FROM SEOUL TO THE WORLD: THE EVOLUTION OF ENGLISH IN NCT 127'S TITLE TRACKS AS GLOBAL STRATEGY AND ARTISTIC HYBRIDITY.

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Preface and Abstract

This study investigates the strategic and artistic deployment of English in the title tracks of NCT 127, a pioneering sub-unit of the South Korean boy group NCT, from their commercial breakthrough in 2020 to 2024. Employing a mixed-methods framework, the research integrates quantitative lyrical analysis of their five highest-selling title tracks, qualitative discourse analysis informed by Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model, and participatory data from a curated focus group of international fans. The findings reveal a sophisticated, non-linear evolution of English usage that functions as a core component of SM Entertainment's "Neo Culture Technology" globalisation strategy. Quantitatively, the proportion of English fluctuates strategically, peaking at 60.54% in *Fact Check* (2023) before recalibrating to 30.67% in *WALK* (2024), indicating that volume is a dynamic variable rather than a fixed goal. Qualitatively, English serves as a multifaceted artistic tool; as phonetic material for rhythmic and textual experimentation, as an intertextual bridge embedding cultural and genre-specific references, and as a conceptual lexicon for thematic world-building. The fan engagement analysis demonstrates that these crafted English lyrics are actively actualised by international listeners, transforming into catalysts for communal singing, markers of in-group identity, and drivers of participatory fandom on social media. This research concludes that NCT 127's approach transcends conventional anglicisation for market access. Instead, it represents a model of "disruptive hybridity" where English is instrumentalised as both a commercial strategy and an artistic signature, enabling the group to navigate global pop landscapes while maintaining a distinct Korean and "neo" identity. The study contributes to academic discourse on linguistic hybridity in transnational music, offers practical insights for cultural production, and highlights a paradigm

where global resonance is achieved not through cultural assimilation, but through strategic and creative localisation.

Keywords: linguistic hybridity, code-switching, K-pop globalisation, participatory fandom, transnational pop music.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The global rise of the Korean pop, or K-pop, as a dominant cultural phenomenon has reshaped the music industry, transcending linguistic and geographical barriers (Kim & Kwon, 2022). The forefront of this movement is SM Entertainment, one of South Korea's most influential entertainment companies founded by Lee Soo-man, which has pioneered innovative strategies to globalize K-pop through structured training systems, multinational marketing and cultural hybridization (Dalugdug, 2024; Yang, 2025). Among its most ambitious projects is NCT (Neo Culture Technology), a revolutionary K-pop group concept designed to transcend traditional idol group boundaries with a "limitless" structure, featuring multiple sub-units targeting different global markets while maintaining a cohesive brand identity (Jae-heun, 2016).

NCT 127, the first fixed sub-unit of NCT, consisting of eight (8) members, namely Taeyong, Johnny, Yuta, Doyoung, Jungwoo, Jaehyun, Mark and Haechan. They exemplify SM Entertainment's vision of a globally adaptable yet culturally rooted K-pop act through their evolving discography. Their music incorporates a strategic mix of Korean and English lyrics. This is a common practice in K-pop that helps to enhance international appeal while preserving Korean identity. As we investigate deeper into them, English in NCT 127's music functions beyond mere translation. It makes content more memorable, promotes cross-cultural interaction as well as strengthens artistic hybridity. Although English in K-pop groups like BTS and BLACKPINK has been explored, there is a significant gap in understanding how NCT 127's strategic use of English shifts over time since their 2016 debut to present and how to place them within industry trends and SM Entertainment's global branding strategies. As a result, this research adds to a more general discussion on the language usage in international pop music. As K-pop continues to top global

charts, knowledge of how English functions as both a cultural and commercial tool provides essential insight into this genre's ongoing appeal on a worldwide scale and the evolving dynamics of linguistic imperialism against localization in entertainment media.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The global ascent of K-pop has been accompanied by a strategic increase in English usage, a phenomenon widely acknowledged in existing literature. However, current research predominantly examines groups like BTS and BLACKPINK, creating a significant gap in understanding how SM Entertainment's "Neo Culture Technology" framework is implemented through NCT 127's music. While studies have established English as a tool for market expansion, they often overlook its multifaceted role in artistic expression and fan engagement. For instance, the creative use of English in NCT 127's lyrics through slang, wordplay and code-switching remains underexplored, as does its impact on participatory fandom behaviours like social media challenges. This study addresses three critical gaps, the lack of longitudinal analysis tracking English evolution in NCT 127's title tracks, the limited attention to English as a stylistic device beyond commercial purposes and the absence of fan-centered research on how English lyrics influence memorability and vitality. By integrating linguistic analysis with media and fandom studies, this research offers a nuanced perspective on English as both an industry strategy and a cultural practice in K-pop's globalization.

1.3 Research Objectives

The proposed research aims to achieve three interconnected objectives.

1. It quantifies the prevalence and development trajectory of English in NCT 127's title tracks through systematic lyrical analysis of their discography (2016-2024).

2. It evaluates English's artistic role by conducting close readings of lyrics to identify creative devices like slang, puns and code-switching, contextualising them within K-pop's genre-blending tendencies.
3. It analyses how international listeners actualise the prevalent and artistically significant English lyrics identified in the preceding analyses.

1.4 Research Questions

The main query that drives this investigation is: How does English function as both a global strategy and creative tool in NCT 127's title tracks? To unpack this, three sub-questions are proposed:-

1. How have the proportion and functional roles of English evolved in NCT 127's title tracks from their 2016 debut to the present? This sub-question seeks to identify quantitative trends and qualitative shifts in language use.
2. What artistic purposes does English serve, such as genre hybridity or linguistic play, beyond its marketability? Here, the focus shifts to stylistic analysis, examining how English enhances musical and lyrical innovation.
3. How do international listeners actualise the quantified and artistically significant English lyrics in NCT 127's music? This sub-question explores the lyrics' role in fostering communal identity and engagement.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. K-pop: K-pop (Korean pop) is one part of the "Korean Wave". It is also known as "Hallyu", a Romanized term referring to the popularity of Korean pop culture. This includes Korean TV shows, music and movie across Asia and other parts of the world (Ng, 2015). It is a genre of popular music originating from South Korea, characterized by a blend of

audiovisual elements, including pop, electronic, hip-hop, R&B (Rhymes and Blues) and synth-pop influences. It is distinguished by its highly produced nature, elaborate choreography and a strong emphasis on idol groups promoted by entertainment agencies (Armstrong, 2025). K-pop has become an international cultural phenomenon, facilitated by digital platforms and transnational fandom communities (Fadianti et al., 2024).

2. Title Tracks: In K-pop, title tracks refer to the lead singles from an album or EP (Extended Play) that receive primary promotion through music shows, media appearances and music videos ("Sounding Out K-pop", 2023). These tracks are typically chosen for their commercial appeal, catchy hooks and choreography, serving as the centerpiece of a group's comeback campaign and are strategically designed to maximize visibility on music charts, streaming platforms and televised music shows. Unlike B-sides (non-highly promoted tracks), title tracks typically feature repetitive lyrics and dynamic production to ensure memorability and fan engagement.
3. Linguistic Hybridity: Linguistic hybridity refers to the intentional mixing of multiple languages; for instance, English, Korean and Japanese within K-pop lyrics, fostering cross-cultural appeal (Demska, 2019). This practice facilitates globalization by enhancing accessibility for international audiences while retaining Korean identity (Kraidy, 2002). Examples include code-switching, loanwords and non-sensical "Konglish" phrases designed for rhythmic or aesthetic effects.
4. Code-switching: Code-switching refers to the deliberate alternation between two or more languages or linguistic varieties within a single conversation, sentence, or musical line. In K-pop, this often involves mixing Korean, English, Japanese, or other languages to enhance global appeal, emphasize emotional tones, or create rhythmic flow. Code-

switching serves strategic purposes in marketing, identity expressions and cross-cultural engagement (Nazri & Kassim, 2023).

5. Singability: Singability refers to the ease with which a song's lyrics can be sung and remembered, a critical factor in K-pop's mass appeal (J, 2023). Songs with high singability often feature simple, repetitive phrases, vowel-heavy pronunciations and infectious melodies (Brandt et al., 2012). These qualities that encourage fan participation, cover performances and viral challenges. English phrases are frequently incorporated not only for international audiences but also because they often fit smoothly into melodic structures. Singability is closely tied to K-pop's emphasis on communal fan experiences, where memorable lyrics foster collective singing at concerts, fan chants and social media trends.

1.6 Significance of Study

This study holds significant value across academic, industrial and cultural domains, offering fresh insights into the strategic use of English in K-pop. Academically, it advances research on SM Entertainment's "Neo Culture Technology" framework by analyzing how NCT 127's linguistic hybridity operates within the broader K-pop industry. While existing studies focus on groups like BTS and BLACKPINK, this research fills a critical gap by examining NCT 127's unique approach to language blending, contributing to transnational pop music studies. By integrating linguistic analysis with media and fandom studies, the study bridges disciplinary divides, proposing a mixed-methods model that combines qualitative lyric tracking with quantitative fan discourse analysis. This approach not only enriches academic discourse but also sets a precedent for future research on language in global music.

From an industry perspective, the findings provide actionable insights for entertainment agencies and content creators. By dissecting how English enhances memorability through slang,

code-switching and phonetic play, the study offers practical strategies for songwriters and marketers aiming to optimize international appeal. It also highlights the delicate balance between localization and globalization, demonstrating how NCT 127 retains Korean identity while leveraging English for cross-cultural engagement. Furthermore, the analysis of fan interactions with English lyrics, such as social media challenges and cover dances, reveal patterns that agencies can harness to foster deeper audience connections. These insights are invaluable for stakeholders navigating the competitive landscape of global pop music.

Culturally, the study challenges conventional narratives about language and power in entertainment media. It critically examines whether English usage in K-pop reinforces linguistic imperialism or disrupts it through creative hybridization, such as the playful use of "Konglish". By centering fan participation, the research validates the agency of non-English-speaking audiences in shaping global trends, countering the notion that English is merely a tool for Western market penetration. Additionally, it underscores that artistic integrity of NCT 127's music, framing English not just as a commercial tactic but as a dynamic element of stylistic innovation. Ultimately, this research contributes to a more nuanced understanding of K-pop's globalization, celebrating its linguistic creativity while promoting reflection on the industry's evolving cultural dynamics.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

This study examines the role of English in NCT 127's title tracks, analyzing their discography from their 2016 debut to their most recent releases in 2024. The research focuses on three main aspects: the quantitative and qualitative evolution of English in lyrics, its artistic and stylistic functions and its impact on international fan engagement. By concentrating on title tracks, specifically the most promoted and commercially significant songs, the study captures NCT 127's strategic language use in their most visible musical output. However, it does not extend to B-sides

or other NCT sub-units, as these would introduce additional variables in terms of target markets and musical styles.

The linguistic analysis tracks the frequency and development of English in NCT 127's lyrics, identifying patterns such as code-switching, loanwords and hybrid expressions like "Konglish". While the study acknowledges that K-pop is a multimedia phenomenon involving choreography, visuals and production, the primary focus remains on lyrical content to maintain a clear scope. The artistic analysis explores how English contributes to genre-blending, wordplay and stylistic innovation, though it does not delve deeply into musical composition or performance elements. Fan engagement is assessed through publicly available social media discourse, including platforms like Twitter/X, TikTok and YouTube, to understand how English lyrics influence memorability and participatory fandom. However, the study does not include private fan interactions or interviews, which could offer deeper qualitative insights.

Several limitations must be acknowledged. First, while the study tracks English usage, some nuances in Korean-English code-switching, such as cultural references or puns, may be lost in translation. Second, the research is bound by its temporal scope (2016 – 2024), meaning future releases may introduce new linguistic trends not accounted for here. Third, the analysis of fan engagement relies primarily on English-dominant platforms, which may underrepresent non-English-speaking audiences. Finally, while the study evaluates English as both a commercial strategy and an artistic tool, distinguishing the primary intent behind its usage remains interpretive, as industry decisions and creative choices are often intertwined.

Despite these limitations, this study provides a structured framework to comprehend the way English functions in NCT 127's music, contributing to broader discussions on language globalization in K-pop. By focusing on SM Entertainment's "Neo Culture Technology" framework

and NCT 127's unique position within it, the study offers insights into the evolving dynamics of linguistic hybridity in transnational pop music. Future research could expand on these findings by incorporating comparative analyses with other sub-units or exploring fan perspectives through direct interviews.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The global ascent of Korean pop music, also known as K-pop, constitute one of the most important cultural phenomena of the 21st century, characterized by its relentless innovation and strategic transcendence of linguistic and geographical boundaries. At the forefront of this movement stands SM Entertainment, a pioneering force that has systematically engineered the globalization of K-pop through sophisticated framework like Lee Soo-man's "Culture Technology". Among its most ambition projects are NCT 127, a sub-unit of the larger Neo Culture Technology (NCT) system, designed as a "limitless" group targeting global markets while retaining a distinct Korean identity. Central to NCT 127's international strategy is their nuanced and evolving use of the English language within their title tracks, a practice that extends far beyond simple translation to encompass artistic innovation, commercial calculation and fan engagement.

