



Morpho-phonological Variation and Emotional Attitudes of Ideophones in Korean, Compared to English*

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ABSTRACT

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In this study, we examine the pragmatics and semantics surrounding emotive ideophones in Korean, compared to English, treating them as a subset of expressive elements, which are analyzed within the framework of conventional implicature (Potts 2005). By delving into the intricate connotational nuances present in both positive and negative variants of ideophones, we demonstrate how systematic phonetic and morphological alterations contribute to the generation of numerous derivations. A notable feature of Korean ideophones, distinct from English, lies in their ability to convey the speaker's emotional stance—either positive or negative—through specific derivations of ideophonic terms, in addition to their inherent meaning pertaining to sound, shape, or movement. To elucidate the subtle emotional differences, a hybrid analysis of ideophones is proposed, situated at the intersection of pragmatics and semantics. This approach effectively captures the nuanced differences across a wide array of ideophonic variants. Through a meticulous examination of potential variants for ideophones, the study aims to unveil the systematic nature of expressive elements within our grammatical structure. Finally, the identification of yet another instance of expressive elements in language lends support to the concept of multidimensionality.

KEYWORDS

emotive ideophone, expressives, conventional implicature, Korean, English

1. Introduction

Ideophones, a unique class of linguistic expressions, serve as powerful tools for vividly conveying sensory perceptions and experiences. Unlike English, in the Korean language, ideophones play a crucial role not only in communicating sensory information but also in conveying nuanced emotional and affective states of the speaker. This study examines the inherent duality present in the sentiments expressed through ideophones, often reflecting negative or positive connotations.

While previous literature has discussed the semantic properties of ideophones in both English and Korean, and their ability to evoke vivid imagery and emotions, the precise nature of the negative versus positive sentiment within ideophones remains relatively understudied.

The inventory of ideophones in Korean, including mimetics of sound or onomatopoeia, is considered one of the largest among world languages. The Korean national dictionary records approximately 30,000 ideophones, and this inventory continues to expand due to the productive nature of ideophone derivation and coinage. The systematic nature of the ideophone system in Korean, with its internal grammar, has been noted in previous research. A distinguishing feature of Korean ideophones is their systematic utilization of sound symbolism, wherein the alternation of yin/yang (dark/bright) vowels plays a significant role in conveying meaning and sentiment. This linguistic phenomenon reflects rich cultural and philosophical heritage in Korea, which emphasizes concepts of balance and harmony. Through such manipulation of vowel qualities, Korean ideophones intricately depict sensory experiences with emotional nuances.

In this paper, we explore the dichotomy between negative and positive sentiments encapsulated within ideophones. Drawing from existing literature on sound symbolism and ideophones, our goal is to elucidate the underlying mechanisms through which these linguistic constructs encode affective meaning. We aim to uncover the intricate interplay between phonetic features and emotional valence in Korean ideophones. Further, our study seeks to contribute to a broader grasp of linguistic diversity and its intersection with emotional attitude. By delving into the complexities of Korean ideophones, compared to English ideophones, we illuminate the distinctive landscape of ideophones and offer valuable insights into the universal principles governing the interrelation between sound and meaning in language. By bridging the theoretical underpinnings of linguistics with empirical analysis, our findings have the potential to enhance our understanding of the intricate interplay between language and cognition.

2. Morpho-phonological Derivation of Native Ideophones

2.1 Sound Symbolism of Ideophones

One of the most intriguing aspects of ideophones revolves around phonetic symbolism. Sound symbolism, as defined by Hinton et al. (1994), refers to a hypothesized systematic relationship between sound and meaning. Ohala (1997, p. 1) observes that it is widely assumed that most meanings conveyed by speech signals exhibit "a purely arbitrary sound-to-meaning relation." However, the notion of a non-arbitrary relationship between the physical aspects of a speech signal and its meaning dates back at least to Plato's time, as evidenced in his work "Cratylus," where Socrates debates whether names for things are arbitrary or a natural reflection of the things named.

Phonetically natural classes of speech sounds, for example, are known to be systematically associated with expressions of size across languages (Morton 1977, Ohala 1997, Shinohara and Kawahara 2012). In addition, sound symbolism for politeness marking has been observed in the prior literature: high F0 tends to be associated with politeness or deference, while low F0 tends to express anger, aggression, or threat.

In an experimental study on sound and size using nonce words, Shinohara and Kawahara (2012) noted that three phonetic/acoustic factors—namely, the height, backness of vowels, and voicing in obstruents—play a role: /a, o/ (lower) > larger, /i/ (higher). They also hinted at the possibility of a parallel association in Korean: aspirated consonants > larger tense consonants.

Regarding sound symbolism in Korean, Sohn (1999, p. 96) remarks that the Korean lexicon contains several thousands of sound symbolic words, most of which belong to the native stock and possess delicate "Sprachgeföhls" (speaking feels) in addition to connotational nuances. These words not only enhance vividness, expressiveness, and vitality in daily human interactions and are also widely utilized for their effect in literary works of all genres.

