation around social justice and identity. They are part of a broader lexicon that addresses inclusivity, diversity, and the social movements reshaping cultural norms. *Allyship* involves the practice of being an ally to marginalized groups, actively supporting their struggles for rights and equality, often by members outside of those communities.

**Table 4.** Neologisms for Social and Cultural Shifts

English	Korean
Cancel culture, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), Allyship, Microaggression, Virtue signaling, Essential worker	뉴노멀 (Nyoo-no-mel: New Normal), N잡러 (N-jableo: people with multiple jobs), MZ세대 (MZ Sedae: MZ Generation), 플렉스 (Peul-lek-seu: Flex), 언택트 문화 (Untact Mun-hwa: Untact culture) 가족 돌봄 휴가 (Ga-jok Dol-bom Hyu-ga: Family care leave)

*Microaggression* refers to indirect, usually accidental, remarks or behaviors that may offend marginalized groups, often revealing hidden prejudices. *Virtue signaling* involves displaying one's morality or social awareness, which can be seen as superficial. *Essential worker* is a term that gained prominence during the pandemic to describe employees who perform jobs that are crucial to public health and safety, often without the option to work from home. These neologisms reflect a growing conversation around social justice and identity. They are part of a broader lexicon that addresses inclusivity, diversity, and the social movements reshaping cultural norms. The inclusion of these terms in the pandemic lexicon not only captures the linguistic adaptation to the crisis but also underscores the broader socio-cultural transformations underway.

The Korean terms corresponding to these concepts illustrate similar shifts within Korean society. *뉴노멀* (Nyoo-no-mel: New Normal) encapsulates the overarching changes in everyday life, while *N잡러* (N-jab-leo) represents the diversity of modern careers. *N잡러* becomes a pertinent reflection of the evolving work culture in Korea. This term, denoting individuals who manage multiple jobs or side hustles, underscores a significant shift towards gig and freelance economies in response to the pandemic's economic impact. *N잡러* not only captures the resilience and adaptability of individuals in navigating the economic uncertainties of the new normal but also highlights the broader societal acceptance of flexible and diverse career paths as a viable means of livelihood. *플렉스* (Peul-lek-seu: Flex) and *언택트 문화* (Untact Mun-hwa: Untact Culture) highlight the new behaviors in consumption and interaction, respectively. *가족 돌봄 휴가* (Ga-jok Dol-bom Hyu-ga: Family Care Leave) underscores the increasing recognition of the importance of family care within the workplace. These terms, both in English and Korean, indicate a shared global experience of adapting to changes brought about by the pandemic, suggesting that the cultural impact of these shifts transcends linguistic and geographic boundaries.

### (5) Economic Reshaping

The category of Economic Reshaping encompasses a lexicon that emerged in response to the shifts in the economy and consumer behavior driven by the pandemic. The vocabulary listed in Table 5 highlights significant trends such as the increasing prevalence of remote work, the transformation of consumer spending patterns, and the shift towards sustainable practices.

*Remote economy*, *gig economy*, and *digital nomad* have become particularly relevant terms, capturing the essence of a workforce adapting to the fluidity of the modern job market. These terms reflect the evolving nature of employment, where work from home arrangements and freelance opportunities are becoming the norm, and geographical boundaries are becoming less significant. *Contactless Payments* represent the move towards convenience and safety in transactions, while *sustainable consumption* reflects a growing consumer consciousness about environmental impacts.

**Table 5.** Neologisms for Economic Reshaping

English	Korean
Remote economy, Gig Economy, Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL), Contactless payments, Sustainable consumption, Remote workforce, Digital nomad, Greenwashing	홈코노미 (Hom-ko-no-mi: Home economy), 비대면 경제 (Bi-dae-myeon Gyeong-je: Non-face-to-face economy), 언택트 경제 (Untact Gyeong-je), 집콕 경제 (Jipkok Gyeong-je: Stay-at-home economy), 배달 앱 (Baedal App: Delivery apps)

The Korean terms in Table 5 include *홈코노미* (Hom-ko-no-mi: Home economy), which reflects a trend towards activities centered around the home. *비대면 경제* (Bi-dae-myeon Gyeong-je: Non-face-to-face economy) captures the growth of economic interactions that do not require in-person contact. *집콕경제* (Jipkok Gyeong-je), which translates to “stay-at-home economy”, captures the shift in economic activities and consumer behaviors driven by increased home-staying during the pandemic. This term reflects the significant shift towards online shopping, remote services, and home-based work and leisure activities, evidencing a profound transformation in consumer habits and economic structures. The inclusion of *집콕경제* in our analysis enriches the understanding of how the pandemic has reshaped economic paradigms, highlighting the adaptability of markets and the critical role of digital platforms in sustaining economic activities under new normal conditions. *배달 앱* (Baedal App, Delivery apps) has seen a surge as delivery services become integral to consumer habits. These terms demonstrate the responsive nature of both English and Korean languages to the economic restructuring prompted by the pandemic. They underscore the innovative strategies individuals and businesses employ to navigate an economy that increasingly values remote capabilities and digital solutions.

(6) Language Evolution and Neologisms

This category sheds light on the dynamic nature of language, highlighting neologisms and linguistic innovations spawned by the new normal. Table 6 presents these novel terms under Type 6, which document the evolution of language and the creation of neologisms.

