

K-House: Linguistic-Cultural Synergy among Online Filipino Communities

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ABSTRACT

This ethnographic study examines the significance of linguistic cultural hybridity among online Filipino communities watching Korean drama series. The study demonstrates the interwoven deeds of online Filipino communities in terms of language, performative acts, and habituation interdependent with the residents' literacy, nature, and environment. Using the generated Inter-Phenomenon Linguistic Cultural (IPLC) model, the study appraises the apparent discourses in K-dramas, assesses the residents' K-drama-related performatives, and underscores the processes of habituation in platforms connected to conversations and meaning-making with others. These findings and processes endorse the principles, praxes, technology, history, and referentiality of language of online Filipino communities that are collectively rooted in their understanding and environment. By extension, the study sustains and empowers glocalized syncretism, cultural synergy, and transculturation.

Keywords: language, glocalization, cultural hybridity, K-drama, online community

INTRODUCTION

As observed in this study, language synergy and habituation have evolved due to increased exposure to K-drama series among online residents. The COVID-19 pandemic has also driven a notable shift towards linguistic and cultural diversities. This study explores the hybrid-culture engagement within online communities, focusing on residents' online transactions. The interaction and engagement of resident-informants with K-drama culture play a vital role in this research. It analyzes the manners, characters, and proficiencies observed in these communities, using linguistic anthropological insights to examine the film language, performativity, and cultural hybridity of Korean dramas. The research includes perspectives, accounts, insights, and narratives of resident-informants who subscribe to K-dramas through online streaming platforms or offline downloads, facilitated by various social media platforms on the Internet.

For decades, numerous studies have been published about the *Hallyu* or Korean Wave phenomenon. The existing research has primarily focused on the influence of

K-dramas on viewers' clothing choices, spoken language, and travel preferences, as well as the exploration of 'soft power' frameworks related to K-drama patronage. However, present-day scholarship has not directly studied the language of film or performativity in Korean dramas and its potential for fostering linguistic and cultural diversities through textual discourses.

With this in mind, this study aims to explore people's evolving paradigms of cultural hybridity through a linguistic anthropological lens in the context of the K-drama phenomenon. The research primarily investigates the cultural engagements of online Filipino communities with Korean dramas, analyzing the significant role of film language, performativity, and cultural hybridity. The study also navigates the following aspects:

1. Analyze the manners and processes through which online Filipino community residents recognize K-drama textual discourses and performative acts within their sense-making;
2. Understand through identification the processes of how online Filipino residents habituated into some K-drama- related textual discourses from various social media platforms;
3. Evaluate the significance of habituation, conversations, and common meanings into the making and remaking of K-drama related textual discourses and performative acts in online Filipino communities; and
4. Discuss the conditions of hybrid-cultural engagements in online Filipino communities within the substance of the languages of film and performativity via Korean drama series.

Framework of Analysis

The operations of the language of film, performativity, and cultural hybridity in K-dramas, along with their relevant discourses in online Filipino communities, were discernibly present in various forms and functions of language, symbols, and interactional instincts. These intricacies are best observed in *mise-en-scene*, motif, diegesis, parallel-repetitions, and performative acts that carry both conscious and unconscious material-discursive articulations and agencies. These engagements are manifested across various transmedia platforms, relying on communicative behaviors and the natural environment. Within these facets, the interplay between literacies facilitates conversations, cultural connectedness, and transactions among the residents, leading to the translation of individual meanings into shared meanings and common acceptance.

Cultural growth is nurtured through these processes and conditions, fostering the co-existence, and thriving of online Filipino residents in proportion to the support given to

cultural growth. This ongoing dynamic creates liminal spaces where cultural temporalities and interstitial passages find their cultural location (see Figures 1A, 1B, & 1C).