Indeed, the extensive use of phonetic symbolism in Korean extends beyond ideophones to various adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and even deictics (Yoon 2018). As noted by Martin (1962), Korean employs a system of sound symbolism for connotational variants of words. Such alternations of consonants and vowels in sound symbolic words bring about systematic and productive connotation shifts, allowing native speakers to effortlessly predict the resulting form and its nuance (Kim 1977).

The following examples compare English and Korean in terms of ideophones for describing spinning motion: Whereas English ideophones in (1) lack any morpho-phonological variants, a single Korean ideophone *pingkul* allow at least five different variants through vowel or consonant alternations. These examples illustrate how vowel alternations in (2) and consonant alternations in (3) even give rise to connotation shifts concerning size, speed, or force of movement:

- (1) a. *whirligig* [English]
b. *twizzle*
c. *swirl*
d. *spinny*
e. *whirl*
f. *twirl*
g. *swivel*
- (2) a. *pingkul* [i] 'turn round and round' [Korean]
b. *payngkul* [ε] 'turn round and round' (the circle involved is smaller; movement faster)
- (3) a. *pingkul* [b] 'turn round and round'
b. *phingkul* [p] 'turn round and round' (movement is more powerful and faster)
c. *ppingkul* [pp] 'turn round and round' (movement is more powerful and faster) (Kim 1977, p. 67)

The correlation between phoneme alternation and connotation shift is also evident in ideophones. In fact, ideophones exhibit even greater versatility, given the rich array of morpho-phonological tools available in Korean to express various emotional attitudes through systematic alternations in ideophones.

An important theoretical implication of this analysis is that the meaning of ideophones can be understood as two-dimensional. First of all, the semantic aspect entails the indication of sensory perceptions or experiences.

Second, regarding the pragmatic aspect, the situation or mental state of the speaker is reflected in the choice of derivational morpho-phonology for ideophones.

2.2 Positive vs. Negative Variants of Ideophones

Compared to other languages like English, Korean is renowned for its extensive repertoire of ideophones, which serve to convey a wide range of sensory experiences, including sound, shape, and movement. These ideophones often exhibit subtle differences in terms of size, intensity, and emotional attitudes. This leads to an important question: How does the Korean language manage to express such a diverse array of aspects through ideophones?

Such level of sophistication of ideophonic system can be attributed to two main factors in Korean. First, phonetic alternations of consonants and/or vowels, including the use of yin/yang or dark/bright vowels, are possible (to be discussed in Section 2.2). Second, as an agglutinative language, Korean allows for productive and cumulative permutations such as prefixation, suffixation, or reduplication (to be discussed in Section 2.3). With this multifaceted system for generating highly nuanced expressions, Korean uniquely caters to the need for capturing the delicate nuances of a speaker's emotive stance, as well as subtle differences in size, intensity, or movement.

As illustrated in the following examples, ideophones, including onomatopoeia and mimetic words, in English ideophones tend to be separately lexicalized for ones with positive or negative emotive stance, as in (4). Korean, on the other hand, exhibit a rich array of emotive variants of the same base ideophonic item through phonological derivations, as in (5).

- (4) English ideophones with positive vs. negative emotive stance [English]
- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. | <i>vibrant</i> | 'colorful.pos.att' | vs. | <i>gaudy</i> | 'colorful.neg.att' |
| b. | <i>bubbling</i> | 'boiling sound.pos.att' | vs. | <i>furious</i> | 'boiling sound.neg.att' |
| c. | <i>plump</i> | 'chubby.pos.att' | vs. | <i>blobby</i> | 'obese.neg.att' |
| d. | <i>sparkling</i> | 'flashing.pos.att' | vs. | <i>glimmering</i> | 'flashing.neg.att' |
| e. | <i>dewy</i> | 'moist.pos.att' | vs. | <i>damp</i> | 'soggy.neg.att' |
| f. | <i>soothingly</i> | 'gently.pos.att' | vs. | <i>listlessly</i> | 'sneaky.neg.att' |
| g. | <i>gurgling</i> | 'flowing liquid sound.pos.att' | vs. | <i>sluggishly</i> | 'flowing liquid sound.neg.att' |
- (5) Korean ideophones with positive vs. negative emotive stance [Korean]
- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----|
| a. | <i>alloktallok</i> | 'colorful.pos.att' | | | vs. |
| | <i>ellwuktellwuk</i> | 'colorful.neg.att' | (possibly with stains) | | |
| b. | <i>pokulpokul</i> | 'boiling sound.pos.att' | (smaller motion) | | vs. |
| | <i>pwukulpwukul</i> | 'boiling sound.neg.att' | (larger motion) | | |
| c. | <i>photongphotong</i> | 'chubby.pos.att' | (smaller size) | | vs. |
| | <i>phitwungphitwung</i> | 'obese.neg.att' | (larger size) | | |
| d. | <i>panccakpanccak</i> | 'flashing.pos.att' | (smaller motion) | | vs. |
| | <i>pencekpenccak</i> | 'flashing.neg.att' | (larger motion) | | |
| e. | <i>chokchok</i> | 'moist.pos.att' | (mildly moist texture) | | vs. |
| | <i>chwukchwuk</i> | 'soggy.neg.att' | (excessively moist texture) | | |
| f. | <i>salccak</i> | 'gently.pos.att' | (smaller motion) | | vs. |
| | <i>sulccek</i> | 'sneaky.neg.att' | (larger motion) | | |
| g. | <i>colcol</i> | 'flowing liquid sound.pos.att' | (softer sound/motion) | | vs. |
| | <i>cwulcwul</i> | 'flowing liquid sound.neg.att' | (louder sound/motion) | | |

One of the theoretical implications of the current study is that by delineating an Emotional Index for expressive items within the sentiment lexicon in Korean, we can predict the manner in which multiple occurrences of expressive elements contribute to reinforcing a speaker's positive or negative emotions.