While existing scholarship has explored English incorporation in groups like BTS and BLACKPINK, a significant gap remains in understanding how NCT 127's approach, deeply embedded within SM Entertainment's "Neo Culture Technology" vision, functions as both a global strategy and a tool of artistic hybridity. Their music does not merely add English phrases for accessibility, but it integrates them structurally and conceptually to create a unique linguistic fingerprint that mirrors their genre-blending sonic identity. From the jarring interjections in Fire

Truck (2016) to the culturally resonant, Gen-Z slang in Fact Check (2023), their deployment of English is deliberate, evolving and multifaceted.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the evolution of English in NCT 127's title tracks from their 2016 debut to their most recent releases, framing this analysis within Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model to understand the socio-pragmatic motivations behind their code-switching (Scotton, 1983). By asking how English functions as both a global strategy and a creative tool, this research addresses three critical dimensions, namely the quantitative and qualitative evolution of English usage, its artistic and stylistic purposes and its impact on international fan engagement through memorability and singability. By doing so, it not only fills a gap in the literature on NCT 127 but also contributes to broader discourses on cultural globalization, linguistic hybridity and the dynamic interplay between commerce and creativity in transnational pop music.

2.2 The Role of English in K-pop's Globalization

2.2.1 Historical Context of English in K-pop

The strategic incorporation of English in K-pop has evolved significantly since its manifestation in the 1990s, reflecting South Korea's deliberate efforts to position itself as a cultural exporter (Kim et al., 2022). The historical trajectory of English usage in K-pop can be traced through three distinct development phases, each reflecting evolving industry strategies and Korea's changing position in global cultural markets.

The foundational phase (1990s-early 2000s) saw English used primarily as a sonic embellishment rather than a strategic tool (Escudero, 2023). Pioneering artists like Seo Taiji and Boys evaluated with English phrases as early as 1992, embedding words like "You, you, you" in their breakthrough hit *Nan Arayo* (I Know), primarily for their phonetic qualities rather than

semantic meaning, demonstrating how even basic English elements could enhance a song's catchiness (Lee, 2023). This trend developed further with first-generation idols where this approach reflected Korea's then-nascent cultural export ambitions, where English served as a signifier of modernity and as a marker of youth (Lynn, 2022).

The above strategic groundwork was first proven viable by BoA. Her training, a comprehensive program involving SM Entertainment and its Japanese partner, Avex Entertainment, included extensive Japanese language and cultural instruction, enabling her to achieve an unprecedented breakthrough where she became the first Korean artist to top Japan's Oricon chart with her debut album, *Listen to My Heart*, which became a million-seller (Bartlett, 2022). This success demonstrated the potential for Korean artists to achieve deep, mainstream success in major foreign markets by mastering local language and culture. Building on this pan-Asian stardom, her self-titled English-language album, *BoA* (2009) then marked another historic milestone as the first by a K-pop artist to chart on the Billboard 200, where it debuted at number 127 (Tophitz, 2018). While its commercial performance in the West was limited the venture provided SM with invaluable data on Western market dynamics, highlighting the critical necessity of building dedicated fan infrastructure, a lesson that would directly inform the more nuanced, fan-driven globalization strategies deployed for subsequent acts like NCT 127.

The transitional phase (late 2000s - 2012) witnessed a paradigm shift as entertainment companies began systematizing language training (Alves, 2025). SM Entertainment's institutionalization of English training represented a critical evolution in the historical trajectory. Lee Soo-man's "Culture Technology" framework, formalized in the late 2000s, made English acquisition a core component of idol development (Lamoose, 2016). Trainees at SM, also known as SM Rookies, undergo vigorous language education that goes beyond simple phrases

memorization to include phonetics training to neutralize Korean accent, colloquialism training for natural delivery, cultural context studies for appropriate usage and even media training for English-language interviews. This period also saw the emergence of "global-ready" idols like Girls' Generation's Tiffany and Super Junior's Henry, whose bilingual abilities became key marketing points (Rajapakshe-Pathirannehelage et al., 2025). However, English usage remained largely supplementary, confined to hooks and slogans rather than integral to musical composition.

The current sophisticated phase (2013 - present) represents the full maturation of English as both commercial tool and artistic element, exemplified by NCT 127's strategic deployment. Three key developments characterized this phase. Firstly, the structural integration where English is no longer simply added to songs but structurally embedded in composition. NCT 127's *Regular* (2018) demonstrates this through its bilingual lyric structure, where English and Korean alternate not randomly but according to melodic and rhythmic requirements. Secondly, the personnel strategy. The group's lineup strategically includes fluent English speakers, namely Mark and Johnny from North America, alongside Jaehyun, who had lived in Connecticut from the age of five to ten, creating a build-in linguistic flexibility (Nate, 2019). This represents an evolution from earlier "token foreign member" approaches to a more sophisticated linguistic ecosystem within groups. Finally, the conceptual alignment where English usage is now tied to group identity. For NCT 127, English functions as a marker of their "neo" concept where their hybrid language mirroring their hybrid musical style. This is evident in tracks like *Simon Says* (2018) where abrupt language switches sonically reinforce the song's thematic tension.

SM's 2020 restructuring into SM 3.0 further emphasized this approach, establishing dedicated "global training teams" that tailor language education to target markets. This institutional commitment distinguishes SM from other agencies; where competitors might add

English as an afterthought, SM's system produces idols capable of genuine bilingual expression, allowing for more sophisticated code-switching in songs like *Regular* (2018) and *Highway to Heaven* (2019).

The historical development reveals an important insight where English in K-pop has evolved from decorative garnish to structural ingredient, mirroring Korea's transformation from cultural borrower to culture exporter (Schneider, 2023). NCT 127's sophisticated deployment represents the current state-of-the-art in this evolution, where English functions simultaneously as market access tool, artistic signature, group identity marker and cultural bridge mechanism. This multifaced role distinguishes contemporary K-pop language strategy from earlier approaches and helps explain NCT 127's particular effectiveness in global markets. The group's ability to maintain strong Korean identity while achieving global resonance through strategic English usage offers a compelling model for cultural globalization that avoids complete Western assimilation. This duality is perhaps best exemplified in one of NCT 127's title tracks, "Kick It" (2020), where Bruce Lee references and martial arts terminology create a cultural bridge that is simultaneously pan-Asian and globally legible (Dam-Young, 2020).

2.2.2 Commercial and Strategic Motivations for Global Expansion

SM Entertainment's deployment of English in NCT 127's music represents a sophisticated commercial calculus that has evolved significantly since the early generation of K-pop globalization. The company's "Culture Technology" framework, as articulated by Lee Soo-man, reconceptualizes language not merely as a translation tool but as a core structural element of cultural production (Yu, 2024). This system operated on three strategic levels that distinguish NCT 127's approach from previous K-pop globalization attempts. First, their multilingual capacity is engineered directly into the group's composition through the inclusion of fluent English speakers,

creating an organic bilingual dynamic that avoids the stilted English common in earlier generations (Octaviani & Yamin, 2020). Second, their title tracks employ a "modular" language design where English components can be emphasized or minimized based on target market where the same song architecture supports both Korean and English audiences (Burt, 2024). This is prominent through songs named *Regular* (2018) and *Highway to Heaven* (2019) which are presented in both languages. Third, SM has developed a proprietary songwriting system that assigns different linguistic functions to specific song sections. For instance, English typically dominated hooks and titles while Korean maintains narrative continuity in verses (Blume, 2016).

The "double targeting" strategy for title tracks represents a significant innovation in K-pop's global market approach. Where groups like BTS initially prioritized either domestic (Korean-language tracks) or international (English-language singles) markets at different times, NCT 127's title tracks are structurally designed to serve both simultaneously. This is achieved through several deliberate compositional techniques:

1. English hooks are crafted to meet Western radio formatting requirements (the 7-second rule for attention capture), while Korean verses maintain cultural specificity (Morales, 2024),
2. Phonetic English (non-lexical phrases) provides international accessibility without sacrificing rhythmic flow,
3. Cultural references are selected for cross-border resonance (martial arts motifs in Kick It (2020)) (Lin, 2022).

The commercial effectiveness of this approach is evidenced by the parallel English and Korean variants of the single titled *Regular* (2018), featured in the *NCT #127 Regular-Irregular* (2018) album which achieved rare simultaneous success on both the and the United States charts.

The album topped Goan's Monthly Album Sales Chart for October 2018 and was certified platinum by Goan for selling over 250,000 copies (Cha, 2018a; Cha, 2018b). Besides, the *NCT #127 Regular-Irregular* (2018) album also debuted at number 86 on the Billboard 200, dated on 27 October 2018 (Herman, 2018).

SM's branding of NCT 127 as "K-pop's global experimental unit" leverages English as a signifier of innovation through several carefully constructed mechanisms. Linguistically, the group subverts standard English usage as branding and genre-specific. These intentional deviations from normative English create a distinctive linguistic fingerprint that reinforces their experimental image. The strategic unpredictability of their English deployment, varying from 46.60% English in "Fire Truck" (2016) (see Appendix 1) to 60.54% in *Fact Check* (2023) (see Appendix 2), itself becomes part of their brand identity, keeping audiences anticipating their next linguistic innovation.

Market data reveals how these strategies translate to commercial outcomes. NCT 127's English-optimized tracks show 2 to 4 times higher international streams compared to their Korean-dominant tracks. As of 15 September 2025, the English version of *Regular*, released on 9 October 2018 has garnered 92,727,405 views (see Appendix 3), significantly outperforming the Korean version released two days later by almost 4 times, which has 23,827,672 views (see Appendix 4) on YouTube. Similarly, on Spotify, the English version of *Highway to Heaven*, released on 18 July 2019 has accumulated 53,610,352 plays (see Appendix 5), nearly doubling the 28,662,542 plays (see Appendix 6) for the original Korean version, which was released on 24 May 2019. Additionally, the group's strategic use of English choruses and hooks demonstrates a clear correlation with heightened social media engagement, both in the volume of content created and its potential reach. For instance, the English hooks in *Sticker* (2021) generated around 9,400 Instagram Reels (see Appendix 7), with the highest-viewed reel amassing 4.8 million views (see

Appendix 8). This trend intensified with *Fact Check* (2023) featuring a full English repetitive chorus, inspired approximately 12,000 Instagram Reels (see Appendix 9) and achieved new viral benchmark with its top reel garnering 10 million views (see Appendix 10). This pattern suggests that NCT 127's English-language strategy not only facilitates market penetration but is particularly effective in driving participatory fan behaviors on visual-centric platforms like Instagram.

The group's strategic language use also reflects broader shifts in SM Entertainment's global business model. The company's effort to scout global producers and songwriters from within Korea, Europe and the United States further institutionalizing the dual-targeting approach (Kim, 2024). NCT 127's recent collaborations with Western producers like Adrian McKinnon for *Superhuman* (2019) (see Appendix 11) and Dem Jointz for *Ay-Yo* (2023) (see Appendix 12) further reflect this strategic orientation, blending Korean lyrical frameworks with English-language songwriting conventions. This represents an evolution from earlier K-pop globalization models that either adapted existing Western songs or created separate English versions, toward an integrated production system where multilingual capacity is built into songs from initial composition.

2.3 Musical and Visual Hybridity in K-pop

2.3.1 Genre Blending and Western Influences in NCT 127's Musical Hybridity

NCT 127's sonic identity represents a deliberate fusion of avant-garde noise music elements with conventional K-pop structures, creating what musicologists have termed as "disruptive hybridity", a stylistic approach that intentionally jars listeners while maintaining pop accessibility (Tobias, 2023). This musical philosophy finds its perfect counterpart in the group's linguistic strategies, where unconventional English usage mirrors their experimental soundscapes. Their 2021 studio album, with a title track named *Sticker* exemplified this synergy, pairing an

oddly tuned flute and a distorted heavy bass with lyrics that alternate between Korean narrative verses and fragmented English hooks (see Appendix 13). This combination creates what producer Dem Jointz described as "being different". He said, *"You want to stand out, but at the end of the day, you still want everybody to get what you're doing"* (Gilpin, 2023).

The group's incorporation of trap influences reveals particularly sophisticated cultural synthesis. Where Western trap typically employs African American Vernacular English (AAVE) for authenticity, NCT 127's *2 Baddies* (2022) adapts trap slang about being confidently and unapologetically living life in the fastlane through a distinctly Korean lens (*NCT 127: 2 Baddies*, 2022). According to one of the members from the group, Mark said, *"It's from the meaning of what we're trying to deliver. 질주 ("Jilju", Korean title for 2 Baddies) in English means high-speed. It definitely goes well with the Porsche concept that we came up with. We made a point about going full speed to our goal without caring about what the world may put in front of us or whatever opinions people may have. We're just focusing on what we live in our dreams. That attitude was very tough for us in the song, so that's what we wanted to portray and put into the song"* (Mitchell, 2022). The linguistic layering of the title achieves three strategic objectives simultaneously. These objectives include maintaining genre credibility through authentic trap signifiers, preserving Korean musical identity through syntactic structures and creating shareable moments through repetitive English phrases ("2 Baddies, 2 Baddies, 1 Porsche").