Figure 1A

Operational Framework - Inter Phenomenon Linguistic Cultural (IPLC) Model

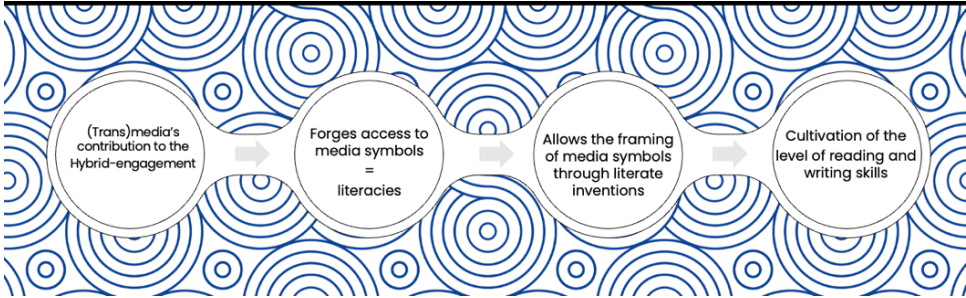


Figure 1B

Operational Framework - Inter Phenomenon Linguistic Cultural (IPLC) Model

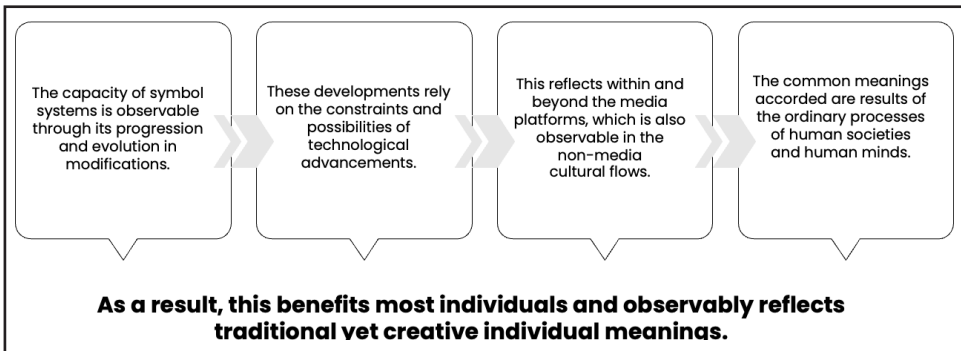
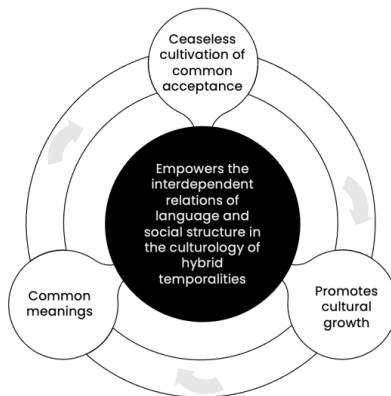


Figure 1C.

Operational Framework - Inter Phenomenon Linguistic Cultural (IPLC) Model



Review of Literature

In a 2012 Philippine Korean Studies Symposium organized by the Department of Linguistics at the University of the Philippines Diliman, the looming skepticism in integrating Korean culture into Philippine pedagogy was addressed. Roald Maliangkay (2012), one of the presenters, discussed the impact of the Korean Wave (*Hallyu*) on Korean Studies and recommended teaching *Hallyu* to introduce related knowledge in human conditions and popular culture, including socio-cultural developments in South Korea. These changes led to an exponential growth in interest, particularly evident in academic inquiries and Internet searches about K-pop music, K-dramas, fashion, and cosmetic surgery. However, it was found that the majority of students signing up for Korean studies courses were only interested in learning the language to understand K-pop music and K-dramas. This suggests that the 'soft power' held by *Hallyu* does not necessarily develop a deeper interest in the country's culture and society.

Maliangkay (2012) suggested offering academic courses in Korean popular culture to take advantage of students' receptiveness. He proposed the popular studies of the Korean wave, specifically focusing on K-pop, which runs parallel with the application of soft power to neighboring countries like China and Japan. Jose Wendell Capili, one of the reactors, noted that Korea's popular culture had been obscured by its East Asian neighbors' cultural products but has now overshadowed J-pop or Cantopop in terms of impact and popularity. To build on Maliangkay's recommendations, Capili proposed that courses in Korean studies should not only address political or moral-psychological issues but also emphasize aesthetics. He argued that the Korean wave's global presence requires diverse academic pursuits, including linguistic anthropological understanding. While scholarly perspectives may interweave in sociocultural dynamics, the body of literature focusing on linguistic and cultural lenses is relatively limited compared to economic and political implications. Whereas, the integration of Korean culture into Philippine pedagogy faces challenges, but exploring various academic angles, including aesthetics and linguistic anthropology, can provide a comprehensive understanding of the Korean wave's influence.

While current scholarship has extensively debated the economic and political implications of the Korean wave, there is relatively limited literature exploring the matter through linguistic and cultural lenses. Nevertheless, these various fields of inquiry—political, moral, psychological, aesthetic, and linguistic—are interconnected in the fabric of sociocultural dynamics. Relative thereto, Williams popularized the concept of the ordinariness of cultures, emphasizing that every human society expresses its shape, purposes, and meanings through institutions, art, and learning (Williams 1958, 4-5). Culture can be understood in two ways: as a whole way of life in common meanings and as the arts and learning in special processes of discovery and creative effort.

Language plays a crucial role in communication, social identity, group membership, and cultural practices. Studying everyday encounters, language socialization, rituals, political events, scientific discourses, verbal art, language contact, language shift, literacy events, and the media is significant in anthropology and language studies, particularly in relation to socialization and cultural determinism. Whereas, cultural relativism argues that languages encode objective experiences, leading to different understandings and effects on individuals' actions (Carroll 1963, 12).

The influence of culture on language, including major grammatical features and language directives, is evident in the literature. For example, the study on the Pirahã peoples' lack of counting concept in language demonstrates how their cultural ethos of living in the present affects their language structure (Everett 2008, 209-223). Language is a cognitive tool for maintaining social cohesion and allows humans to acquire and enhance cognitive abilities. It is interconnected with culture and social structure, leading to various modes of communication, grammar constructions, and impacts on linguistic and cultural diversity.

The reality, as a mirror of language, unravels diversity in thoughts. These differences stem from varying perspectives on the nature of reality and its operations. Language form encompasses aesthetic, moral, emotional, and intellectual attributes. Knowledge is seen as the accumulation of awareness of symbols, as they are organized into thoughts (Witherspoon 1977, 46). The inseparability of language, culture, and meaning is emphasized through the primordial relationship between symbols and substance. Scholars highlight the essential role of performativity in culturology, asserting that it lies in actions (deeds) rather than individuals (subjects), reinforcing the inseparability of language, culture, and meaning.

As Austin (1962, 132-146) succinctly puts it, performative language is something that does something to the world, although performative utterances must be uttered in appropriate circumstances for it to take effect. Speech act develops the performative force through the process of reiteration within some given provisional effects (Derrida 1988, 15). Under these pretexts, the conceptual view about gendered or social identity formation that performativity should be regarded performative-based as opposed to subject-based (Butler 1997, 156-161). Besides, while performative language is a basis for the processes for this, social identity is not an individual trait. The 'regulatory fiction' which has performative effects on identificatory praxes is responsible for the self-directed subjects' identity. Thus, the performative act of doing brings the performer into existence through the repetition of the deed. It is the (repetitive) deeds that bring to form their social identity into existence.