2.3 Data Analysis Phonetic Variation in English vs. Korean

In this subsection, we show how systematically vowel alternations contribute to connotation shifts in Korean. In English, on the other hand, some group of vowels may tend to convey a certain meaning in terms of the type of sound or movement, but the connotation does not seem to concern emotional state. For instance, high-front vowels like [i] in drip and ping often convey sharp, crisp, or light sounds, but might be neutral in terms of emotive stance of the speaker.

(6) Vowel alternation in English

a. <i>drip</i>	vs.	<i>drop</i>	[English]
b. <i>clank</i>	vs.	<i>clunk</i>	
c. <i>ping</i>	vs.	<i>pong</i>	
d. <i>splish</i>	vs.	<i>splash</i>	

The intensification effect in Korean can be achieved through phoneme variation, and the fundamental patterns of phoneme variations adhere to the rule of vowel harmony: (i) yan (bright) vowels such as /a/, /ay/, /o/ tend to avoid co-occurrence with yin (dark) vowels such as /e/, /ey/, /u/ within the word boundary; and (ii) the type of vowels in the stem (i.e., yin vs. yang) determines the type of vowels in its suffix.

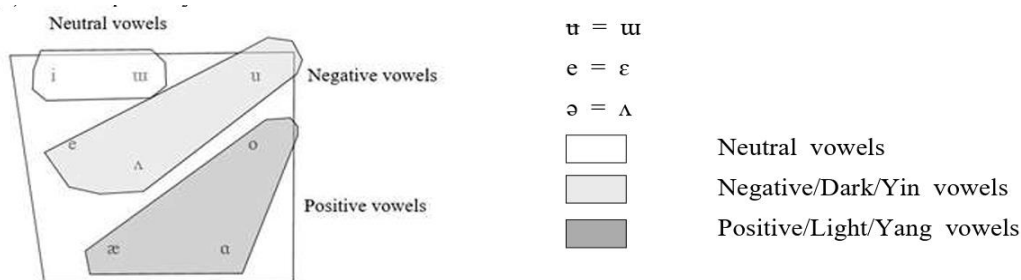
Kim (1985) notes that despite gradual contamination influenced by Chinese loanwords and the historical loss of certain sounds, the rule of vowel harmony remains applicable to native ideophones. Specifically, the group of yan vowels in the ideophonic term tends to connote diminution, conveying qualities like lightness, brightness, quietness, or affection, while alternation to yin vowels evokes opposite attitudes such as darkness, heaviness, or slowness.

(7) Vowel alternation due to vowel harmony (Kim 1985, p. 432; emphasis ours)

<i>hayah-ta</i>	<i>white</i>	<i>heyeh-ta</i>	[Korean]
<i>ppalkah-ta</i>	<i>red</i>	<i>ppelkeh-ta</i>	
<i>kkamah-ta</i>	<i>black</i>	<i>kkemeh-ta</i>	
<i>phalah-ta</i>	<i>green/blue</i>	<i>phelah-ta</i>	
<i>nolah-ta</i>	<i>yellow</i>	<i>nuleh-ta</i>	

In (8), Koo and Rhee (2018) illustrates how the system of sound symbolism works for consonants and vowels in Korean (Kim 1977, Kim-Renaud 1976, Martin 1962, Koo 2007).

(8) vowel polarity (Koo and Rhee 2018)



This diagram shows three categories of vowels: positive/light vowels, negative/dark vowels, and neutral vowels, each with distinct characteristics. The positive/light vowels include [a], [o], [æ], and their associated diphthongs, typically used to describe small, delicate, and bright objects, or movements evoking sensations of lightness. In contrast, the negative/dark vowels comprise [ə], [e], [u], and their diphthongs, typically employed to depict large, crude, or dark objects, as well as movements evoking sensations of heaviness or darkness.

Diffloth (1994) further observes that [i] is utilized for large, whole objects or movements, while [a] is selected for small objects or movements. Note that this contradicts assertions made by Sapir (1929), Newman (1933), Jespersen (1933), Tarte (1974), and Ultan (1978), as noted by Koo and Rhee (2018).

Additionally, consonant alternations contribute to connotation shifts in Korean. In English, however, some group of consonants may exhibit some tendency to carry a certain meaning in terms of the type of sound or movement, but the connotation does not seem to concern emotional state. For instance, plosive consonants like [p] or [d] in thump and thud convey abrupt or explosive sounds, but might be neutral in terms of emotive stance of the speaker.