**Table 6.** Neologisms for Language Evolution and Neologisms

English	Korean
WFH (Work From Home), Infodemic Coronacoaster, Maskne (Mask acne), Doomscrolling, Covidiot	확찐자 (Hwak-jjin-ja), 플렉스 (Peul-lek-seu: Flex - to show off one’s wealth or possessions, often used on social media) 홈트 (Hom-teu: Home training - exercise at home), 언택트 (Untact), N잡러 (N-jableo: people with multiple jobs)

The term *infodemic*, typically associated with ‘Health and Well-being’, is also pertinent here, emphasizing the dual nature of some neologisms. These words not only reflect the ingenuity and adaptability of language but also the emergence of new expressions designed to articulate the unique experiences and challenges presented by the pandemic. They cover a range of concepts from *WFH* (Work From Home), indicating a shift in work culture, to *coronacoaster*, which conveys the emotional ups and downs experienced during this period. *Covidiot* exemplifies the interplay between

linguistic innovation and public health, fitting both ‘Language Evolution and Neologisms’ and ‘Health and Well-being’ categories. This reflects its dual significance in addressing behaviors impacting public health and its role in pandemic-era language.

The Korean terms included in Table 6 are *확찐자* (Hwak-jjin-ja), a portmanteau that humorously refers to sudden weight gain during the lockdown, and *언택트* (Untact), which encapsulates the move towards non-physical interaction across various sectors including business and education. These terms, along with others like *플렉스* (Peul-lek-seu, Flex) to flaunt wealth or possessions on social media and *홈트* (Hom-teu, Home training) for exercising at home, illustrate the quick response of the Korean language to social and lifestyle changes. The categorization of pandemic-era neologisms, such as *N잡러*, underscores the multifaceted impact of COVID-19 on language and society. While *N잡러* is primarily situated within the context of ‘Social and Cultural Shifts’ due to its reflection of evolving work cultures and economic realities, it also resonates with themes of ‘Language Evolution and Neologisms’. This overlap illustrates that some terms transcend singular categorizations, embodying broader shifts across social, cultural, and economic dimensions. Such neologisms serve as linguistic bridges, connecting various aspects of the pandemic’s influence and highlighting the interconnected nature of the changes we experience.

This analysis of Table 6 indicates that both English and Korean have experienced similar trends in linguistic creativity, demonstrating the universal impact of the pandemic on language development. While each language has its unique expressions, the underlying experiences that these terms describe are remarkably similar, highlighting the shared human experience across cultures during this period.

## 5. Conclusion

This research embarked on a linguistic journey to explore the proliferation of neologisms reflecting the societal and cultural shifts during the new normal era—a period marked by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this paper was to analyze contemporary English and Korean terms that have surfaced on online platforms and social media, investigating their correlations with evolving societal dynamics. This endeavor was not merely an academic exercise but a deeper investigation into how language mirrors the collective human response to unprecedented global challenges.

Our findings uncovered a wealth of neologisms across six categorically distinct yet interconnected domains: ‘Adaptation and Response’, ‘Digital Transformation’, ‘Health and Well-being’, ‘Social and Cultural Shifts’, ‘Economic Reshaping’, and ‘Language Evolution and Neologisms’. From *WFH* and *social distancing* to *digital nomad* and *contactless delivery*, each term added a rich layer of understanding to the complex tapestry of linguistic evolution. The study revealed that language adaptation was not a siloed phenomenon but a shared global experience, with Korean terms echoing the sentiments and practicalities captured by their English counterparts.

Moreover, this research was not without its nuances and unexpected findings. For instance, the term *Covidiot*, which distinctly captures behavior impacting public health in English, lacks a direct equivalent in Korean, underscoring the cultural specificity in the linguistic response to the pandemic. Conversely, *N잡러* uniquely reflects the evolving work culture in Korea, a concept not encapsulated by a single term in English but understood through phrases like ‘gig worker’ or ‘side hustler’. These examples illustrate the nuanced ways languages adapt to global crises, revealing both shared experiences and distinct cultural responses. The absence of direct equivalents for certain neologisms between

English and Korean emphasizes the unique socio-cultural landscapes that shape language evolution in the face of global challenges.

However, this research was not without limitations. The scope was restricted to English and Korean, offering a comparative but not exhaustive global perspective. Furthermore, the rapid pace at which new words are coined could mean that the lexicon continues to evolve even as this paper reaches its conclusion. The data collection was confined to online sources and social media platforms, which, while extensive, do not capture the full breadth of linguistic changes that may occur in less digital or more private communication settings.

This paper has shed light on the vital role language plays in navigating through the trials posed by a global crisis. It has demonstrated the resilience and creativity inherent in linguistic expression, and underscored the importance of understanding these changes as part of our collective adaptation to a world forever altered by the events of the new normal era. Looking ahead, there is fertile ground for future research. Linguists and cultural analysts could expand this study's methodologies to include a broader range of languages and dialects, offering a more comprehensive global view. Longitudinal studies could track the staying power of these neologisms, determining which terms will embed themselves permanently into the lexicon and which will fade as the memories of the pandemic begin to recede. Additionally, future research could delve into the psychological impact of these neologisms, examining how they influence societal attitudes and behaviors. While this study has identified numerous new words that have emerged during the pandemic, there remains a significant opportunity for additional research. Expanding the investigation to encompass a wider array of data and employing varied research methodologies could provide deeper insights into the linguistic impact of the pandemic. This approach would further our understanding of how these unprecedented circumstances have influenced language and communication.

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