The subject, in performing the material-discursive articulation that provides for the likelihood of political agencies, is second to the performance since the subject is formed in and through the performances. Through literary means, the author-audience

has performatively acted in the continuous flow of the culture in ways of knowing and writing. This transpires where there is a process of generated meaning, thus, the process of generating cultural meaning (Keesing 1972, 299-332). To know a culture is like knowing a language. They are both mental realities. Furthermore, to describe a culture is like describing a language. Hence, the goal of ethnographic descriptions is the writing of 'cultural grammars'. The act of doing so provides the presentation of interpretations and emancipation from writing. The generation of symbolic interpretations happens through the sociology of knowledge. This embraces the understanding of the texts within the interpretive perspectives and the web of significance.

Culture is not something that occurs in human heads since meanings are public (Geertz 1973, 9-10). Under the aegis of logic, culture is public. There is a level of similarity in thoughts throughout humanity despite the different symbols people use to communicate. Thus, it would be effective to study symbols as patterns of social phenomena, rather than manners by which it may have penetrated mental processes. The symbols and myths provided by the structures (as affective connotations or constructions of denotations), facilitate meaning that, as maintained, constitute a cohesive narrative of existence.

Debates over the study of culture on ways of writings, and not of knowing, had magnetized attention ascribed to the literary niche where scholars established their authority and influence. Zooming in, cinematographic discourses provide a view of the internal tensions of ideologically charged "texts", which lie subordinate due to its filmic presentation of independence. As films are analyzed in different frameworks — from the stricter technical perspective to the more embedded ideological and semiological suggestions — it is significant to be attentive that film is an art and arguably, a language that is exposed to 'readings' and 'writings'. Within the ambits of criticality, this serves as a medium to gather a clearer perspective of the creative statements, as well as the webs of significance that may be spun across the audience. As to what Barthes (1967, 30) posited, there is a reminder that one must consider the denoted meanings which may be restricted within the process of photochemical reproduction. With ample consciousness that these are codified and has no innate organization, one realizes that it is the denotation itself that is being constructed, organized, and to a certain extent codified.

Following the works of Derrida on the idea of deconstruction, (Spivak 1994, 159) instigated a proposal for the concept of 'strategic essentialism', which referred to a sort of temporary solidarity for social action. It is a strategy that nationalities, ethnic groups, or minority groups, can use to present themselves despite the differences that may exist between members of these groups. It fundamentally allows temporal role in the collective to "essentialize" themselves to flesh out their identity as they mature to achieve certain goals.

According to (Bhabha 1994, 158-160), the 'production of hybridization' is not only indicative of the condition of colonial enunciation, but rather a mark for the possibility of

counter-colonial resistance. Hybridity denotes those moments of civil disobedience within the discipline of law and order as signs of spectacular resistance. The theory of the ‘third space of enunciation’ asserts the difference in discourses. Likewise, he claims that the “transformational value of change lies in the re-articulation, or translation, of elements that are neither the One (unitary working class) nor the Other (the politics of gender) but something else besides which contests the terms and territories of both” (Young 1995, 22). The actualization of this rests within the reception of the idea of *differance* (internal dissonance). This operates within the examination of colonialism as a cultural text or system of meaning and importance on the performative aspect of cultural articulation (Bhabha 1994, 158-160).

By extrapolation, there is a pressing need to locate the questions within the realm of the beyond — ‘being in the beyond’ is to inhabit an intervening space and to lay the groundwork to revisit the present and redefine modernness (Bhabha 1994, 158-160). The social articulation of difference produced performatively in the ‘terms of engagement’, whether associative or opposed or from the perspectives of the minority, is a constant negotiation that pursues cultural hybridities in moments of historical alternation. Within these interstices are contentions and convergences on the ‘right to signify from the periphery of authorized power and privilege does not depend on the persistence of tradition’ (Bhabha 1994, 158-160), but rather depends on the power of tradition reinscribed across the environments of possibilities and oppositions. Identification is bestowed in the distinction of this tradition, which takes into form in terms of performing the past as it introduces other ‘cultural temporalities’ into the creation of tradition.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed narrative ethnography to analyze the relationship between informants’ experiences outside the shared story-world. The researcher incorporated steps from fieldwork-infused narratives into refined ethnographic storytelling to understand the hybrid culture of engagement. These methods had direct, intensive, and multifaceted impacts on the field of narrative praxis, complementing participant-observation and screen culture approaches. More so, the study involved watching, recording, and analyzing narrative cues in over 300 K-drama series. Online surfing, screen-grabbing, and conversations with resident-informants were conducted. Face-to-face conversations were initially held before the COVID-19 pandemic, but shifted to online chats due to lockdown restrictions. Despite pandemic challenges, one-on-one online conversations were scheduled, and a Google Form inquiry was used to gather insights. Measures for free and prior informed consent (FPIC) were followed, ensuring anonymity for resident-informants using pseudo names (see Table 1). Data on the language of film in K-dramas and online performative acts were collected and illustrated in the Inter-

Phenomenon Linguistic Cultural (IPLC) Model, derived from the researcher’s dissertation in Anthropology (Palileo, ALJEH 2023, 42, 45).