(9) Consonant alternation in English

- | | | | |
|------------------|-----|---------------|-----------|
| a. <i>thump</i> | vs. | <i>thud</i> | [English] |
| b. <i>chirp</i> | vs. | <i>cheep</i> | |
| c. <i>rustle</i> | vs. | <i>ruffle</i> | |

In Korean, on the other hand, the transition from the word-initial lenis stop /k/ to the fortis consonant /kk/ in the following example of color terms gives rise to an emphatic effect, indicating a shift in the quantity/quality of the color and/or the associated emotional attitude.

(10) Consonant alternation in Korean (Kim 1985, p. 432)

- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------|
| <i>kamah-ta</i> | <i>black</i> | <i>kkamah-ta</i> | [Korean] |
| <i>kemeh-ta</i> | <i>black</i> | <i>kkem-eh-ta</i> | |
| <i>kem-ta</i> | <i>black</i> | <i>kkem-ta</i> | |
| <i>palkah-ta</i> | <i>red</i> | <i>ppalkh-ta</i> | |
| <i>pelkeh-ta</i> | <i>red</i> | <i>ppelkeh-ta</i> | |

Furthermore, Koo (2007, p. 201-202) emphasizes the force-dynamic iconicity reflected by articulatory gestures, where forces involved in tensing and aspiration are systematically reflected in the semanticization of word derivation and the creation of new words. Additionally, Koo and Rhee (2018) note that among the plain-tensed-

aspirated tripartite—p-ph-pp, t-th-tt, k-kh-kk, c-ch-cc, etc.—in Korean, tense forms tend to indicate more localized and intensified force, as in (11b), while aspirated forms tend to denote more strongly exerted but diffused force, as in (12b) (Koo and Rhee 2018).

- (11) a. *pokulpokul* e.g. water boiling in a small pot [Korean]
 b. *ppokulppokul* e.g. thick stew boiling
- (12) a. *collangcollang* e.g. a colt walking behind its mother
 b. *chollangchollang* e.g. a colt trotting along behind its mother

With the systematic pattern observed in Korean, we can naturally predict the distinction between *pokulpokul* meaning ‘boiling sound’ with a positive attitude and *pwukulpwukul* representing ‘boiling sound’ with a negative attitude. This difference is illustrated by the following examples.

- (13) a. *masissnun* *ccikay-ka* ***pokulpokul*** [Korean]
 delicious stew-Nom boiling_sound.pos.att
- b. *#masissnun* *ccikay-ka* ***pwukulpwukul***
 delicious stew-Nom boiling_sound.neg.att

2.4 Morphological Variation

In addition to phoneme variation, Korean makes extensive use of morphological derivation to achieve nuanced meaning differences. In color terms, for instance, emphatic prefixes such as *say-* (for words with yang vowels) or *si-* (for ones with yin vowels) can be attached to emphatic variants like *kkamah-ta* (instead of *kamah-ta*) for even stronger emphatic effects (Yoon 2018).

- (14) Emphatic prefixes
- | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <i>kamah-ta</i> | <i>black</i> | <i>kkamah-ta</i> | <i>say-kkamah-ta</i> | [Korean] |
| <i>kemeh-ta</i> | <i>black</i> | <i>kkemeh-ta</i> | <i>si-kkemeh-ta</i> | |
| <i>palkah-ta</i> | <i>red</i> | <i>ppalkah-ta</i> | <i>say-ppalkah-ta</i> | |
| <i>pelkeh-ta</i> | <i>red</i> | <i>ppelkeh-ta</i> | <i>si-ppelkeh-ta</i> | (Kim 1985, p. 432) |

These emphatic prefixes are only attachable to ideophones with initial (emphatic) tense consonants when available, as observed in the cases of variants of the color term for 'red' and 'black.' In such instances, we assume that the dual effects of the fortis consonant and emphatic prefix result in an approximately doubly stronger attitude. However, in other ideophones without the option of alternation to tense consonants, such as *hayah-ta* for 'white', *nolah-ta* for 'yellow', and *phalah-ta* for 'green/blue', emphatic prefixes attach to the basic form.

In a similar vein, Korean ideophones may employ such emphatic prefixes, as illustrated in the following newly coined ideophone to describe the action of 'excessively devouring in a negative sense.' *Che-* is an emphatic prefix that evokes a strong negative attitude.

- (15) ***che-mwuk-che-mwuk***
 ‘excessively devouring in a negative sense’

Yoon (2018) points out another potential variation achieved through reduplication, which appears to result in either an emphatic effect akin to 'very' or a quantity-related distributional property of the color, such as 'in places' (see Kroeger 2016 for reduplication as CI in Kimaragang).

(16) Reduplication

- | | | |
|----|--|----------|
| a. | <i>kama-kamah-ta</i> 'very vivid deep black' | [Korean] |
| b. | <i>kamti-kam-ta</i> 'vivid black or blackish in places' | |
| c. | <i>keme-kemeh-ta</i> 'very pale black' | |
| d. | <i>kemwus-kemwus-ha-ta</i> 'black or blackish in places' | |
| e. | <i>kemti-kem-ta</i> 'extremely black' | |
| f. | <i>kkamwus-kkamwus-ha-ta</i> 'vivid deep black or blackish in places' | |
| g. | <i>kkemwus-kkemwus-ha-ta</i> 'strong deep black or blackish in places' | |

In English, reduplication may also convey repetition of sound or motion or intensity of the sound or motion, as in the following examples.