A deeper musicological analysis reveals how NCT 127's genre choices dictate their English adaptations. Noise-driven tracks like *Sticker* (2021) (see Appendix 13) feature 43% more non-lexical English vocables like "Woo" and "Hoo" than melodic songs like *Gold Dust* (2022) (see Appendix 14), with staccato phrases ("Like a stick-er, stick-er, stick-er) which are short and punchy lines that add sense of emphasis to convey a percussive effect to mirror rhythmic

complexity. Trap-influenced tracks like *Cherry Bomb* (2017) (see Appendix 15), meanwhile, employ AAVE-derived phrases like "I'ma do my thing" or interjection like "Yeah", which is a key feature of AAVE's influence on musical ad-libs. Pop R&B like *Be There For Me* (2023) (see Appendix 16) showcases smoother code-switching and conventional grammar ("I need to know", "Are you down to ride?").

This sophisticated interplay between sound and language positions NCT 127 at the forefront of next-generation cultural globalization. Their model suggests that future global pop success may depend less on assimilating Western norms and more on strategic hybridization, where language functions as both bridge and boundary and musical experimentation coexists with commercial precision.

2.4 The Role of English in K-pop

2.4.1 Linguistic Hybridity in K-pop Lyrics

The standard approach to English usage in mainstream K-pop follows several well-established patterns that prioritize accessibility and marketability. Most groups employ English primarily in song titles, song lyrics and even the singers' stage names, recognising these sections as crucial for international listener engagement (Berliana & Anjarningsih, 2022). Gabrielle (2013) also reveals that recent K-pop title tracks place their English phrases in this structurally prominent position. Although it was previously mostly limited to the rap section of songs, we are now occasionally treated to practically complete English choruses in addition to the song's English title (Gabrielle, 2013). Common techniques include the use of simple, repetitive phrases designed for immediate comprehension and singability, such as "I tell you, this time, I wanna rock with you" in SEVENTEEN's *Rock with you* (2021) (see Appendix 17) or TWICE's "You make me feel special" in *Feel Special* (2019) (see Appendix 18). These linguistic choices reflect careful market

research showing that international audiences typically engage most with easily recognizable English phrases during initial listens and can make listeners attach to the artists more as they can comprehend one another better (Octaviani & Yamin, 2020).

Grammatically complete English thoughts frequently appear in song bridges or pre-choruses, serving as emotional peaks that transcend language barriers. For instance, SEVENTEEN's *_WORLD* (2022) incorporated full English sentences that sound "Trust in me, baby, I can see" at key melodic moments to maximize emotional impact (see Appendix 19). However, these conventional approaches largely treat English as a supplementary tool rather than an integral artistic element, maintaining clear boundaries between Korean narrative content and English accessibility hooks.

2.4.2 NCT 127's Phased Linguistic Evolution

NCT 127's approach to English language usage has undergone a sophisticated evolution across their career, reflecting both their artistic maturation and the changing landscape of global pop music. Their linguistic journey can be clearly traced through three distinct phases, each demonstrating progressive refinement in how English is integrated into their musical identity.

Experimental Phase (2016 - 2018): Establishing a "Neo" Identity

During their formative years, NCT 127's English usage was characterised by bold, disruptive choices that immediately set them apart in the K-pop landscape. Their 2016 debut track *Fire Truck* featured jarring English interjections like "What, what, what, what, fire truck", that served as explosive punctuation marks rather than meaningful phrases, establishing their reputation for linguistic daring (see Appendix 1). This approach reached its peak with 2017's *Cherry Bomb*, which incorporated fragmented English phrases like "빨리빨리 피해 right, cherry bomb, feel it, yum" and invented Konglish terms that prioritized rhythmic impact over semantic coherence (see

Appendix 15). These early linguistic experiments, while sometimes polarizing, successfully established NCT 127 as K-pop's experimental linguists, willing to break conventions to create a distinctive sonic identity.

Structured Phase (2019 - 2021): Perfecting the Hybrid Formula

As NCT 127's international profile grew, their English usage evolved into a more sophisticated system of function code-switching. This period saw them developing what linguists call "language allocation strategies" where they assign specific roles to each language within their songs just like how bilingual teachers apply language of instruction at different times, with different content areas (Triggs, 2021). The English version of *Highway to Heaven* (2019) (see Appendix 20) demonstrated their growing fluency as well as their connection with international listeners, while the Korean original (see Appendix 21) showcased success and potential through their lyrics with refined code-switching techniques (Herman, 2019). Other tracks like *Kick It* (2020) revealed new nuance in cultural blending, using terminology, imagery, action verbs and philosophies with martial arts connotations in English (see Appendix 22) like "Bruce Lee", the Hong Kong-American martial artist and "Jeet Kune Do", the hybrid martial art philosophy and system founded by Bruce Lee alongside Korean lyrical flow (Augustyn & Adam, 2025). The group began employing English for clearer narrative purposes, as seen in *Favourite (Vampire)* (2021) where Gothic themed English phrases like "Just watching you never satisfy my soul" is used (see Appendix 23). The song title, *Favourite (Vampire)* also acts as the prominent step to portray the Gothic element, combining the genres of romance and horror to create atmospheric cohesion before the initial listen (Petrarca & Gonzalez, 2023). This phase also saw them mastering phonetic English, with *Sticker* (2021) using the repetitive titular phrase like "Sticker, tagging, tagging, tagging, tagging", primarily for its

percussive quality rather than meaning, demonstrating how their experimental roots has evolved into more calculated artistry (see Appendix 13).

Refined Phase (2022 - Present): Conceptual Linguistic Artistry

NCT 127's current approach represents the maturation of their linguistic philosophy into a fully realized artistic tool. Recent tracks demonstrated how English now serves multiple integrated functions within their music. *Ay-Yo* (2023) transforms simple English phrases like "How we do that?" and "Are you ready?" into fluid melodic motifs that adapt throughout the song's structure (see Appendix 24). *Fact Check* (2023) marks a conceptual breakthrough, with Gen-Z jargons like "GOAT" that stands for "Greatest of All Time", "vibe" that describes the overall mood or atmosphere of a place or situation and "glow" that indicates a positive transformation to create a unified futuristic aesthetic across both Korean and English languages (see Appendix 2). The title track for their first single album, *Be There For Me* (2023) also showcases bilingual fluidity, using emotionally resonant English phrases as anchoring points between Korean and English sections. This can be illustrated by the lyrics "Are you down to ride? 새벽 별과 눈꽃 속의 Would you be there for me?" (see Appendix 25). This current phase reveals several key developments where English terminology is carefully selected to reinforce overarching concepts, phonetic play serves musical purposes rather than just shock value, code-switching flows organically within narrative structures, cultural references operate simultaneously on multiple levels and language choices reflect deeper commentary on globalization. This evolution from rebellious experimentation to refined multilingual artistry demonstrates NCT 127's unique position in K-pop history. Unlike groups that simply increase English content for commercial reasons, NCT 127 has developed a comprehensive language philosophy that treats English as a musical element, a cultural bridge and a conceptual tool. Their phased development reveals how strategic linguistic innovation can

become a powerful component of artistic identity in global pop music, offering a model that balances Korean specificity with international appeal while continually pushing creating boundaries.

2.5 Linguistic Studies on K-pop: Phonetics, Syntax and Semantics

2.5.1 English in K-pop Lyrics: Structural Analysis

The structural deployment of English in K-pop lyrics reveals significant variation across groups, with NCT 127 exhibiting a distinctive "neo" approach that contrasts sharply with industry peers (Lopez, 2021). While most K-pop acts utilize English primarily for its semantic value and add emotional accessibility, NCT 127 has developed a more experimental methodology that treats English language as a raw sonic material to be manipulated for artistic effect. The fundamental difference in linguistic philosophy becomes particularly evident when comparing their work to groups like BTS, who employ English strategically to enhance listeners and cross-cultural connection (Ribeiro, 2021).

NCT 127's approach to English is fundamentally phonocentric. The concept of phonocentrism is a belief that speech is inherently superior to or more essential than text which later, plays a significant role in how we create, perceive and analyze songs (Prezi, 2024). In music, particularly in vocal performance, phonocentrism prioritize the physical properties of language including its intonation systems, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, timbre and phonetic texture over conventional semantic functions or written meaning (Vereshchahina-Biliavska et al., 2023). This manifests in several characteristic techniques such as the use of fragmented English phrases as rhythmic punctuation such as "Like a stick-er, stick-er, stick-er in *Sticker* (2021) (see Appendix 13). Besides that, the deployment of non-lexical vocables for their pure sonic qualities and the strategic distortion of English phonetics to create distinctive vocal textures. *Sticker* (2021) also

exemplifies this approach perfectly, where the titular phrase functions primarily as a malleable melodic motif that transforms throughout the song, its meaning secondary to its musical utility. This treatment of English as musical raw material rather than communicative vehicle aligns with their broader experimental ethos and noise music influences.

In contrast, groups like BTS and SEVENTEEN demonstrate a more semantically-driven approach to English integration. Their English phrases are carefully selected for maximum emotional resonance and clarity, often serving as key thematic statements or emotional climaxes within songs. One of BTS' title tracks, *Life Goes On* (2020) features complete, grammatically sound English phrases that distill the song's central messages into universally accessible expressions. Those lyrics sound like, "Like an echo in the forest", "Like an arrow in the blue sky" and "Yeah, life goes on like this again" (see Appendix 26). Besides that, even in their more experimental work, such as *Black Swan* (2020), English maintains its communicative integrity, serving as an emotional anchor amidst more abstract Korean lyrics (see Appendix 27). This difference reflects fundamental divergent creative priorities where BTS uses English to bridge cultural gaps, NCT 127 employs it to expand artistic possibilities.

The syntactic treatment of English further highlights these contrasting approaches. NCT 127 frequently engages in what might be termed as "intra-sentential code-switching", where switching occurs within a single sentence or clause (Mujiono & Diputri, 2018). The switch happens fluidly; often mid-phrase and the grammar of the two languages is blended well (Khalil & Firdaus, 2018). The English phrases also interrupt the Korean lyrical flow in deliberately jarring ways. This creates a distinctive linguistic texture that mirrors their musical experimentalism. BTS, conversely, practices "inter-sentential code-switching", weaving English seamlessly into Korean sentence structures to create fluid bilingual expressions. This type of switching happens between

complete sentences or clauses (Rusli et al., 2018). The speaker, or in this context, the singer, finishes a complete thought in one language and then begins a new complete though in another language (Khalil & Firdaus, 2018). Each clause is grammatically independent and complete within its own language (Tunaz, 2016). These divergent strategies reflect different conceptions of language's role in music where NCT 127 treats English as another instrument in their sonic palette, while BTS approaches it as an additional channel for emotional expression.

The table below shows two verses exemplify a stark contrast in code-switching strategies, with NCT 127's verse from *Kick It* (2020) utilizing intra-sentential code-switching to create a fluid, aggressive and culturally hybrid style that blends English and Korean within single grammatical units to mirror the rapid-fire, referential ethos of global hip-hop. In contrast, the vocal verse from BTS' *Black Swan* (2020) that employs inter-sentential code-switching, mark a clear emotional and structural boundary between a complete Korean clause expressing despair and a subsequent English clause introduced by "But", which heightens dramatic tension by juxtaposing internal reflection with an external, urgent possibility. Where rap verse prioritizes rhythmic fusion and stylistic authenticity, the vocal verse uses language separation to amplify narrative climax and emotional resonance.

Table 2.5

Contrasting Code-Switching Strategies in K-pop: NCT 127 and BTS

Intra-sentential Code-switching by NCT 127	Inter-sentential Code-switching by BTS
"잃어버린 겁 (yah), 어디서든 make it *poppin'* *Keep it movin' like Jeet Kune (like it)*	*"이게 나를 더 못 울린다면* *내 가슴을 더 떨리게 못 한다면* *어쩜 이렇게 한 번 죽겠지 아마*

내 앞을 막을 땐 Samuel Jackson 돼 *wassup?* *배배 꼬인 놈, baby, you just gotta watch* *"Enter the Dragon", 난 영화같이* *걸음걸이마저 martial arts* *Looking that everybody looking at me* *Cams, action, movie, shh* *쓰러뜨려 하나씩 (쉿) blows away* *자비는 없지 ruthless* *Droppin' the bomb on my enemies* *And I'm gonna kick it like Bruce Lee."* - *Verse 2 of Kick It (2020) (SMTOWN, 2020)*	*But what if that moment's right now, right now?"* - *Verse 2 of Black Swan (2020) (HYBE LABELS, 2020)*

These structural differences have significant implications for listener engagement and interpretation. NCT 127's approach invites a more physical, rhythmic engagement with their music, where English phrases function as sonic hooks that embed themselves in the listener's consciousness through repetition and phonetic appeal. BTS's methodology fosters a more cognitive and emotional connection, where English serves as accessible entry points into the song's deeper meaning. Both approaches represent valid and effective strategies for global pop music, but NCT 127's distinctive phonocentric treatment of English establishes them as unique innovators in K-pop's linguistic landscape.