Table 1
Demographic profile of resident-informants under individual pseudo-names

Pseudo Name	Age Range	Educational Foundation	Current Occupation	Religious Affiliation	Spiritual Preference	Gender Preference	Geographic Residence	Online Residence
Alisha	18-29	BA/BS Student	N/A	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Quezon City	Twitter
Alma	30-39	MA/MS Student	Assistant Manager, Social Media	Roman Catholic	Agnostic	Female	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Amado	30-39	BA/BS Graduate	Senior Creative Producer	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Rizal	FB (Facebook)
Amalia	18-29	BA/BS Student	Theatre Arts Student	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Caloocan	FB (Facebook)
Carmela	30-39	PhD Graduate	Educator	N/A	N/A	LGBTQ+	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Chandra	50-59	MA/MS Student	Project Consultant	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Noveleta, Cavite	FB (Facebook)
Crispin	18-29	BA/BS Student	Student	Christian	Polytheism (Multiple God)	Male	Muntinlupa	FB (Facebook)
Daria	50-59	BA/BS Graduate	Housewife	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Emil	50-59	BA/BS Student	Freelance Writer	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Marikina City	FB (Facebook)
Farah	18-29	MA/MS Student	Content Producer/ Creative Entrepreneur	Roman Catholic	Polytheism (Multiple God)	Female	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Gia	18-29	MA/MS Student	Tutor	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Valenzuela City	FB (Facebook)
Gian	18-29	MA/MS Student	Museum Researcher	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Male	Cavite	FB (Facebook)
Jericho	40-49	MA/MS Student	Information Officer IV	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Jiana	30-39	MA/MS Graduate	Producer/Line Producer	Roman Catholic	Polytheism (Multiple God)	Female	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Kelvin	30-39	PhD Graduate	Asst. Professor	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Malabon	FB (Facebook)
Magan	60-75	MA/MS Graduate	Practicing Architect	Roman Catholic	Polytheism (Multiple God)	Female	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Margarita	30-39	BA/BS Graduate	Executive Assistant II	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Antipolo, Rizal	FB (Facebook)

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Pseudo Name	Age Range	Educational Foundation	Current Occupation	Religious Affiliation	Spiritual Preference	Gender Preference	Geographic Residence	Online Residence
Megan	30-39	BA/BS Graduate	Business Journalist	Catholic and Buddhist	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Quezon City	Multiple: FB, IG, Twitter
Mila	50-59	BA/BS Graduate	Housewife	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Caloocan	FB (Facebook)
Pia	18-29	BA/BS Graduate	Government Employee	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Antipolo, Rizal	FB (Facebook)
Raisa	18-29	BA/BS Graduate	Legal Assistant	Roman Catholic	Atheism (No deities)	Female	San Juan City	FB (Facebook)
Rasheed	18-29	MA/MS Student	Government Employee	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	-	Bulacan	FB (Facebook)
Alexa	18-29	BA/BS Graduate	Production Coordinator	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Male	Manila	Twitter
Anita	18-29	BA/BS Student	Student	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	California, USA	Instagram
Anna	18-29	BA/BS Graduate	Nurse Case Manager	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	California, USA	Instagram
Bayanai	30-39	MA/MS Student	Youth Development Officer	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Male	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Celeste	18-29	BA/BS Graduate	Tutor	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Celia	18-29	BA/BS Graduate	Department Manager, Marketing Comm.	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Bulacan	Twitter
Cyril	30-39	BA/BS Graduate	Segment Producer	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Quezon City	Instagram
Jeff	30-39	MA/MS Student	Program Manager	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Jem	40-49	BA/BS Graduate	University Research Associate II	Christian	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Jerod	18-29	BA/BS Graduate	Manager of Operations, Services	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Manila	FB (Facebook)
Kira	18-29	MA/MS Student	Freelance Writer	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Cavite	FB (Facebook)
Larissa	30-39	MA/MS Graduate	Teacher	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Tarlac	FB (Facebook)
Maya	30-39	BA/BS Graduate	Mother and Wife	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Baguio City	FB (Facebook)
Pancho	30-39	BA/BS Student	Scriptwriter	Christian	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Mandaluyong	FB (Facebook)

Pseudo Name	Age Range	Educational Foundation	Current Occupation	Religious Affiliation	Spiritual Preference	Gender Preference	Geographic Residence	Online Residence
Quana	18-29	MA/MS Student	Program Associate	Christian	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Quezon City, Manila	FB (Facebook)
Rane	40-49	BA/BS Graduate	Housewife	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Taguig City	FB (Facebook)
Ivan	40-49	BA/BS Graduate	Media Professional	Roman Catholic	Monotheism (Single God)	LGBTQ+	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)
Lani	40-49	BA/BS Graduate	Government Employee	-	Monotheism (Single God)	Female	Rizal	FB (Facebook)
Paco	40-49	BA/BS Graduate	Medical Professional	-	-	Male	USA	
Raul	50-59	PhD Graduate	Educator	-	-	LGBTQ+	Quezon City	FB (Facebook)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Glocalized (Trans)media

When watching K-dramas, smartphones were the most accessible device for 71.1% of resident-informants, followed by laptops (65.8%), and television (34.2%). Android tablets and iPads ranked fourth with 26.3%, while desktop computers or personal computers were used by 7.9% of users. A significant 92% of the resident-informants used online streaming platforms to watch K-drama series, with the majority (97.4%) identifying Netflix as the most popular platform. Viu (57.9%), KissAsian (55.3%), YouTube (34.2%), Facebook (28.9%), and Dramacool (28.9%) were also mentioned as streaming sources. Some resident-informants preferred downloading K-dramas to their gadgets or external hard drives instead of streaming directly online, avoiding the need for an internet connection.