(17) Reduplication

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-----------|
| a. | <i>choo-choo</i> | [English] |
| b. | <i>knock-knock</i> | |
| c. | <i>flip-flap</i> | |

According to Koo and Rhee (2018), ideophones often involve phonological (partial) reduplication to convey the repetition of sound or motion in Korean, as in (18).

(18) reduplication: repetition of sound or motion

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|---|
| a. | <i>phwungteng</i> | e.g. a big object falling into deep water |
| b. | <i>phwungtengphwungteng</i> | e.g. big object falling into deep water in succession, repetition of (a) |
| c. | <i>phwungteteng</i> | e.g. a big object with irregular surface falling into deep water, thus creating multiple splashes |
| d. | <i>phwungteteteng</i> | e.g. a big object with irregular surface falling into deep water in a more extended duration of event than (c) (adapted from Rhee 2016) |

As shown in the following examples, which are partially reiterated from earlier (5), ideophones appear to incorporate reduplication without literal repetition. Instead, reduplication seems to produce musical effects through rhyming and intensify the dynamic flavor.

(19) Korean ideophones with positive vs. negative emotive stance

- | | | | |
|----|--|-----|---|
| a. | <i>photongphotong</i> 'chubby.pos.att' | vs. | <i>phitwungphitwung</i> 'obese.neg.att' |
| b. | <i>chokchok</i> 'moist.pos.att' | vs. | <i>chwukchwuk</i> 'soggy.neg.att' |

So far, we have shown the numerous potential derivations of ideophones.

3. The Semantic and Pragmatic Dimensions of Ideophones

3.1 Emotive Ideophones as Expressives

Given such intricacies of the morpho-phonological system to convey connotational nuances related to a speaker's emotional attitude, in addition to descriptive content concerning sound, shape, or movement, we propose that, unlike English ideophones, the expressive sense of Korean ideophones renders them as a subclass of expressives that can be analyzed within the framework of Conventional Implicature (CI) (Gutzmann 2011, Kim and Sells 2007, McCready 2010, Potts 2005, Sawada 2010, Yae and Yoon 2017, Yoon 2011, 2015).

Expressives are characterized by conveying expressive content reflecting a speaker's emotional attitude. Typical examples include utterance modifiers like 'confidentially' and epithets like 'damn,' which provide information on the speaker's positive or negative emotive stance. They have a significant impact on how current and future utterances are perceived, conveying the speaker's subjective perspective, as it is often challenging to articulate the precise emotional attitude solely with descriptive items.

Across languages, a variety of expressive elements have been identified, including Japanese adverbials such as *yoku* and *yokumo* (McCready 2004), and German intensifiers such as *sau*, *total*, and *voll* (Gutzmann and Turgay 2012). Additionally, informal and formal German pronouns, as well as honorific and anti-honorific markers in Japanese and Korean, have been treated as expressive items, conveying the speaker's attitude (Kim and Sells 2007, Potts 2007). Other examples of CI triggers include appositives, 'even' items in Greek, and metalinguistic particles like 'more' and 'than' in Greek and Korean (Giannakidou and Yoon 2011).

In a similar fashion, when a speaker opts for an emotional variant of ideophones, the utterance becomes more emphatic. These ideophone variants are used in contexts where the speaker intends to disclose their emotive stance, exhibiting expressive properties as stance markers.

Our hypothesis regarding the expressivity of ideophones is supported by the core properties of expressives outlined by Potts (2005, 2007), including *independence* and *perspective dependence*. Just as *bastard* in English expresses the speaker's negative attitude toward 'Frederic' or the propositional content that 'Frederic is famous' in (20), ideophones express the speaker's delicate emotional stance, separate from the semantic at-issue dimension. For example, in (21), the ideophone *alloktallok* 'colorful.pos.att' exhibits a parallel property, expressing the speaker's negative attitude toward Mina's face.

(20) That bastard Frederic is famous. [English]

(21) Kkoch-tul-i **alloktallok** cemata-uy pichkkal-ul ppomnay-koiss-ta. [Korean]
 flower-PL-Nom colorful.pos.att their.own-Gen hue-Acc boast-Asp-Decl
 'The flowers are proudly display their hues in a colorful fashion.'

It is also noteworthy how the attitudinal aspect in ideophones can be corrected through metalinguistic negation, as in (22a), or metalinguistic comparatives (Giannakidou and Yoon 2011), as in (22b). In both instances, only the emotive stance in the expressive dimension is altered from negative to positive, while the descriptive content of 'boiling sound' remains unchanged.

- (22) a. ccikay-ka “pwukulpwukul”-i ani-la “pokulpokul”-kkulh-ess-ta.
 stew-Nom boiling.sound.neg.att-Nom Neg-Prt boiling.sound.pos.att-boil-Pst-Decl
 ‘The stew was not boiling “with a negatively bubbling sound”, but “with a positively bubbling sound.”’
- b. ccikay-ka “pwukulpwukul”-ila.kipota “pokulpokul”-kkulh-ess-ta.
 stew-Nom boiling.sound.neg.att-rather.than boiling.sound.pos.att-boil-Pst-Decl
 ‘The stew was not boiling “with a positively bubbling sound”, rather than “with a negatively bubbling sound.”’