2.5.2 NCT 127's Linguistic Innovation

NCT 127 has established itself as a pioneer in linguistic experimentation within K-pop through its bold reimagining of English usage. The group's approach transcends conventional language boundaries, creating a distinctive hybrid style that blends lexical creativity with syntactic innovation (Melendez, 2017). Their lyrics demonstrate an unprecedented level of linguistic playfulness that has become a hallmark of their artistic identity.

The group's lexical creativity represents a masterclass in cultural synthesis. Tracks like *Kick It* (2020) showcase their ability to compress multiple cultural references into concise English phrases (see Appendix 22). The line "And I'm gonna kick it like Bruce Lee" operates on three distinct levels simultaneously; as a martial arts reference connecting to pan-Asian identity, as contemporary youth slang meaning to excel and as a meta-commentary on NCT's own boundary-breaking approach. This multidimensional wordplay extends to *Fact Check* (2023), where Gen-Z jargons like "GOAT" is repurposed as both lyrical content and rhythmic device (see Appendix 2). Similarly, *2 Baddies* (2022) transforms African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) into a self-aware commentary on global hip-hop culture, demonstrating NCT 127's sophisticated engagement with linguistic appropriation.

NCT 127's syntactic experimentation pushes the boundaries of conventional K-pop lyricism. Their signature use of English imperative verbs, also known as command verbs within Korean grammatical structures creates a distinctive linguistic texture that is immediately recognizable (O'Reilly, 2023). The command "If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands" from *Cherry Bomb* (2017) exemplifies this technique, maintaining English syntax while adapting to Korean speech rhythms. Besides that, this children's rhyme is out of context, used purely for its rhythmic cadence and shock value (see Appendix 15). This approach achieves several artistic

objectives simultaneously where it preserves the urgency of hip-hop influences, creates memorable rhythmic punctuation and maintains the natural flow of Korean-dominant verses. This group frequently employs this strategy across their discography, from early tracks like *Fire Truck* (2016) (see Appendix 1) to their most recent release *Walk* (2024) (see Appendix 28), establishing it as a core component of their musical identity.

These linguistic innovations serve multiple strategic purposes within NCT 127's artistic and commercial framework. The group's creative wordplay functions as both cultural bridge and brand differentiator, allowing them to maintain Korean musical integrity while achieving global accessibility. Their unconventional syntax creates recognizable lyrical trademarks that facilitate fan engagement and social media virality. Perhaps most importantly, these techniques establish NCT 127 as cultural synthesizers, capable of navigating complex global pop landscapes while maintaining a distinct neo-identity (Jun-Hee, 2022).

The evolution of NCT 127's linguistic approach reveals a carefully developed philosophy rather than random experimentation. Their early work featured more overt linguistic fragmentation, as seen in the jarring English interjections of *Cherry Bomb* (2017) (see Appendix 15). Recent releases demonstrate refined conceptual wordplay, where every linguistic choice serves both musical and thematic purposes. This progression from disruptive experimentation to sophisticated integration illustrates NCT 127's maturation as artists while maintaining their core innovative spirit.

What truly distinguishes NCT 127's linguistic innovation is its systematic deployment across their entire body of work. Unlike occasional experimentation by other K-pop acts, NCT 127's approach to English usage represents a comprehensive artistic philosophy. From phonetic manipulation to cultural reference layering to syntactic bending, each element works in concert to

create a cohesive linguistic identity. This consistency amidst evolution has cemented their reputation as K-pop's foremost linguistic innovators, pushing the boundaries of what English can achieve within Korean popular music while establishing new paradigms for global pop expression.

2.6 Fan Engagement and Participatory Culture

2.6.1 Memorability and Singability

K-pop songs typically combine dance-friendly instrumental parts, bass-heavy hip-hop beats, catchy tempo and a mix of Korean and English lyrics to appeal to global audiences, enhancing memorability and singability (Moses, 2025). NCT 127's strategic use of English is fundamentally engineered to maximize memorability and singability, two critical factors that drive participatory fan culture in the digital age. The group consistently crafts concise, phonetically potent English hooks designed for easy recall and replication across social media platforms (Reifsnyder, 2017). These phrases function as linguistic anchors, enabling global listeners to engage with the music regardless of language barriers (Jr Animator 2, 2024). The repetitive, staccato hook "Stick-er" in *Sticker* (2021), their third Korean-language and fourth overall studio album exemplifies this approach (ifeeleverything, 2021). By elongating a simple word into a distinctive two-syllable phrase, NCT 127 created an instantly recognizable earworm perfectly suited for Instagram challenges. Its simplicity and rhythmic precision sparked the challenge, where listeners worldwide replicated the accompanying minimalist choreography, demonstrating how a deliberately designed English phrase can become the cornerstone of a global participatory trend (see Appendix 7).

This strategy permeates their discography, with each title track featuring similarly optimized English elements. The mantra-like hook in *2 Baddies* (2022) that sounds like "2 Baddies, 2 Baddies, 1 Porsche" leverages numerical simplicity and luxury imagery for high memorability,

while *Fact Check* (2023) combines vowel-heavy interjections and phrases to make it easy to shout or sing, solidifying its role as an accessible participatory chant (see Appendix 2). The effectiveness of this design is quantifiable via tracks with such concise English hooks as they consistently show higher media engagement metrics. For example, NCT 127's music video (MV) for *2 Baddies* (2022) holds the record for their most viewed MV in the first 24 hours on YouTube, amassing an impressive 33.2 million views. Their previous title track, *Sticker* (2021), achieved a notable 27 million views in its first day. Rounding out the top three is Fact Check (2023), which garnered 10.7 million views within its 24 hours of its release (NCT 127 CHART, 2023). These phrases achieve a high "singability index" through their brevity, vowel-driven pronunciation and pairing with iconic choreography, encouraging imitation from concert fan chants to online cover dances.

Ultimately, NCT 127's approach to English prioritizes functional virality over grammatical complexity. By reducing linguistic barriers to entry, these carefully designed phrases lower the threshold for global participation, enabling listeners across language proficiencies to engage in communal singing, dancing and content creating. This strategy demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of digital culture, where minimalist linguistic units can become powerful drivers of fan activity and identity formation within the K-pop ecosystem.

2.7 Research Gaps in Existing Literature on NCT 127's Use of English in their Title Tracks

Despite the growing body of scholarship on K-pop's globalization, significant research gaps persist regarding NCT 127's distinctive use of English in their title tracks. While studies have extensively documented code-switching practices in groups like BTS and BLACKPINK, NCT 127's innovative approach remains unexplored. Existing literature tends to focus primarily on commercial motivations for English incorporation, overlooking the artistic and conceptual dimensions that define NCT 127's linguistic experimentation. Their strategic use of Gen-Z jargons

(see Appendix 2), non-lexical phrases (see Appendix 13) and culturally hybrid expressions represent a rich area for investigation that extends beyond conventional market-driven analyses.

Another critical gap lies in the quantitative analysis of NCT 127's linguistic evolution. While researchers have examined English-Korean rations in broader K-pop contexts, no longitudinal study has systematically tracked the progression of English usage across NCT 127's discography from their 2016 debut to recent 2024 releases. Such research could reveal how their language strategies have evolved through distinct phases; from early disruptive hybridity (2016 - 2018) through structured code-switching (2019 - 2021) to their current period of conceptual integration (2022 - 2024). This analysis would provide valuable insights into how their linguistic innovation has matured alongside their global career development.

Comparative studies also remain notably absent from the literature. While researchers have compared English usage across groups like BTS, BLACKPINK and TWICE, NCT 127's distinctive approach which they prioritize sonic texture over semantic clarity has not been adequately contrasted with their peers' practices. Such comparisons could reveal how different groups balance artistic innovation with commercial considerations in their language strategies and how NCT 127's "neo" concept influences their unique linguistic identity.

Furthermore, the influence of SM Entertainment's institutional frameworks on NCT 127's language use requires deeper investigation. While the "Neo Culture Technology" concept is frequently referenced, its specific impact on linguistic decision, specifically from songwriting processes to member selection and training remains unexplored. Research examining how corporate strategies shape artistic expression would provide insights into the interplay between commercial imperatives and create innovation in global music production.

Methodologically, the field would benefit from more diverse approaches. Current research

relies heavily on quantitative content analysis of lyrics, while qualitative methods, including interviews with producers, songwriters and group members are scarce. Mixed-methods approaches combining lyrical analysis with fan surveys, social media analytics and industry ethnography would offer a more comprehensive understanding of how English functions within NCT 127's creative ecosystem.

Addressing these gaps would not only enrich our understanding of NCT 127's unique position within K-pop's globalization but also contribute to broader discussions about language innovation in popular music. Their strategic blending of artistic experimentation and commercial considerations offers a compelling case study of how cultural producers navigate the complexities of global markets while maintaining distinctive creative identities.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model serves as the foundational theoretical framework for this study, providing a robust sociolinguistic lens to analyze NCT 127's strategic use of English in their title tracks. This model posits that code-switching is a rational, intentional practice where speakers select linguistic codes to negotiate "rights and obligations" (RO) sets, where social expectations define relationships between participants in a communicative interaction (Scotton, 1983). According to Myers-Scotton (2003), an unmarked choice represents the expected, normative language for a specific context, reinforcing existing RO sets, while a marked choice deviates from these norms to redefine social dynamics, express identity, or achieve pragmatic effects. For NCT 127, a K-pop group operating within a Korean cultural industry, Korean is typically the unmarked choice for domestic audiences. However, their deliberate incorporation of English functions as a marked choice, strategically designed to align with SM Entertainment's "Neo Culture Technology" vision of globalized and hybrid artistry. This framework effectively

decodes how NCT 127's code-switching transcends mere linguistic alternation to become a tool for commercial expansion, artistic innovation and fan engagement.

The model's negotiation principle, "Choose the form of your conversational contribution such that it indexes the set of rights and obligations which you wish to be in force between speaker and addressee", is particularly relevant to NCT 127's title tracks (Myers-Scotton, 2003). For instance, in their early track *Fire Truck* (2016), abrupt English interjections like "What, what, what, what, fire truck" serve as marked choices that disrupt Korean lyrical flow, signaling their experimental "neo" identity and challenging conventional K-pop norms (see Appendix 1). Similarly, in *Kick It* (2020), cultural references like "Bruce Lee" and "Jeet Kune Do" in English act as marked deviations that bridge Korean and global hip-hop cultures, fostering solidarity with international audiences while maintaining Korean narrative depth (see Appendix 22). These marked choices are not random, but they reflect a calculated strategy to shift RO sets from localized expectations to global engagement, enabling their role as "cultural synthesizers" in the transnational music landscape.

Myers-Scotton's concept of exploratory code-switching further illuminates NCT 127's evolution across phases. During their experimental phase (2016 - 2018), as see in *Cherry Bomb* (2017), English phrases like "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands" were used disruptively, testing boundaries of linguistic acceptability (see Appendix 15). As the group progressed to their structured (2019 - 2021) and refined (2022 - 2024) phases, marked choices became more sophisticated. For example, *Fact Check* (2023) incorporates Gen-Z slangs like "GOAT" and "vibe" as marked lexical selections that index youth global culture (see Appendix 2), while Sticker (2021) uses phonetic English for rhythmic effect rather than semantic meaning (see Appendix 13). This evolution aligns with the model's assertion that marked choices can

become conventionalized over time, reflecting NCT 127's growing confidence in leveraging English as both an artistic and commercial tool.

This model also addresses criticism, such as Peter Auer's argument that code-switching creates social meaning dynamically rather than referencing pre-existing norms (Auer, 1999). For NCT 127, this dynamic is evident in how their marked choices actively construct their "global experimental unit" identity rather than merely responding to external expectations. Additionally, the group's inclusion of fluent English speakers, like Mark, Johnny and Jaehyun, allows for organic code-switching that avoids the stiltedness seen in earlier K-pop generations, addressing Blommaert and Meeuwis's critique that the Markedness Model overlooks intra-language variability (Setyawan & Sigalingging, 2024; Lanvers & Auer, 2000).

In summary, the Markedness Model provides a nuanced framework for analyzing NCT 127's code-switching as a strategic negotiation of global and local identities. It contextualizes their English usage within broader industry practices, revealing how marked choices serve dual purposes where it reinforces SM Entertainment's globalization strategies and enhances artistic hybridity. By applying this model, the study moves beyond superficial linguistic analysis to uncover the socio-pragmatic motivations behind NCT 127's language choices, offering insights into how K-pop navigates the complexities of cultural globalization.