Resident-informants estimated the time it takes to finish a K-drama series with 16 episodes when binge-watching. The majority (42%) said it takes three to five days, while 29% finish within one to two days. Thirteen percent can complete it in three days, and 11% take more than a week. A small percentage (3%) takes either one day or a month to finish. In terms of frequency, 32% of resident-informants stream K-dramas for an hour or two per day, while 29% watch for two to three hours a week. The rest varies depending on their availability and idle time.

Glocalized-Communized Habits

When asked about re-watching K-drama series, 61% of resident-informants affirmed that they watch K-dramas they have already seen or finished. On the other hand, 24% stated they do not re-watch. Some mentioned occasional re-watching or

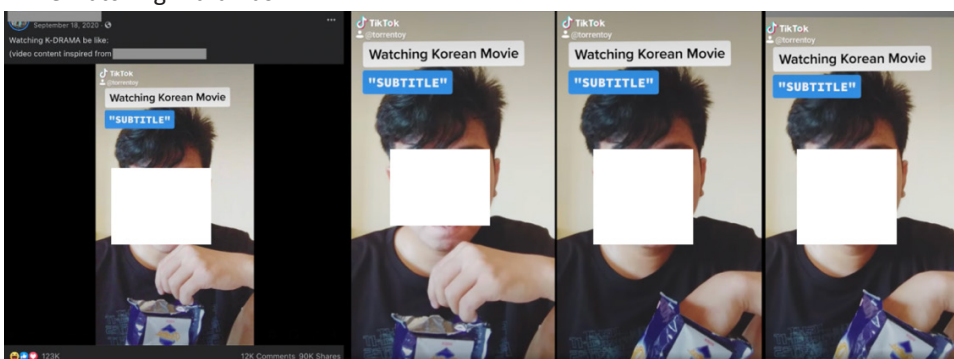
selecting specific episodes. Alisha and others mentioned emotional recall and feeling good, while Rasheed appreciates well-made production value. Jerod uses re-watching to review dialogue and character development, and Carmela benefits from better subtitle understanding during short lunch breaks. The prevalence of both binge-watching and re-watching among the resident-informants suggests strong implications for linguistic connections, encompassing affective, cerebral, experiential, and worldly experiences in the space of K-dramas.

The majority (92.1%) of resident-informants watch K-drama series by themselves, while 15.8% watch with family members, and 7.9% with friends. However, some clarify that even when watching with friends, it's mostly virtual, and they still consider it a solo experience. K-drama related-discussions are public, taking place in group chats and community webs. Almost all viewers (97%) watch K-dramas with subtitles, with a small percentage (3%) mentioning they can understand the language without relying solely on subtitles. None of the resident-informants indicated they could watch K-dramas without subtitle assistance.

This information provides a wide spectrum of knowledge. Subtitles in K-dramas play a momentous role in residents' engagement with textual discourses. A viral video post on Facebook, created on September 18, 2020, demonstrated how viewers appear when watching through subtitles. Six months later, it garnered 123,000 reactions and 90,000 shares, with residents expressing excitement and tagging friends to watch the relatable video post (see Figure 2). Watching with subtitles has become normalized and widely accepted, especially among K-drama enthusiasts, as a way of life.

Figure 2

Facebook post that went viral mimicking Korean accent and expressions while watching K-dramas



To a certain degree, this communized-normal way of watching K-dramas with subtitles classifies them as a hot medium, according to Marshall McLuhan's distinction of hot and cool media where the medium is the message. Hot media fully engage one's

senses, while cool media engage fewer senses and require more viewer interaction (Baran and Davis 1995, 229-232). The residents' claims that they give full focus when watching K-dramas further support this communized-normal approach.

During moments of watching K-dramas, resident-informants characterized their behavior and level of focus. The majority (86.8%) said they give their full attention. Some (21.1%) admitted to simultaneously surfing the Internet and social media, while others (13.2%) mentioned doing tasks like homework. A small portion (7.9%) chats with friends or family, and 5.3% do household chores. Only 2.6% eat meals while streaming K-dramas.

On Hangeul-Literacy

The resident-informants were asked to self-assess their comprehension and proficiency in the Korean language while watching K-dramas. The majority (55.3%) are familiar with 10 to 20 Korean words and can speak some five to 10 words or expressions in conversations. On the other hand, 28.9% admitted not understanding any Korean words without English subtitles. Additionally, 21.1% can speak and use five to 10 words or expressions in everyday interactions. Some (13.2%) are familiar with the Korean words in dialogues but cannot repeat them specifically. There are also outliers with varying levels of comprehension and working proficiency in the Korean language among the resident-informants.

This information is notably relevant to the classification of K-drama as a hot medium. The residents' high focus at 86.8% while watching contributes to this classification. The communized-normal means of watching with subtitles allows for Korean language literacy among residents, with many becoming familiar with 10 to 20 Korean words and able to use five to 10 of them in everyday interactions. Additionally, 53% of them search for facts and meanings of specific terms or expressions from K-dramas on the Internet. This search revolves around better understanding the context of the situation, historical data, cultural practices, social norms, and more. On the other hand, 47% do not engage in further searches.

For some residents, like Alma and Gian, Google searches while watching help them gain more insights into related issues reflected in K-drama narratives. Rasheed, with an intermediate level of Hangeul proficiency, occasionally watches without subtitles but still looks up new words, especially slang and local jargon used in K-dramas like *ManGwanBu*, a shortened term for *Manuen Gwangum Putakdeurimnida*, which means 'please give us a lot of attention'. For him, learning such words reflects Korea's culture and is personally important.

K-dramas: Film or Television Series?