This further confirms that the expressive element in ideophones indeed shows the property of *independence*, effectively operating on another dimension. Crucially, however, while stating that “the expressive and descriptive meanings that a sentence can convey should not be combined in a single unit”, Potts (2007, p. 3) acknowledges the possibility of a hybrid nature for certain expressives, with some expressive meanings acting as bridges between the two realms by mapping descriptive content to expressive content. We assume that ideophones belong to such a category.

Second, ideophones demonstrate *nondisplaceability*, meaning that the expressives must comment on the utterance situation itself but cannot report on past events, attitudes, or emotions unless in quotations (Potts 2007, p. 5). Such immediate impact on the context is generally exhibited by ideophones in Korean.

- (23) Con-un kunye-uy **phitwungphitwung**-han elkwul-ul po-ass-ta.
 John-Top her-Gen pudgy.neg.att-Adn face-Nomsee-Pst-Decl
 ‘John saw her pudgy face.’
 — But John considers her face attractive.
 — #But I consider her face attractive.

In the above example, the speaker is the one who made the lexical choice of the emotive variant *phitwungphitwung* ‘pudgy in a negative sense’ over the neutral or positive variant like *photongphotong* ‘chubby in a positive sense.’ The connotation shift within the speaker’s perspective can thus be disagreed by John. This implies that only the matrix subject, John, can accept the semantic content of the assertion ‘John saw her chubby face’ as truthful without necessarily agreeing with the additional depiction of the face as an unattractive pudgy or puffy face. However, the speaker, as the judge, cannot separate the assertion and the associated emotional attitude, as shown by the infelicitous continuation ‘#But I consider her face attractive.’

Within Potts’ system of CI logic, the two-dimensional meaning can be approximately represented as follows: (i) the descriptive (semantic) meaning of the sentence with the type e (at-issue type) is ‘(John saw) her chubby face’; and (ii) the conventionalized implicature (pragmatic meaning) with the type ε (CI type) is ‘I feel negatively toward her chubby face (as it was negatively puffy).’

- (24) *phitwungphitwung-han elkwul*
 a. at issue: chubby(her-face): e
 b. CI: negative-attitude(speaker)(her-chubby-face): ε

Finally, alongside other regular expressive elements, ideophones in Korean exhibit *ineffability*. As observed in

Sec. 2.1, each variant of 'chubby' carries its own unique meaning in terms of the speaker's positive or negative emotional stance, as well as the shape. Among the morpho-phonological options available for conveying the same semantic content, the speaker's choice of a particular variant with a complex combination of altered consonant, altered vowel, specific prefix, and/or suffix contributes to an extremely subtle yet nuanced flavor of the ideophone in context. This complexity makes it difficult to find any equivalent expression to precisely capture the delicate flavor of a particular morpho-phonological variant such as *phitwungphitwung* 'pudgy in a negative sense.'

In summary, based on the properties of ideophones discussed so far, we assume that ideophones in Korean are a subspecies of expressive elements, akin to the aforementioned expressive items.

3.2 Analysis: Ideophones as Conventional Implicature

Building on Karttunen and Peters (1979), Potts develops the CI logic by revising their rule-by-rule system with a new system based on type-driven translation. The CI logic provides us with a tool for precisely conveying a meaning that exists in a distinct dimension. The tree-admissibility condition of the CI logic (based on Karttunen and Peters 1979) requires that "a CI meaning always applies to an at-issue meaning to produce a CI meaning" (Potts 2005, p. 48). This feature will be crucial for capturing the various subtle CI meanings conveyed by expressive items. Since the expressive meaning of ideophones seems to be akin to that of speaker-oriented adverbs such as 'fortunately' in Potts' model, we assume that the CI in ideophones can be captured as follows.

First, as a subtype of CIs, the emotive meaning of ideophones should not be part of 'what is said' (Grice 1975). In the following scheme for the mode of composition in the CI logic, the bullet function • (a separation function for independent lambda expressions) guarantees that the CI meaning on another level participates in the overall interpretation. With this system, we can represent how the semantic at-issue dimension of ideophones like *kamwu-taytay-ha-ta* 'somewhat vulgar vivid deep blackish' is also fully contentful:

(25) $[[pwukulpwukul]]$

at-issue: 'boiling sound': e
CI: negative-attitude(boiling sound): ε

(26) *The meaning of the ideophone (pwukulpwukul)*

boiling sound: e
•
negative-attitude (boiling sound): ε

negative-attitude: $\langle e, \varepsilon \rangle$ boiling sound: e

What is asserted is that the sound is a 'boiling sound,' and by means of the bullet function, we can further convey that, at the CI level, 'the speaker holds a negative attitude toward the boiling sound' (multidimensionality). This means that the precise meaning of ideophones like *pwukulpwukul* requires an abstract division of the expressive component for negative attitude and the referential meaning $\lambda x.\text{boiling.sound}(x)$. Then, the expressive component with type $\langle e, \varepsilon \rangle$ takes the 'boiling sound' with type e, and yields a type ε . The new type ε indicates the expressive

CI type while the regular type *e* indicates an at-issue type. The at-issue term $\lambda x.\text{boiling.sound}(x)$ is furthermore saturated to the mother node and the part of the argument, and the result of the CI application is passed on to the mother node. This general composition rule is designed to separate the at-issue dimension from the CI operators.