2.9 Conclusion

This study has systematically examined the evolution of English within NCT 127's title tracks, revealing it to be a sophisticated and multi-dimensional strategy that operates at the intersection of global commerce, artistic innovation and fan engagement. Through the application of Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model, the analysis has demonstrated that NCT 127's code-switching is far from arbitrary, and it is a calculates series of marked choices designed to negotiate

new “rights and obligations” with a global audience, thereby redefining the group’s identity from a locally-bound K-pop act to vanguard of “neo” cultural hybridity (Myers-Scotton, 2003).

The longitudinal analysis confirms that NCT 127’s use of English has evolved through three distinct phases, namely the experimental, structured and refined, each mirroring both their artistic maturation and SM Entertainment’s refining “Culture Technology” framework. From the disruptive, phonetically-driven interjections in Fire Truck to the conceptually integrated Gen-Z lexicons in Fact Check, each phase represents a more sophisticated deployment of English as a structural, rather than supplementary, element of their music. This evolution underscores a key finding where English in NCT 127’s discography has transitioned from a tool for market accessibility to an integral component of artistic identity.

Furthermore, this research positions NCT 127’s strategy as a distinct paradigm within K-pop’s globalization. Unlike their peers, who often use English semantic clarity and emotional resonance, NCT 127 employs a phonocentric approach, treating the language as raw sonic material for rhythmic punctuation and textual experimentation. This practice is intrinsically linked to their “disruptive hybridity” in music production, creating a cohesive aesthetic where linguistic and musical innovation are linked. The commercial data is unequivocal as this strategy has proven immensely effective, with English-optimized tracks and hooks demonstrably driving higher international streams, video views and unprecedented levels of participatory fan engagement on social media platforms.

Ultimately, this study contends that NCT 127’s strategic use of English offers a compelling model for cultural globalization in the 21st century. It successfully navigates the tension between linguistic imperialism and localization, leveraging the global dominance of English not through assimilation, but through creative appropriation and hybridization. By maintaining a core Korean

identity while strategically deploying English for global engagement, NCT 127 exemplifies a path where artistic integrity and commercial success are not mutually exclusive. Their practice demonstrates that the future of global pop may lie not in erasing cultural specificity, but in innovating new forms of expression that are simultaneously local and global, familiar and radically new.

3.0 Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodological framework employed in this study. It begins with the overall research design, followed by a detailed account of data collection procedures, analytic strategies and ethical considerations. By combining quantitative, qualitative and participatory approaches, this chapter shows how the study achieves methodological triangulation to provide an understanding of English's role in NCT 127's title tracks as both a global strategy and a tool of artistic hybridity (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012).

3.1 Research Design

This research uses a mixed-methods research design to investigate the evolution and functions of English in NCT 127's title tracks from 2016 to 2024. This approach facilitates both macro-level trend analysis and micro-level nuance examination, allowing for a holistic understanding of how English operates as both a global strategy and artistic tool within SM Entertainment's "Neo Culture Technology" framework (Fiveable, 2024). The methodology integrates three primary components, specifically the quantitative linguistic analysis of song lyrics to track patterns and evolution, qualitative discourse analysis to decipher artistic and stylistic functions and to assess how international listeners actualize the English lyrics in NCT 127's music. This triangulation approach is justified by its ability to provide complementary insights as quantitative metrics reveal broad

patterns in language use, qualitative close readings uncover artistic intent and linguistic innovation, and survey analysis captures organic audience behaviors and engagement patterns.

By triangulating methods, this research draws from three interconnected domains. The quantitative strand calculates the frequency and distribution of English words across NCT 127's five highest-selling title tracks, thereby capturing macro-level shifts in linguistic hybridity. The quantitative strand applies discourse analysis to decode artistic functions of English, such as code-switching, non-standard forms and culture references. Finally, the listener actualization by gathering survey data from international listeners, survey questionnaire. This mixed-methods design therefore ensures that the findings account for industry strategies, artistic creativity and audience practice in equal measure.

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Selection of Corpus

The primary dataset comprises five of NCT 127's highest selling albums' title tracks released between 2016 and 2024. Restricting the analysis to only five title tracks ensure focus on the group's most promoted and commercially impactful works, which serve as vehicles of SM Entertainment's global branding strategies. By choosing the top-selling tracks, the study maximizes representativeness and relevance, since these songs achieved the greatest visibility, sales and international reach. Official lyrics will be retrieved from verified sources such as SM Entertainment's album booklets, Genius lyrics and Musixmatch to ensure textual accuracy.

3.2.2 Supplementary Materials

To contextualize corporate strategies, SM Entertainment's press releases, promotional campaigns and comeback-related media content will be collected. These materials can provide

insights into the institutional frameworks that shape artistic and linguistic decisions, aligning with the study's objective of bridging industry practice and textual creativity.

3.2.3 Fan Engagement Data

The data collection will center on a structured online survey that will be distributed via Google Forms. The survey will be administered to a curated focus group of 5 NCT127's international listeners. This strategy prioritizes in-depth and introspective qualitative data on fan actualization, reinforced by quantitative measurements for triangulation. A sampling strategy will be used to recruit participants who can provide rich and relevant insights based on their demonstrated engagement. Prospective participants will be screened according on the criteria below:

- Being 18 years old and above,
- Having attended at least one NCT concert (of any sub-unit or the whole group) in person,
- Having a non-Korean primary language.

This criterion ensures that participants have a deep, experiential connection to the group's music and fandom, which is crucial for providing detailed insights into the actualization of lyrics.

3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.1 Quantitative Lyrical Analysis

For the five title tracks, lyrics will be coded according to language distribution, mainly focusing on English and Korean. The English-to-Korean word ratio will be calculated and compared across tracks, producing a longitudinal picture of linguistic evolution from 2016 to 2024. Additional coding accounted for lexical categories, like nouns, verbs and interjections as well as repeated hooks, allowing analysis of whether English is concentrated in choruses, verses, or

refrains. Descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequency counts will be used to present these findings.

3.3.2 Qualitative Discourse Analysis

The lyrics will be then subjected to discourse analysis, focusing on how English functions artistically within songs. In this section, particular attention will be given to code switching and its placement within lyrical flow; phonetic play like repetition, staccato delivery and non-lexical vocables; cultural references and slang as well as stylistic hybridity, where English enhances genre blending and conceptual themes. This analysis is strongly related to Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model, which conceptualizes code-switching as a rational choice to negotiate identities and audience relationships (Scotton, 1983). Each marked linguistic choice will be examined for its role in reinforcing or reconfiguring NCT 127's artistic identity as a global experimental unit.

3.3.3 Fan Engagement Analysis

The survey data will be analyzed using a convergent mixed-methods approach to address how international listeners actualize the specified lyrics. First, quantitative data from the scaled question will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify which if the pre-identified English lyrics are most frequently recalled, sung along to and perceived as central to the fan community. Subsequently, the qualitative data from the open-ended response will be subjected to a systematic thematic analysis. This will explore the processes of communal identity formation and engagement. Finally, the quantitative and qualitative findings will be integrated where the numerical patterns will highlight which lyrics are most significant, while the thematic analysis will provide rich and narrative evidence on their role in fostering inside jokes, shared singalongs and a collective fan identity, thereby offering a triangulated and rich in-depth answer to the research question.

3.4 Ethical Consideration

All data collection procedures shall be adhered strictly to ethical research standards (Bhandari, 2021). For the lyrical analysis, only officially published materials will be used to avoid misrepresentation. For survey data, participants will be provided with an informed consent statement outlining the research purpose, voluntary participation and assurance of anonymity (Siegle, 2023). Since the survey will be carried out anonymously, no personal identifiable information will be collected and responses will be stored securely (*Are anonymous surveys really anonymous?*, 2024). This approach respects listeners' digital privacy while enabling meaningful analysis of participatory culture.

3.5 Conclusion

The methodology of this study integrates quantitative lyric tracking, qualitative discourse analysis and fan-centered survey research to capture the multifaceted role of English in NCT 127's title tracks. By focusing on five of the group's highest-selling works, contextualizing SM Entertainment's industry strategies and examining audience participation on Instagram, this study situates English at the intersection of commerce, creativity and fandom. This triangulated approach ensures methodological rigor while reflecting the complex realities of K-pop's globalization.

4.0 Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter marks the pivotal transition from theoretical framework and methodological design to the empirical heart of this research, which investigates the evolution of English in NCT 127's title tracks as both a global strategy and a tool of artistic hybridity. The primary aim is to answer the central research question that sounds, "How does English function as both a global

strategy and a creative tool in NCT 127's title tracks? To systematically unpack this inquiry, the analysis is structured around the three interconnected research objectives:

1. To quantify the prevalence and development trajectory of English in NCT 127's title tracks through systematic lyrical analysis of their discography (2016-2024).
2. To evaluate English's artistic role by conducting close readings of lyrics to identify creative devices like slang, puns and code-switching, contextualising them within K-pop's genre-blending tendencies.
3. To analyse how international listeners actualise the prevalent and artistically significant English lyrics identified in the preceding analyses.

This chapter is organised to reflect this tripartite framework. It begins by presenting the quantitative findings from the lyrical analysis, tracking the proportional use and evolution of English across the selected corpus. Following this, the qualitative analysis delves into the artistic dimensions of English usage, employing close reading and Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model to interpret the socio-pragmatic motivations and creative functions of code-switching and linguistic play. Finally, the chapter will examine the fan engagement data, drawing from survey responses to understand how international audiences receive, memorise and integrate these English lyrics into participatory fandom practices.

By integrating these quantitative, qualitative and participatory perspectives, this chapter will provide a comprehensive and triangulated understanding of how English operates within NCT 127's musical output. It aims to demonstrate that NCT 127's use of English is a dynamic, evolving and deeply calculated practice. It is a practice where commercial calculation and artistic innovation are not in tension but are intrinsically linked, and where strategic language choices are designed to be physically felt, easily shared, and collectively owned by a global audience. It moves beyond

mere description to offer a nuanced interpretation of the data, setting the stage for the final discussion in Chapter 5, where these findings will be synthesised with the existing literature and their broader implications for cultural globalisation will be fully articulated.

4.2 Quantitative Analysis of English Evolution

This section addresses the first research objective, which is to quantify the prevalence and developmental trajectory of English in NCT 127's title tracks from 2016 to 2024 that form the commercial backbone of their discography. A comprehensive understanding of this trajectory requires a focus on the period where their global strategy was most fully realised and commercially potent. While their debut in 2016 marks the starting point, their linguistic approach evolved significantly alongside their growing international presence. Therefore, to capture the maturation of their strategy at its most impactful, the corpus was deliberately restricted to their **five** highest-selling title tracks. This approach is justified by three critical rationales that align the linguistic analysis directly with the research aims.

Firstly, this selection prioritises strategic significance over mere discographic completeness. Title tracks are, by definition, the primary vehicles for a K-pop group's promotional campaigns and global branding (Tanudjaja, 2024). By concentrating on those that achieved the highest commercial success, this analysis ensures it is examining the linguistic strategies that SM Entertainment invested in most heavily and that resonated most powerfully with the global market. These tracks represent not just songs, but successful commercial products, making their linguistic composition a matter of strategic importance rather than casual artistic choice (O'Reilly et al., 2013).

Secondly, this method provides a clear lens through which to analyse "global strategy". Commercial performance, particularly in the K-pop industry, is a direct metric of a group's ability

to capture market share and audience attention (Jae-Heun, 2024). By correlating language use with proven commercial success, we can move beyond speculative claims about intent and instead, identify the actual linguistic formulae that correlate with peak market performance (S, 2024). If English functions as a global strategy, as posited by this writing, then its deployment in the group's best-selling works provides the most compelling evidence.

Thirdly, this focus ensures analytical depth and manageability. A comprehensive analysis of all the title tracks could dilute the findings with outliers or less impactful releases. By honing in on the commercial peaks, the analysis captures the evolution of NCT 127's approach at its most refined and consequential moments. This allows for a more nuanced exploration of how English usage shifts between their most significant commercial eras, from the foundational success of *Fire Truck* (2016) to the record-breaking achievement of *Sticker* (2021).

To contextualise this selection, all NCT 127 title tracks will be presented chronologically, followed by their approximate first-month Korean album sales based on Circle chart, which was officially rebranded from Gaon chart by the Korea Music Content Association (KMCA) (Yang, 2022). The list will clearly illustrate the commercial hierarchy within their discography and highlight the five tracks that constitute the primary corpus for this study. The decision to base the corpus selection on first-month sales, rather than cumulative figures up to year 2024, is methodologically critical as it prioritizes initial strategic impact over long-term longevity. First-month sales capture the direct commercial outcome of a title track's intensive promotional campaign, providing a precise measure of its immediate market resonance and the efficacy of its linguistic strategy at the time of release (Keyser, 2025). This approach neutralizes the bias inherent in cumulative data, where older tracks benefit from years of a growing fanbase and ensures an equitable, contemporaneous comparison that aligns with the K-pop industry's own "comeback"

paradigm, where success is definitively measured by explosive, short-term performance (Huez, 2024). Based on this rationale, Table 4.1 below demonstrates all NCT 127 title tracks by their approximate first-month sales for a transparent corpus selection.