In discussing the Internet's role in transmedia platforms, one key difference between television and cinema is the silent conventions. For instance, it is acceptable to leave the television set, unlike in movie theaters. The Internet has brought about significant changes, enabling downloading, recording shows, watch-parties, and streaming, making binge-watching common and easy. In the historical perspective, binge-watching represents a new example of progress in viewer behavior. The distinctions between TV episodic narrative (series drama) and serialized episodic narrative (serial drama) are evident, primarily seen in soap operas. Serialized television offers years of engagement with varying viewer encounters, leading to diverse utility and pleasures. However, constant functions and pleasure remain critical components of the serialized experience.

When asked about their perception of Korean dramas, the online Filipino community resident-informants had varying classifications. The supermajority, 62%, considered K-dramas as TV series. A significant part, 35%, identified them as Film series. Three percent regarded K-dramas as both a TV series and Film series. Farrah associated K-dramas with TV series due to their initial stardom in the Philippines through GMA7 network, regardless of genres. Jiana was confused about the terminology, unsure whether K-dramas are called K-films, affecting her classification. Kelvin, on the other hand, firmly categorized K-dramas as TV series, citing their plot and endings revolving around individual and collective strength and triumph. For him, films are more trailblazing, radical, and independent in nature.

Among the resident-informants, a valued portion considered K-dramas as a Film series. Their justifications reveal a layering and hierarchy of standards between TV shows and films. Residents like Alma and others saw K-dramas as a piece of art, exhibiting excellence akin to films. Pancho pointed to the episode's running time, making K-dramas similar to full-length films. For Jerod and Kira, the evolution of binge-watching turned K-dramas into a film series. Some residents saw K-dramas as both a TV and Film series, considering it an umbrella term for Korean entertainment viewed on various platforms. The audiovisual of K-dramas is strategically exhibited on TV and streaming services alike.

To categorically identify a serialized episodic narrative as either television or film, it is important to consider developments within the popular moving-image culture. One significant factor is the presence of leading, adamant, and unsettling visions in each serialized experience. The cinema and television are increasingly moving closer together and fusing with other forms for various reasons. Today's serial dramas extend across multiple media platforms, including media franchises consisting of series, serial dramas, feature films, video games, comic strips, toys, novels, musical recordings, etc. These trans-and-multiple media forms offer people opportunities to engage with others, focusing on narratives, character development, and other elements present in K-drama production values. Quality and mainstream indulgence are not necessarily contradictory;

what matters most are the opportunities and means to realize and actualize the creative talents of community members in using the language form and medium with interactional instincts, aided by their varying levels of literacies.

The influence of television and cinema on each other remains constant. Beyond their distinction, what matters most are the cinematic qualities. Anything seen or heard from a screen, regardless of size, falls under the realm of cinema. Cultural development steers in this direction, reframing novelistic, cinematic, and televisual aspects during production. Audiovisual stylistics undergo alterations, with overall production look, sound, and tonal vibes serving as important signatures that reflect the spoken, read, and interpreted language. Distinctive relations exist between the narrative and its language's speak-ability, read-ability, and interpretive aspects. The appeal lies in developing intimate connections with narrative characters as they evolve. These connections are feasible within the linguistic-cultural spectrum. Visual consistency becomes a strength in episodic series, while look and sound-overs create an identity that allows expressive deviations.

The resident-informants closely observe cultural textual discourses in K-drama series. Their levels of literacy enable them to interpret and engage with these discourses at various levels. These interactive relations between language, thought, and communication connect conversations across cultures through K-dramas. The linguistic-cultural transactions allow active users to engage with and maneuver these literate inventions. As users access different cultures and experiences, they also gain proficiency in "reading" and "writing" media symbols, fostering the inertia of these symbols.

The Repetitive: Operations of the Language of Film

From the online resident-informants, the earliest recorded date of watching K-dramas dates back to the first month at the turn of the century. While the most recent one started watching in July 2020 during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Magan vividly recalled watching *I Loved Spring Waltz* in 2006 with her firstborn grandchild, creating special memories between them as the grandchild was the same age as the lead protagonists. To this day, the K-drama remains a bond between Magan and her grandchild, and they occasionally recall scenes from it. Scenes like playing hide-and-seek in a grapeseed field, piggyback rides, and the girl calling out "oppa" hold a special place in their hearts. Other residents also shared scenes and dialogues from K-dramas that deeply resonated with their memory and consciousness, reinforcing the intensity of emotions they feel towards Korean culture reflected in these shows.

During his engagement, Amado observed that K-dramas often feature characters with stories of unrequited love and portrayals of antagonist-mothers to the male protagonists who are rich and powerful. He also noticed that the relationship between the couple-protagonists usually starts as enemies, with a cat-dog kind of distaste, before

they eventually fall in love with each other. Jem noticed some repetition despite binary opposition, like characters hitting the nape of another as opposed to showing great respect to someone older, even with just a few months' age difference, in K-dramas.

Certain repeating non-material cultures were also observed, such as the use of the first snowfall to signify the discovery of one's true love and the manifestations of Confucian ethics in society. Kelvin pointed out that the latter is reflected in K-dramas' themes of hard work, filial piety, and respect for superiors. In terms of words often used in line-dialogues, Maya mentioned the repetitive Hangeul words for 'I am sorry' and 'thank you'. On technical repeats, Quana recollected K-dramas' repeated use of slow-motion effects. Meanwhile, Farrah noted the added layers of effort for numerous angles and shots exerted for just one scene.