Second, akin to CI such as the following appositive "a confirmed psychopath," we expect that the expressive meaning triggered by ideophones is uncancelable.

- (27) Sue believes that Chuck, *a confirmed psychopath*, is a suitable babysitter. [English]
— #but Chuck isn't a psychopath. (Potts 2005, 2007)

Ideophones in Korean reveal their *uncancelability* indeed: Observe how the negative attitude in *chwukchwuk* 'moist in a negative sense' renders the continuation with the conflicting emotional attitude by the same speaker infelicitous. Such a continuation is odd because, if the cake tasted good, the speaker would have chosen a positive variant like *chokchok* 'moist in a positive sense.'

- (28) Meyli-uy kheyikh-un chwukchwuk hay-ss-ta. [Korean]
Mary-Gen cake-Top moist.neg.att do-Pst-Decl
'Mary's cake was damp in a negative sense.'
a. at issue: 'Mary's cake was moist.'
b. CI: negative-attitude(speaker)(moist cake)
—#but it was so delicious!

Third, akin to CI, the expressive content of ideophones reveals the property of speaker-orientation (Cruse 1986, Löbner 2002, Potts 2005). The attitude holder (i.e., an individual anchor or judge) of ideophones is typically the speaker, except for cases where ideophones express the attitude of a matrix subject in subordinate contexts. This entails that, just like color-term-based racial slurs (Yoon 2015), ideophones are a hybrid kind of expressives that behave rather differently from pure expressive elements.

Finally, the expressive content is generally expected to be part of the conventional meaning of words, which is not applicable to ideophones in which the CI is triggered by phonetic or morphological means, typically without inherent conventional meaning.

3.3 The Expressive Index of Ideophones

The effect of uttering an expressive like an ideophone in context can be captured by Expressive Indices (EIs), represented as an operation on the context with various parameters including an expressive setting. As defined by Potts (2007, p. 37), EIs are the primary objects manipulated by expressive denotations.

- (29) An expressive index is a triple $\langle a \mathbf{I} b \rangle$, $\mathbf{I} \in [-1, 1]$.

Within his system, EIs serve as the crucial foundation for expressive domains in expressive elements such as *damn* or *bastard*. These indices, defined via numerical intervals $\mathbf{I} \subseteq [-1, 1]$, are designed to encode (i) the degree of expressivity and (ii) the orientation of the expressive emotion. The triple $\langle a \mathbf{I} b \rangle$ denotes that an individual *a* is at expressive level *I* for an individual *b*. The system of expressive intervals provides the flexibility to encode

detailed emotional stances ranging from neutral to very positive or negative. Emotive relations are defined by how I is specified to proper subintervals of $[-1, 1]$; the more positive the numbers, the more positive the expressive relationship, and vice versa, as illustrated below.

- (30) a. $\langle [[\text{tom}]] [-.5, 0] [[\text{jerry}]] \rangle$: Tom feels negatively toward Jerry. [English]
 b. $\langle [[\text{ali}]] [-.8, 1] [[\text{jerry}]] \rangle$: Ali feels essentially indifferent to Jerry.
 c. $\langle [[\text{kevin}]] [0, 1] [[\text{jerry}]] \rangle$: Kevin is wild about Jerry.

As previously emphasized, EIs are entities that cannot be perfectly conveyed through paraphrase, highlighting their *ineffability*. In (30), the propositional implications fulfill this role: in $\langle [[\text{tom}]] [-.5, 0] [[\text{jerry}]] \rangle$, for instance, we can infer propositions equivalent to ‘Tom feels negatively toward Jerry.’ Furthermore, note that the indices are constructed by establishing a relationship between two individuals using I. This enables us to represent the emotive relation between the speaker and the modified referent of ideophones.

In this context, the EI of ideophones must express the fact that an individual stands in an emotive relation to another individual or event. Drawing from earlier works on other expressives in Korean (Giannakidou and Yoon 2011, Yae and Yoon 2017, Yoon 2011, Yoon 2015), we propose the following CI logic for ideophones. First, there are potential variations in the strength of emotion among ideophones (e.g., weak vs. strong negative ideophones). Second, the expressive interval I may pertain to either of the following two cases: (i) it may relate to a bouletic state where the individual expresses desirability concerning the impression that the speaker receives from the referent: an ideophone variant may evoke negative or positive impressions; or (ii) it may also concern an epistemic state such as certainty about the speaker's description of the shape, movement, or sound (e.g., *panccakpanccak* ‘bling.bling.pos.att’ vs. *penccekpenccek* ‘bling.bling.neg.att’).