Table 4.2.1

Chronological Sales Data of NCT 127 Title Tracks (for Corpus Selection)

Title Track	Corresponding Album (Format)	Album Release Date	First-Month Album Sales	Order
Fire Truck	NCT #127 (1st Mini Album)	July 10th, 2016	60,118 copies (see Appendix 29)	15/15
Limitless	NCT #127 LIMITLESS (2nd Mini Album)	January 6th, 2017 (digital) January 9th, 2017 (physical)	77,417 copies (see Appendix 30)	14/15
Cherry Bomb	NCT #127 CHERRY BOMB (3rd Mini Album)	June 14th, 2017	105,877 copies (see Appendix 31)	13/15
Regular	NCT #127 Regular-Irregular (1st Full Album)	October 12th, 2018	273,075 copies (see Appendix 32)	10/15
Simon Says	NCT #127 Regulate (Repackage Album)	November 23rd, 2018	140,330 copies (see Appendix 33)	12/15
Superhuman	NCT #127 WE ARE SUPERHUMAN (4th Mini Album)	May 24th, 2019	226,636 copies (see Appendix 34)	11/15

Kick It	NCT #127 Neo Zone (2nd Full Album)	March 6th, 2020	723,150 copies (see Appendix 35)	5/15
Punch	NCT #127 Neo Zone : The Final Round (Repackage Album)	May 19th, 2020	409,620 copies (see Appendix 36)	9/5
Sticker	Sticker (3rd Full Album)	September 17th, 2021	2,277,575 copies (see Appendix 37)	1/15
Favorite (Vampire)	Favorite (Repackage Album)	October 25th, 2021	626,036 copies (see Appendix 38)	8/15
2 Baddies	2 Baddies (4th Full Album)	September 16th, 2022	1,704,782 copies (see Appendix 39)	2/15
Ay-Yo	Ay-Yo (Repackage Album)	January 30th, 2023	637,291 copies (see Appendix 40)	7/15
Fact Check	Fact Check (5th Full Album)	October 6th, 2023	1,489,690 copies (see Appendix 41)	3/15
Be There For Me	Be There For Me (Special Single Album)	December 27th, 2023	641,364 copies (see Appendix 42)	6/15
WALK	WALK (6th Full Album)	July 15th, 2024	834,480 copies (see Appendix 43)	4/15

*Entries selected for the analytical corpus are highlighted in green.

As evidenced in Table 4.1, the selected corpus, namely *Kick It* (2020), *Sticker* (2021), *2 Baddies* (2022), *Fact Check* (2023), *WALK* (2024) represents a clear spread and encompasses their

most significant commercial peaks. While this excludes their earlier, lower-selling works from the quantitative count, it allows for a precise analysis of how English usage evolved once NCT 127 solidified their status as global chart-toppers (Etimes.In, 2024). The results of the systematic word count analysis for these five definitive tracks are consolidated in Table 4.2, providing the empirical foundation for this chapter.

Table 4.2.2

English Language Analysis of Top 5 Title Tracks Based on First-Month Korean Album Sales

Title Track (Year)	Total Word Count	English Word Count	Percentage
Kick It (2020)	554	227	40.97% (see Appendix 44)
Sticker (2021)	596	247	41.44% (see Appendix 45)
2 Baddies (2022)	707	324	45.83% (see Appendix 46)
Fact Check (2023)	517	313	60.54% (see Appendix 2)
WALK (2024)	714	219	30.67% (see Appendix 28)

The data consolidated in Table 4.2 reveals a nuanced and strategically non-linear trajectory of English usage across NCT 127's most commercially successful title tracks. The proportion of English does not follow a simple, ascending path but instead demonstrates calculated fluctuation, suggesting that the quantity of English is a dynamic variable calibrated to specific artistic and commercial goals for each release (Barnes-Sadler et al., 2025).

To visualize this trajectory, the data is presented in the following line graph, which plots the percentage of English against the release timeline:

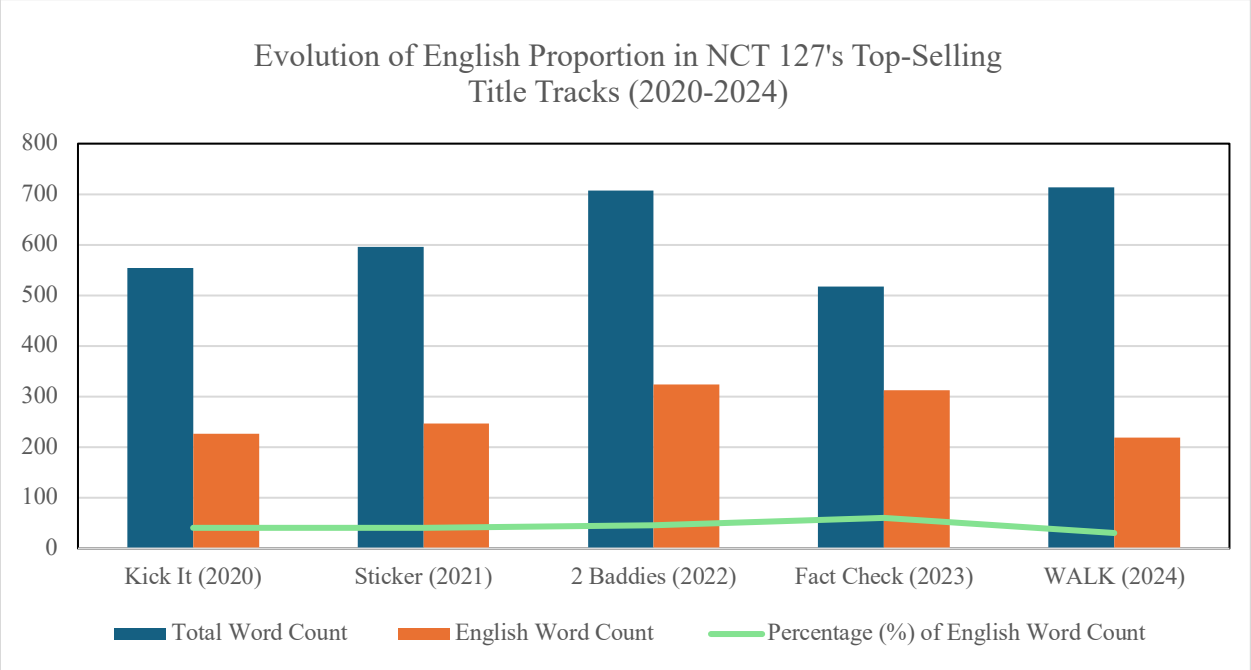

Figure 4.2 Evolution of English Proportion in NCT 127's Top-Selling Title Tracks (2020-2024)

The graph illustrates several key quantitative trends. Firstly, a period of Strategic Escalation is evident from *Kick It* (2020) at 40.97% (see Appendix 44) to a peak in *Fact Check* (2023) at 60.54% (see Appendix 2). This escalation indicates a phase of intensifying linguistic hybridisation where English transitioned from a complementary element to a dominant lexical vehicle in the latter track (Barnes-Sadler et al., 2025).

However, this trend is critically punctuated by two pivotal data points. The first is *Sticker* (2021), the group's highest-selling track, which maintains a moderate 41.44% English ratio (see Appendix 45). This demonstrates that commercial zenith does not necessitate peak linguistic saturation, hinting at other, more artisically-driven factors at play (Antonov, 2025). The second and most striking is the most recent release, *WALK* (2024), which shows a decisive Strategic Recalibration with the lowest proportion in the corpus at 30.67% (see Appendix 28). This sharp

decline signals a clear pivot, suggesting that the group's strategy is highly responsive and refuses to be locked into a single formula.

In conclusion, this quantitative analysis has successfully mapped the fluctuating prevalence of English, establishing a clear and non-linear trend across NCT 127's most commercially successful years. However, these figures, while definitive, remain descriptive. They reveal that the strategy changed but cannot explain how the functional roles of English evolved to create these quantitative outcomes. The critical questions of artistic purpose and linguitic function raised by this data, "Why the most successful track uses a moderate amount of English, or what drives the sudden shift from peak hybridisation to stark reduction?" necessitate a qualitative investigation. Therefore, the following section will now turn to a close reading of these lyrics to decode the artistic motivations and socio-pragmatic functions that underpin this quantitative trajectory, thereby completing the answer to how the proportion and functional roles of English have evolved.

4.3 Qualitative Analysis of Artistic Functions

Building upon the quantitative trajectory established in the previoud section, this chapter addresses the second research objective which is to evaluate English's artistic role by conducting close reading of lyrics to identify creative devices and contextualise them within K-pop's genre-blending tendencies. Where the numerical data revealed that English usage fluctuated strategically, this qualitative analysis seeks to explain why by interrogating the artistic purposes English serves. It answers the respective research question by shifting the focus to stylistic analysis, examining how English function as a tool for genre hybridity, linguistic play and lyrical innovation beyond mere marketability.

The analysis is structured around Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model, which provides a robust framework for understanding the socio-pragmatic motivations behind code-switching

(Myers-Scotton, 2020). Within the context of NCT 127's music, Korean typically serves as the "unmarked' choice, or the expected linguistic norm for a K-pop act (Riedel, 2019). The deliberate incorporation of English, therefore, functions as a "marked" choice, a strategic deviation designed to achieve specific artistic and communicative effects, redefine the group's identity, and negotiate a new relationship with a global audience (Lee, 2025). This framework allows us to conceptualise NCT 127's linguistic experimentation not as arbitrary mixing but as a calculated artistic practice.

4.3.1 Phonetic Experimentation and Rhythmic Punctuation

A primary artistic function of English in NCT 127's music is its use as raw sonic material, prioritised for its phonetic qualities over its semantic meaning (Hankookilbo, 2025). This phonocentric approach is a hallmark of their "neo" identity and is particularly evident in tracks where the quantitative percentage of English is used for impact rather than narrative (Vereshchahina-Biliavska et al., 2023).

In *Sticker* (2021), the quantitative data showed a moderate 41.44% English usage (see Appendix 45). Qualitatively, this English is deployed not for lyrical depth but for rhythmic and textual creation. The titular word, "sticker", which is fragmented and repeated as a percussive hook, "Like a stick-er, stick-er, stick-er", its meaning secondary to its staccato rhythm, which mirrors the song's dissonant flute instrumentation (see Appendix 13). This represents a marked choice to use English as a musical instrument itself, reinforcing the track's experimental, "noise music" aesthetic (Tobias, 2023). Similarly, the extensive use of non-lexical English vocables functions to create rhythmic cadence and a visceral, rather than intellectual, engagement with the music (The Long Now Foundation, 2021).

This trend continues in WALK (2024), which, despite having the lowest English percentage of 30.67% (see Appendix 28), uses English with high phonetic intensity. The

imperative command, “Walk”, and the onomatopoeic, repetitive hook, “빼그덕 빼그덕” (transliterated as “bbae-geu-deok”, mimicking a creaking sound), are central to the song’s attitude (see Appendix 28). Here, the marked choice of concise, punchy English words and sounds serves to create an immediate, gritty and rhythmically driving force, proving that a lower volume of English can be artistically potent when used with phonetic precision.

4.3.2 Intertextuality and Generic Authentication

Moving beyond pure sound, English serves as a critical tool for cultural and generic intertextuality, embedding NCT 127 within global music traditions while maintaining a distinct Korean core (Kuppens, 2009). This function involves the strategic deployment of culturally specific references and genre-specifc slang to build credibility and forge discursive connections.

Kick It (2020) masterfully utilises its 40.97% English quotient (see Appendix 44) to construct a sophisticated intertextual framework around martial arts philosophy (see Appendix 22). Marked choices like “Bass kick swingin' like I'm Bruce Lee” and “Jeet Kune Do” operate simultaneously as pan-Asian cultural homage, globally legible action verbs, and philosophical statements on the group’s adaptable, boundary-breaking “neo” concept (Baker, 2013). This is not superficial appropriation but a deliberate synthesis that positions the group within a transnational discourse of hip-hop and martial arts, enabling the track to resonate across cultural boundaries while retaining its Korean narrative depth (Jin, 2025).