Rasheed mentioned how all of these observed repetitive and cliché line-dialogues, scenes, settings, and/or combinations of elements seem to appeal mostly in countries outside Korea. He said cliché dramas were given low ratings by the Korean general public. Rasheed pointed out that K-dramas were made marketable this way, as they serve as South Korea's exportable goods to the world. Additionally, these elements aid in forging the identity of K-dramas, besides their financial capital. He cited *Reply 1988* (by TvN) as a K-drama that is widely popular in the Philippines, primarily due to the K-drama's large fund of support for its creatives. Furthermore, he explained that major Korean broadcasting agencies such as OCN, CJ, TvN, and JTBC pour in large capital in making K-dramas because they are cable networks. Thus, viewers pay to watch these dramas in Korea. Netflix, on the other hand, allocates approximately 70% of its investment in the Asian market to South Korean dramas, even though it is not a cable television catering only to Korean viewers. It has grown internationally since the late 1990s and has been catering to Korean cultural materials. This is similar to other major Korean broadcasting agencies that utilize online streaming, like other paywalled and subscription-based streaming platforms such as Hulu and Viu, among others.

This discussion leads to the transitions and hybridity that, in foresight, present a challenge in defining terms. These evolutions in media platforms are constantly in progress, driven by technological innovations and intertwined with the fluidity in people's cultures of living.

The (Un)conscious Performatives

The related K-drama maneuvers in performative acts and discourses of the online Filipino residents are best accentuated on both conscious and unconscious levels, manifesting in the forms and functions of language and symbols. These dynamics become evident in the momentum of interactional instincts of the resident-informants. To shed light on the resident-informants' own performative acts while watching K-drama series,

they narrated the content of their posts, reflections, appraisals, and contentions on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Their engagements and involvement in online discussions showcase their own performative acts. This section delves into the intention and motivation of the resident-informants for such participation on the Internet and within their online community residence.

Maya posts K-drama insights as notes to herself. Amado and Daria aim to influence others with their posts to share the joy they experienced. Amalia's posts show appreciation to K-drama makers. Alisha uses Facebook and Twitter to express her overpowering impressions since she lacks someone to share them with. Larissa's K-drama posts showcase her fulfillment. Central to Jericho's online K-drama posts has been his focus on its film form and aesthetics while he continuously connect his post within its local milieu.

In tracing the popularity of social media platforms that are most utilized in posting and sharing K-drama related content, the majority of resident-informants (76.3%) prefer using Facebook for posting K-drama content. Twitter comes in second place as a mainstream social media platform, with 39.5% of users. Facebook Messenger, known as Messenger, ranks third at 28.9%. Instagram, a popular social media giant, follows in fourth place for sharing K-drama information. Viber is also used by 5.3% of resident-informants for their K-drama reflections. Additionally, 5.3% of resident-informants do not post anything about K-dramas. In summary, resident-informants have identified five social media sites, including two messaging platforms, where they share their reviews and sentiments about K-dramas.

Some resident-informants also expressed their involvement in private chat groups where they engage in deep discussions about dated K-drama series they collectively enjoy. For example, Magan mentioned her ties with these chat groups, which serve as platforms for free-flowing discourses on K-drama characters' struggles and the appearance of cute "*oppas*" (older brothers) from their favorite K-dramas. Magan finds comfort in these chat groups as they allow her to freely express her admiration for the *oppas* without feeling judged. One of the chat groups includes women in their forties to fifties who openly converse about their admiration for the *oppas*. Chandra even created another K-drama chat group to encourage members to support this research through their valuable insights. Within these chat group conversations, members eagerly expressed their excitement to provide their insights and shared their apprehension about encountering "*kilig*" questions in the Google form inquiry. It is used to describe the exhilarating and romantic experience that brings a rush of excitement and elation¹. The term *kilig* is widely used in streaming websites to describe genres of films and various episodic series, including those on Netflix.

1 The Filipino word "*kilig*" was officially added to the Oxford dictionary in 2016.

(In)-transitions

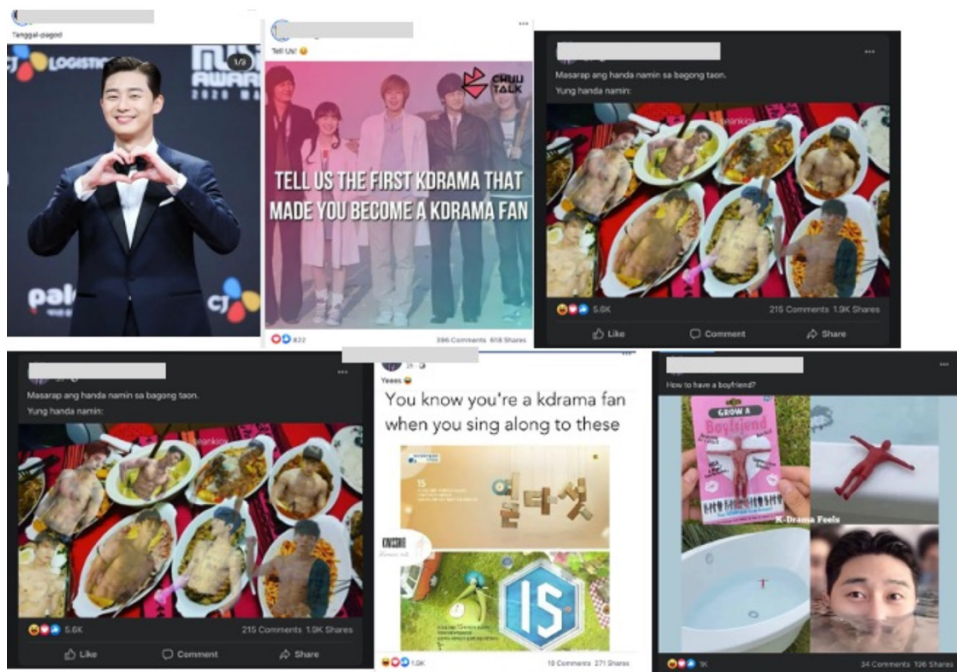
In an inquiry that evaluates whether the resident-informants are intrigued by the potential reactions generated from their social media posts, particularly from their real-life friends, 42% of them straight up answered that they were curious about how their social media mutuals and followers perceive their posts and the number of shares regarding K-dramas. This was followed by 37% of resident-informants who said that they were sometimes inquisitive about other people's reactions. The remaining 21% of the resident-informants stated that they were not at all intrigued by the potential reactions of their friends online regarding their K-drama posts.