Therefore, we propose the following expressive indices of ideophones:

(31) *Expressive indices (EI) of emotive ideophones*

- i. *Emotive ideophones* contain expressive indices $\langle a \mathbf{I} e \rangle$, where a is the individual anchor, e the referent the individual anchor refers to, and $\mathbf{I} \subseteq [-1, 1]$.
- ii. The index \mathbf{I} is an attitude towards e that may be either (a) bouletic state or (b) epistemic state. An ideophone's index ranges through both the positive and negative interval:
 - a. *ideophone*: $\langle e, \epsilon \rangle$: An ideophone combines descriptive content e (the type of entities for the referent) and expressive content ϵ .
 - b. $[[\text{emotive ideophones}]]_c$: $\lambda e.e$ (identity function); c is the context
 - c. Expressive content of *emotive ideophones* in c: Emotive ideophones contain an expressive index (EI) $\langle a \mathbf{I} e \rangle$, where a is the individual anchor, e the referent the individual anchor refers to; and \mathbf{I} ranges between $[-1, 1]$.

The current proposal regarding the CI of ideophones carries the following theoretical implications. First, similar to regular expressive elements, it suggests that the variation in ideophones found in natural languages may be integrated as part of grammar. This implies that ideophones can be understood as reflections of the grammaticalization of perspective and subjective mode, on par with mood choice discussed by Yoon (2011, 2013), or metalinguistic comparatives discussed by Giannakidou and Yoon (2009, 2011). In variants of ideophones,

subjective mode is established by expressing an emotional attitude toward the described object or situation.

Moreover, ideophones, as an expressive component, evoke the speaker as the judge (attitude holder), and can thus be compared to predicates of personal taste like *tasty*, for instance (Lasersohn 2005, 2008, 2009). A crucial commonality is observed in the issue of faultless disagreement (Kölbel 2004, p. 53-54) - where John asserts that a proposition (content of judgment) *p* is true, while Mary asserts that non-*p* is true, and neither party is at fault, as illustrated below, which is a characteristic feature of predicates of personal taste.

- (32) John: The chili is tasty. [English]
 Mary: No, the chili is not tasty.

Indeed, faultless disagreement is also observable with Korean ideophones.

- (33) Context: Mary invited John, and served a chocolate cake that she baked. John was complaining that the cake was rather soggy and Mary was claiming that the cake was positively moist.

John:	kheyikh-i	com	chwukchwuk-ha-ta.	[Korean]
	cake-Nom	little	soggy.neg.att-do-Decl	
	'The cake is a little soggy (in a negative sense).'			
Mary:	aniya,	chwukchwuk-ha-ci.anh-a.		
	no	soggy.neg.att-do-Neg-Decl		
	i	kheyikh-un	chokchok-ha-y.	
	this	cake-Nom	moist.pos.att-do-Decl	
	'No, it isn't soggy (in a negative sense). This cake is moist (in a positive sense).'			

The crucial distinction between faultless disagreement involving ideophones and predicates of personal taste lies in the dimension of meaning they affect. With ideophones, the disagreement pertains to the expressive level, whereas with predicates of personal taste, it concerns the semantic at-issue level.

In the case of faultless disagreement with ideophones, both speakers agree on the descriptive content—that the cake is moister than a normal cake. However, their disagreement arises from their subjective perceptions of the emotive stance toward the moistness. Each speaker's individual emotional stance towards the moist texture differs, i.e. 'the cake is overly moist' vs. 'the cake is wonderfully moist,' leading to the faultless disagreement. Importantly, neither speaker is incorrect in their assessment because the disagreement lies in their subjective emotional interpretations rather than in the factual description of the object or event.

Additionally, the epistemic subject, acting as the judge or individual anchor, is typically the speaker in root clauses. However, in subordinate contexts, such as embedded clauses, the attitude holder can be realized syntactically as the subject. This reflects the principle of *the closest anchor*, wherein the subject of the embedded clause becomes the focal point for expressing the speaker's emotional attitude or judgment.

4. Conclusion

Our exploration of ideophones in English and Korean sheds light on the intricate connotational nuances that these linguistic elements carry. By demonstrating the systematic phonetic and morphological alternations employed in deriving ideophones in Korean, we propose that these variations can convey not only the regular

descriptive meaning but also the speaker's emotional attitude.

In particular, we show how the emotional aspect of ideophones operates through conventional implicature based on Potts' theoretical framework for capturing their expressive content on top of the semantic content. By situating the emotional attitude within another dimension, the expressive level, we elucidate how ideophones serve as a unique subcategory of expressive elements in Korean, in contrast to languages like English.

The parallels between ideophones and other expressives, such as ethnic slurs or taste terms, suggest that ideophones should be considered alongside these elements in conveying multifaceted meanings. Further, our proposal regarding the grammaticalization of the attitude holder's complex stance suggests that ideophones serve as a reflection of this process, incorporating various subjective modes into linguistic expression.

The analysis of ideophones as two-dimensional, encompassing both the semantic at-issue dimension and the pragmatic expressive dimension, provides a comprehensive understanding of their meaning. This approach highlights the intricate interplay between descriptive content and emotional attitude in ideophones.

Overall, our exploration underscores the systematicity of expressives within grammar and supports the notion of multidimensionality in linguistic analysis. By identifying ideophones as an important case of expressive elements, our analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of language structure and usage.

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Examples in: English

Applicable Languages: English

Applicable Level: Tertiary