Similarly, *2 Baddies* (2022) leverages its 45.83% English (see Appendix 46) to authenticate its position within the trap music genre (*NCT 127: 2 Baddies,* 2022). The repetitive, boastful hook, “2 Baddies, 2 Baddies, 1 Porsche” and the adoption of African American Vernacular English (AAVE)-derived constructions like the term “Baddies” or phrase like “We pulling up and we cutting the line” function as marked stylistic signatures (*NCT 127: 2 Baddies*, 2022; Kim et al.,

2022). In AAVE, a "baddie" refers to an attractive, confident and stylish person, often with a connotation of being independent and self-assured (*Who's a Baddie, Anyway?*, 2023). It is a term of admiration and has been widely popularised through hip-hop and social media (AAVE, 2024). On the other hand, "pulling up" from the phrase "We pulling up and we cutting the line" is classic AAVE meaning to arrive at a location, often in a stylish or noticeable vehicle, while "cutting the line" is a direct and colloquial way to say skipping the queue, which fits the confident, rule-breaking vibe of the song (James, 2025; Stewart & Stewart, 2021). These choices are less about narrative meaning and more about establishing genre credibility and stylistic fidelity, using English as a sonic signifier to align the track with the conventions and attitudes of global hip-hop culture.

4.3.3 Conceptual Saturation and Thematic Lexicon

The quantitative peak of English in *Fact Check* (2023) at 60.54% (see Appendix 2) correlates qualitatively with a paradigm shift towards conceptual saturation. Here, English transitions from a supplementary device to the primary lexical vehicle for the song's overarching theme, constituting a marked choice to build a unified, futuristic aesthetic.

The lyrics are densely saturated with a curated lexicon of Gen-Z and internet vernacular, including "GOAT", the abbreviation for "Greatest of All Time", "vibe", "glow" and "iconic" (see Appendix 2). These are not random insertions but marked lexical choices that index a specific, digitally-native, global youth identity (Eurodesk Brussels Link, 2025). The titular command, "Fact Check", is repeated as a conceptual mantra, transforming a term from journalistic and social media discourse into a broader theme of self-validation and myth-making (Liu et al., 2023). This represents the culmination of their linguistic evolution where English is now the dominant code for articulating a comtemporary, self-referential concept, with the high percentage reflecting its total integration into the song's artistic architecture.

4.3.4 Synthesis: The Anatomy of Disruptive Hybridity

The qualitative analysis demonstrates that the fluctuating proportions quantified in Section 4.2 are direct manifestations of a dynamic and evolving artistic philosophy. The numerical trajectory maps directly onto a functional evolution:

1. The strategic escalation from *Kick It* (2020) to *Fact Check* (2023) traces a path from English as a tool for external cultural referencing to its employment as the core lexicon for internal, conceptual world-building.
2. The strategic recalibration in *WALK* (2024) signifies a conscious return to a refined phonocentrism, demonstrating the group's versatility and refusal to be constrained by a single successful formula (Vereshchahina-Biliavska et al., 2023).

In conclusion, the artistic role of English in NCT 127's title tracks is multifaceted, dynamic and fundamentally integral to their "neo" identity (Jun-Hee, 2022). It functions as a sonic device for rhythmic and textual experimentation, an intertextual tool for generic authentication and cultural bridging, and a conceptual lexicon for thematic reinforcement (E. Morales, 2024). By consistently treating English a series of marked choices within their linguistic repertoire, NCT 127 transcends its utilitarian function as a commercial vehicle, elevating it to an indispensable element of their artistic innovation. This analysis thereby answers Research Question 2 by conclusively demonstrating that English's primary artistic purpose is to enact and enable the "disruptive hybridity" that defines their musical and conceptual universe, forging a unique aesthetic that is simultaneously locally grounded and globally resonant.

4.4 Analysis of Fan Engagement and Lyrical Actualisation

This section addresses the third research objective which is to analyse how international listeners actualise the prevalent and artistically significant English lyrics identified in the preceding

analyses. It directly explores the final research question concerning the lyrics' role in fostering communal identity and engagement (LingoStar, 2025). To investigate this, a qualitative focus group was conducted with five participants who met all three specific criteria to ensure rich and experiential data (Flood, 2025). Complete output by the five participants can be found in the appendices (see Appendix 47 to Appedix 51). Each participant must be 18 years of age or older, their primary language is not Korean and they have attended at least one NCT concert (of any sub-units) in person. This selective approach guaranteed that participants were not only dedicated international fans but also had a deep, experiential connection to the group's music and the communal aspects of the fandom. The open-ended questionnaire was designed to move beyond mere quantification, probing instead how fans recall, interpret and integrate specific English phrases into their social and cultural practices (eXperience, 2023).

The data presented herein captures the lived experience of the fandom, revealing the processes of lyrical actualisation which shows the transformation of artistic content into social currency. The findings are organised to illuminate how the strategically crafted English lyrics, whose prevalence and artistic functions were established in Section 4.2 and 4.3, are actively repurposed by listeners. This analysis will demonstrate that these phrases function as foundational tools for communal participation, as lexical tokens that define in-group identity, and as dynamic catalysts for user-generated content, thereby completing the holistic understanding of English's role in NCT 127's global ecosystem.

The focus group participants consisted primarily of long-term NCTzens, with four out of five having followed the group for over five years since their debut or the SM Rookies era, and one fan engaged for one to two years. Perceptions of English usage over time varied, though the majority trended toward recognizing an increase. On a numerical scale assessing the amount of

English in recent tracks, ratings averaged a 4 out of 5. Participants also voted the use of English in their title tracks as having “Significantly increased”, “Slightly increased” or “Stayed about the same”, with one noting a “Slight decrease”.

In their own words, the English phrases that proved most memorable to participants were characteristically catchy and addictive. These phrases included “Check the facts, go check that” and “Iconic move, my motion” from *Fact Check* (2023) and “2 Baddies, 2 Baddies, 1 Porsche” from *2 Baddies* (2022). Once again, participants attributed the memorability of these phrases to their addictive and catchy nature, their association with personal favourite songs, the meaningful message of a track, or simply being the most listened to release.

Regarding the practice of code-switching between Korean and English, participants reported mixed but generally positive reactions. Some found the switching “pretty fun to listen to” when done correctly, though one participant noted that sudden switches could feel jarring if the vocabulary seemed out of place. A significant benefit highlighted was the accessibility English provides; it was perceived as “friendly” by international listeners, offering lyrical anchors that they could sing accurately without the hurdle of Korean pronunciation. One participant even stated that as a non-native speaker with a relatively weak sense of language conversion, the primary concern was rhyme, and thus they “don’t feel much difference” between the language, focusing instead on the overall sonic flow. While one participant admitted the blending could be “kinda confusing” at first listen, they concluded that it works well once the listener learns the meaning, and another simply found the stylistic choice “so cool”.

Participants identified specific English phrases as particularly effective in creating distinct energies within NCT 127’s music, with a key factor for their success being their seamless intergration with the music itself. As one participant noted, “I think the lyrics all match the rhythm

of the music. This repetition creates a sense of progression, making it very addictive and catchy for the audiences". This phonocentric design is evident in several tracks, such as "New thangs, new thangs, bass kick swingin' like I'm Bruce Lee" from *Kick It* (2020) which was noted for establishing a heroic and powerful image through its martial arts imagery, while the hook of *Sticker* (2021) was noted for its catchiness and memorability, though its full effectiveness was recognised as dependent on lyrical context. *Fact Check* (2023) lyrics were perceived as a confident and confrontational challenge that adds a punchy yet self-assured energy. Overall, participants agreed that these phrases are successful because they are exceptionally catchy and memorable, encouraging sing-alongs and standing out prominently during concerts. The strength of these English phrases lies in being short yet impactful, delivering significant energy despite their minimal length, and creating an immediate, powerful connection with listeners through their rhythmic quality and declarative nature.

Participants demonstrated a capacity for deeper interpretation of these lyrics, moving beyond surface-level catchiness to uncover layered meanings. For instance, while the repetitive hook in *Sticker* (2021) is sonically catchy, reading the lyrics reveals a thematic depth, as the "sticker" symbolises sticking together with loved ones. Phrases like *Kick It* (2020) were interpreted as a self-introduction that positions the group as confident newcomers, using Bruce Lee as a cultural references for coolness. The lyric "Check the facts, go check that" from *Fact Check* (2023) was widely seen as a powerful, confident retort to critics and a declaration of the group's authenticity. The song, *Fact Check* (2023) as a whole was described as an "anthem" about reclaiming narrative control and asserting artistic intergrity.

Additionally, participants identified several English phrases as particularly enjoyable for collective singing, citing their dynamic delivery and anthemic quality. The phrase "new thangs"

from *Kick It* (2020) was once again noted for its climactic energy within the song's lively atmosphere, while the entirety of *Fact Check* (2023) was characterised as a fun, high-energy "anthem" that fosters collective participation. This tendency to actualise lyrics through sing-alongs extended beyond title tracks to include prominent B-sides, underscoring the depth of fan engagement. Participants specifically highlighted rap-heavy segments from tracks such as *Welcome to My Playground* (2018), *Pilot* (2021) and *Skyscraper* (2023) for their engaging flow and melodic appeal. The powerful, high-toned declarative English phrases from *Far* (2021) was also described as empowering and thrilling to chant in a concert setting, demonstrating how these carefully crafted English phrases, whether in title tracks or B-sides, function as foundational tools for communal participation.

The focus group also identified several English lyrics that have evolved into popular memes and inside jokes within the fandom. One of the participants mentioned about the "Regular, huh?" trend, which originated from a specific exchange in the song, *Regular* (2018) and became a widespread in-joke, charaterised by its perceived awkwardness and humor that resonated deeply within the fan community as well as the artists themselves. More recently, the opening line of *Walk* (2024) that sounds like "Woah, woah, woah, woah, woah, we on" has been adopted as a versatile callback, used reactively whenever the word "woah" is encountered in daily life, a trend even noted among idols from other groups, like Sungchan and Shotaro from RIIZE (see Appendix 52). Similarly, the persistent hook "Like a sticker, sticker, sticker" from *Sticker* (2021) transcended the song's initial polarizing reception to become a long-term, self-aware joke about the track's unforgettable nature.

Additionally, the festive and emotionally resonant plea, "Be there for me" from the winter special single album is anticipated to see recurring popularity during seasonal periods. Participants

overwhelmingly affirmed that specific English phrases are central to shared identity and inside jokes within the NCTzen community, functioning as crucial identity markers. These phrases, such as the linguistically awkward "Regular, huh?" exchange, create a distinct in-group boundary, where their very oddness is embraced by fans who understand the context but is often lost on the general public. The widespread use of lines like "Woah woah woah we on" from *Walk* (2024) as a reactive meme demonstrates how these lyrics are woven into daily fan communication, transforming common words into specific callbacks. While some common phrases may not always stand out, those that are distinctive or slightly awkward are seen as adding charm and significant meme potential, ultimately providing essential common ground that strengthens the bond within the fandom and between fans and the idols.

Besides that, participants unanimously affirmed that the use of English in NCT 127's music plays a crucial role in fostering a strong sense of community among international fans. A primary benefit highlighted is the feeling of being "seen" and "valued", as the inclusion of English makes the music more accessible and relatable, bridging the linguistic gap for non-Korean speakers. This accessibility directly facilitates connection, enabling fans to confidently sing along at concerts and discuss songs using recognizable English titles, thereby enhancing shared participation. Furthermore, English phrases are seen as creating a vital "shared reference" that allows all fans, regardless of native language, to engage in common jokes, reactions and a collective fandom identity, ultimately strengthening the global bond within the NCTzen community.

In the concluding remarks, participants reinforced the idea that English lyrics significantly enhance their experience as international fans. One fan framed this through a sociological lens, noting that engagement with NCT 127's often unconventional English phrases create a distinct "in-group and out group" dynamic, where understanding and appreciating the lyrical choices

becomes a marker of being a true insider within the fandom. They also observed an artistic evolution, feeling that the integration of English has become more seamless and less "out of place" with each album. The practical benefit of confidence was reiterated, with another participant emphasizing that English lyrics are the parts they can sing "the loudest" at concerts without the fear of mispronunciation, directly enabling fuller participation. Finally, a specific mention of the song Highway to Heaven (2019) underscored how particular English-language tracks and their accompanying visuals leave a powerful and lasting positive impression, cementing the deep connection between the music and fan experience.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has systematically examined how English functions in NCT 127's title tracks through quantitative, qualitative and participatory analysis. These findings reveal a sophisticated linguistic strategy where English serves dual purposes as both commercial tool and artistic medium (Lieber, 2025).

The quantitative analysis established a non-linear trajectory of English usage across NCT 127's most successful works, showing strategic fluctuation that demanded qualitative investigation. The close reading of lyrics demonstrated how English serves distinct creative purposes; as phonetic material in *Sticker* (2021), cultural bridge in *Kick It* (2020) and conceptual lexicon in *Fact Check* (2023).

Most significantly, the fan engagement analysis revealed how international listeners actualise these lyrics into social currency. English phrases function as tools for communal participation, markers of in-group identity and catalysts for user-generated content, creating a shared cultural experience that transcends linguistic boundaries.