In addition to the preceding narratives, the resident-informants' participation in this part puts forth the content that they normally write, comment, and communicate through Facebook reactions. Despite the scale of social media activities, these interactions and engagements warrant a better understanding of the nature and behavior of resident-informants. From the pool of resident-informants, 42% indicated that they generally participate in K-drama related discussions online. Thirty-nine percent of them expressed that they sometimes partake in these online involvements in K-drama related posts. The remaining 18% answered that they do not play a part in these online engagements on K-drama posts (Palileo, ALJEH 2023, 56).

More of these performative acts by the online Filipino community residents mimicked product endorsements by favored actors doing so. Posts of fangirling through possession of throw-pillows with faces of Korean actors were abundant, as well as shots of favorite K-drama actors as screensavers on their mobile phones (Palileo, ALJEH 2023, 57). These performatives indicated the lived lives centered around K-dramas. Several more consisted of 'add-to-cart' memes of their preferred *oppa*-celebrities in online shops or of putting half-naked torso-photo memes of male actors on top of Korean dishes served in plates (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

Other performative acts of resident-informants stimulated by K-dramas



The resident-informants largely post and interact within their (online and offline) communities due to various intentions. Alma said it is to discuss the narratives and frustrations on some of them. Amado converses with his friends through their chatgroup to find common relatabilities. He mentioned how he largely relates to many of the scenes in *The World of the Married* (2020), as he, too, recalls his mother’s admirable effort to fight for their family against his father’s mistress. He also mentioned the tension that happened among viewers caused by *Start-Up* (2020), where the ‘K-house’ was divided into two teams representing the two male lead characters, Ji-Pyeong and Do-San. Amado’s chat-member friends even laid out the pros and cons about these two male characters in the K-drama. This battle of the two teams ensued within the online and offline communities (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Meme about the tension between male lead characters in *Start-Up* (2020)



Coincidentally, at the height of the ongoing tension on this, the researcher happened to encounter a truck while going to work, with a tag-plate hanging by its rear — that reads ‘good boy’. Instantaneously relating it to *Start-Up* and Ji-Pyeong, photos of the truck and the tag-plate were taken (see Figure 5).

Figure 5

Photo of ‘good boy’ in relation to the character of Ji-Pyeong in *Start-Up* (2020)



CONCLUSION

Since individuals learn wherever and whenever learning is available, the actualization of individual meanings, common meanings, and common acceptance is prominent. This is derived from an interdependence of language with social structures, essentially translating cultural growth. The K-drama performative-watch is observable in enculturation, socialization, acceleration of language flows, and influence of societies. Within this environment is the inseparability of language, history, culture, and meaning. The interrelationship's role is essential in the operations of performativity in the processes of historical culturology. Performative acts circulate in the conversations within the communities of the resident-informants, where conversations go through maturation processes from individual to common meanings and acceptance within the inertia and momentum of symbols. Discourses in these performative acts extend beyond the online community, as residents showcase K-drama textual discourses connecting to everyday cultures of living. Reflected in these discursive articulations are various forms and functions of linguistic-culture aiding them in conveying the on-goings in their living practices within their communities. There is inertia in symbols and discourses, attributed to the residents' meaning-making sense at different levels of K-dramas' use and production elements, and its state of existence is in consistent flow.

The cultivation of reading, writing, and conversations is evident in the K-drama characters. Aural and visual elements serve as common means of recognizing perceptions of textual discourses and contextualizing them in one's own environment, unifying ordinary processes in human societies and minds. In these spaces, online Filipino community residents continuously appreciate a whole way of life and learn through their ingenious efforts. The discovery of common meanings through K-drama conversations connects the resident-informants, essential in (re)making shared meanings and fostering momentum in literacies and cultural transactions. Continuous inspirations from cultural materials closer to home thread through spaces where the emotions and consciousness of resident-informants feel at home. Technological progress is important, but it does not appear to be a deterrent or incentive for residents' continued connectedness. Industrial progress might alter platform capacities, but the inter-relations through language within individuals persist as a nucleus in cultural diversities and hybridity.

Understanding the processes by which meaning is motivated holds significance beyond simply learning the interpretations of cultural meanings. This study investigates cultural ways, historicism, measures, and routes in the activities of resident-informants, reflected and shown by narratives. Knowledge as an account of awareness of symbols is organized into thoughts and actions. Social conventions and institutional legitimate use of language have specific instances. In practice, residents develop their force through alternative reiteration, enabling the creation of meanings, concurrences in cultural growth, and harmonies of co-existence. Differences in social articulations are addressed

through ongoing negotiations, allowing for cultural hybridity in transformative processes. The reality, as a mirror of language, unravels diversities attributed to various grounds from nature and environment.

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