These findings confirm that NCT 127's English usage represents a calculated fusion of commercial strategy and artistic innovation. The successful actualisation of these lyrics by global fans demonstrates the effectiveness of this approach in building community while maintaining artistic integrity. These results provide substantial ground for the forthcoming discussion chapter, where their broader implications for cultural globalisation and transnational music production will be fully explored.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This study set out to investigate the multifaceted role of English in NCT 127's title tracks, guided by the central research question, "How does English function as both a global strategy and a creative tool in NCT 127's title tracks?" Using a mixed-methods approach, which is by integrating quantitative lyrical analysis, qualitative discourse analysis, and participatory fan engagement research, this research has systematically traced the evolution and impact of English from their commercial breakthrough in 2020 to their most recent release in 2024. The findings reveal a sophisticated and dynamic linguistic philosophy that is deeply embedded within SM Entertainment's "Neo Culture Technology" framework.

This final chapter synthesizes the key findings from the empirical analysis presented in Chapter 4, interpreting them in the context of the theoretical framework and existing literature outlined in Chapters 2. It will first provide a comprehensive discussion, weaving together the quantitative trends, qualitative functions, and fan actualisation data to present a holistic answer to the research question. Subsequently, it will articulate the theoretical and practical implications of these findings, acknowledge the study's limitations, and finally, propose constructive avenues for future research. The overarching aim is to demonstrate that NCT 127's use of English transcends mere commercial

calculation, representing instead a pioneering model of artistic hybridity and strategic globalisation in contemporary popular music.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The integrated analysis of data yields three overarching conclusions that collectively answer the research question. First, the evolution of English in NCT 127's title tracks is strategic and non-linear, calibrated to specific artistic and commercial objectives for each release. The quantitative trajectory from *Kick It* (2020) to *Fact Check* (2023) showed a clear escalation in English prevalence, peaking at 60.54% (see Appendix 2). However, this trend was punctuated by two critical data points which are the moderate usage in their highest-selling track, *Sticker* (2021), and the decisive recalibration to the lowest percentage inn the corpus in *WALK* (2024). This fluctuation decisively refutes a simplistic narrative of progressive Anglicization. Instead, it demonstrates that the quantity of English is a variable strategically manipulated, not a fixed goal. The proportion is a consequence of the intended artistic function, not the driver of it.

Second, English serves distinct and evolving artistic functions that are fundamental to NCT 127's "neo" identity. The qualitative analysis, framed by Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model, revealed that English is deployed as a series of deliberate "marked choices" to achieve specific aesthetic effects:

1. As a Phonetic Tool: In tracks like *Sticker* (2021) and *WALK* (2024), English is used phonocentrically, prioritising rhythmic punctuation and textual creation over semantic meaning. Words are fragmentated and repeated as percussive elements, functioning as another instrument in the sonic palette.
2. As an Intertextual Bridge: In *Kick It* (2020) and *2 Baddies* (2022), English phrases laden with cultural references. For instance, the usage of "Bruce Lee", "Jeet Kune Do" (see

Appendix 22) and “Porsche” (see Appendix 46) from these songs that serve to authenticate the group’s position within global genres like hip-hop and trap, forging connections with international audiences while maintaining a core Korean narrative (*NCT 127: 2 Baddies*, 2022).

3. As a Conceptual Lexicon: *Fact Check* (2023) represents a paradigm shift where English becomes the dominant vehicle for a unified thematic concept. The saturation of Gen-Z slang creates a self-referential, futuristic aesthetic, demonstrating English’s role in advanced conceptual world-building (see Appendix 2).

Third, international fans actively actualise these strategic and artistic English lyrics, transforming them into the social fabric of the fandom. The fan engagement analysis provided the crucial link between industry strategy and audience reception (Kim et al., 2022). It revealed that the most memorable English phrases, such as “2 Baddies, 2 Baddies, 1 Porsche” and “Check the facts, got check that” are not passively consumed but are actively repurposed. They become:

1. Tools for Communal Participation: These phrases enable confident sing-alongs at concerts and driving viral social media challenges (Kim et al., 2022).
2. Markers of In-Group Identity: These phrases evolve into memes and inside jokes that create a shared cultural vocabulary and solidify the boundary between NCTzens and the general public (Gutierrez-Jauregi et al., 2025).
3. Catalysts for a Global Community: These phrases foster a sense of belonging and being “seen” among international fans, who feel the strategic inclusion of English is a direct acknowledgement of their presence and value (LingoStar, 2025).

5.3 Discussion

The integrated findings of this study demand a paradigm shift in understanding English's role in K-pop globalisation. NCT 127's approach transcends conventional models of linguistic adaptation, establishing a distinct framework where English is neither a mere commercial accessory nor a simple tool of accessibility. Instead, it functions as a core and dynamic element in their "neo" artistic identity which is a carefully calibrated variable for sonic experimentation, conceptual storytelling and participatory fandom engineering (Escudero, 2023). This discussion will unpack how their strategic code-switching, analysed through the lens of marked linguistic choices and enabled by transnational production networks, redefines the relationship between language, artistry and global resonance in contemporary pop music.

5.3.1 NCT 127's Linguistic Model: Beyond Commercial Anglicization

This research confirms that NCT 127's strategy moves beyond the conventional use of English for market accessibility, as commonly observed in groups like BTS (see Appendix 26 and Appendix 27) and SEVENTEEN (see Appendix 19). Where their peers often employ English for semantic clarity and emotional resonance, NCT 127 adopts a phonocentric approach. This aligns with their "disruptive hybridity" in music production, creating a cohesive aesthetic where linguistic and musical experimentation are intrinsically linked (Melendez, 2017). The Markedness Model powerfully explains this, where each jarring interjection in *Fire Truck* (2016) (see Appendix 1), each cultural reference in Kick It (2020) (see Appendix 22) and each piece of Gen-Z slang in *Fact Check* (2023) (see Appendix 2) is a marked choice designed to redefine the group's identity from a traditional K-pop act to a vanguard of "neo" culture or identity. This is not merely code-switching for comprehension; it is code-switching for artistic signature and conceptual depth.

5.3.2 The Synergy of Strategy and Artistry

A central finding of this study is that for NCT 127, commercial strategy and artistic integrity are not in tension but are mutually reinforcing. The commercial data is unequivocal where English-optimized tracks and hooks demonstrably drive higher international streams and engagement (Reifsnyder, 2017; Kim et al., 2022). However, the fan data reveals that this commercial success is not achieve through dilution of their artistic identity. On the contrary, it is the very "unconventionality" of their English usage, like the awkwardness of the "Regular, huh?" or the repetitive minimalism of *Sticker* (2021), that fuels participatory fandom. This "awkward charm" becomes a point of collective ownership and identity formation (Nurudin et al., 2025). Therefore, the artistic risk is the commercial strategy. SM Entertaiment's "Culture Technology" framework, in this case, has successfully engineered a model where the markers of artistic experimentation simultaneously function as highly effective tools for viral marketing and community building (see Appendix 29 to Appendix 43).

5.3.3 The Invisible Architects: The Role of Western Composers and Lyricists

A critical dimension underpinning the findings is the foundational role of Western composers, lyricists and producers. The strategic and artistic use of English identified in this study is not created in a vacuum; it is the product of a sophisticated and transnational collaboration system. The phonocentric hooks in *Sticker* (2021) bear the signature of American producers like Dem Jointz and Ryan Jun, who import an authentic West Coast hip-hop and "noise" sensibility (see Appendix 53). The sleek, pop-R&B fluency of *Highway to Heaven* (2019) by the American pop duo, Social House (Michael Foster and Charles Anderson) (see Appendix 54) and the euphoric, electronic energy of *Superhuman* (2019) by American songwriter, Adrian McKinnon (see

Appendix 11) are crafted by songwriters specialising in globally resonant chart pop. These "invisible architects" are instrumental in:

1. Genre Authenticity: They provide the authentic sonic bedrock, such as the trap beats, the R&B harmonies and the pop structures that allows NCT 127's linguistic hybridity to sound credible rather that imitative (Herman, 2024; Rolle, 2019).
2. Linguistic Optimisation: Western top-liners and lyricists are tasked with crafting the English phrases that are not just translated, but are phonetically optimised for catchiness and culturally coded with slang that feels native. This process is essential for creating the memorable, chant-like hooks that the fan engagement data shows are central to communal participation (Kim et al., 2022).

This collaborative model is a key reason why NCT 127's English usage is so effective. It moves beyond simple translation to a deeper integration of global musical and linguistic trends, curated and directed by SM Entertainment's in-house A&R to fit the "neo" brand (Jae-Heun, 2025).

5.3.4 Navigating Linguistic Imperialism and Localisation

This research also contributes to the critical discourse on language and power in global media. NCT 127's model, facilitated by its Western collaborators, offers a compelling case of how to leverage a global language without succumbing to cultural erasure. They do not simply imitate Western pop forms; they appropriate and hybridise English and Western production styles to serve a distinctly Korean and uniquely "neo" artistic vision (Kim et al., 2022). The use of a Dem Jointz beat for the sonically challenging *Sticker* (2021) (see Appendix 53), or the transformation of AAVe in *2 Baddies* (2022) through a Korean lens, demonstrates a process of creative indigenisation. This challenges narratives of linguistic and musical imperialism by showcasing a flow of culture that is adaptive, not assimilative. The agency remains firmly with the Korean producers and A&R teams

at SM Entertainment, who act as final curators, wielding these global resources as tools to express their own identity and ambitions on the global stage.

5.4 Implications of the Study

The findings of this research hold significance and multidimensional implications across academic, industrial and cultural domains. They extend beyond the specific case of NCT 127 to offer broader insights into the mechanics of transnational pop culture.

5.4.1 Theoritical Implications

Academically, this study makes several contributions. It provides the first longitudinal, mixed-methods analysis of NCT 127's lyrics, filling a significant gap in the literature which has predominantly focused on BTS and BLACKPINK. By successfully applying Carol Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model to popular music, it demonstrates the model's utility in decoding the socio-pragmatic motivations behind artistic code-switching. Furthermore, it bridges the disciplines of linguistics, media studies and fandom studies, proposing a holistic framework for analysing language in transnational pop culture that accounts for production, text and reception.

5.4.2 Practical Implications

From an industry perspective, this study offers actionable insights for entertainment agencies, songwriters and marketers. It demonstrates that successful globalisation is not about maximising English content, but about its strategic and creative deployments, often in partnership with specialised international talent. The findings suggest that:

1. Phonetic Design is Key: Crafting English phrases for their rhythmic and memorability quotient, a skill native-speaking topliners excel at, can be more effective for fan engagement than semantically complex lyrics (Kim et al., 2022).

2. Embrace Conceptual Integration: English can be woven into a group's core concept, as seen with NCT 127's "neo" identity, to create a more profound and distinctive brand. This requires close collaboration between in-house A&R and external composers (Jae-Heun, 2025).
3. Fan Engagememnt is a Feedback Loop: The "meme-ability" of lyrics should be considered a key performance indicator, as organic fan actualisation drives visibility and community strength far beyond traditional marketing.

5.4.3 Cultural Implications

Culturally, this research validates the agency of both creators and consumers in the global cultural economy. It shows that audiences are not passive recipients but active participants who derive meaning and build community around strategically placed linguistic artifacts (Nakamura et al., 2025). NCT 127's success story, facilitated by a global network of creators, is one of a globalised product that did not have to erase its local specificity to achieve international appeal (Schneider, 2023). Instead, it leveraged that specificity, expressed through a creative and confident use of global musical and linguistic resources, to carve out a unique and influential space in the world's pop consciousness.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

While this study provides a comprehensive analysis, several limitations must be acknowledged. Firstly, the quantitative corpus was deliberately restricted to five top-selling title tracks to ensure depth and strategic relevance. This necessarily excludes earlier, lower-selling works and B-sides, which may exhibit different linguistic patterns. Future research could expand the corpus for a more complete diachronic picture.

Secondly, the fan engagement analysis, while rich in qualitative insight, was based on a small, curated focus group. A larger scale survey would allow for greater generalisability and the identification of broader demographic trends in lyrical actualisation.

Finally, the study primarily analysed the lyrical text and fan reception. Incorporating methodologies such as interviews with SM Entertaiment's A&R team, producers including both in-house and Western, or the members of NCT 127 themselves would provide invaluable insights into the intentionality and decision-making processes behind the linguistic and production strategies identified here.

5.6 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several promising avenues for future research emerge:

1. Comparative Analyses: A systematic comparison of NCT 127's linguistic strategies with those of other SM Entertainment groups, such as aespa or RIIZE or other "experimental" K-pop acts would help delineate company-specific versus group-specific approaches.
2. Production Studies: Ethnographic research or interviews with the songwriters and producers in SM Entertainment's network, both Western and Korean, could uncover the institutional mechanism, "song camps" and creative briefs that guide the incorporation of English and Western production into songs.
3. Multimodal Analysis: Research that integrates the analysis of lyrics with choreography music video imagery and fashion could provide a more holistic understanding of how English functions within NCT 127's total multimedia package.

4. Expanded Fandom Research: A large-scale quantitative study mapping the demographic profiles of fans who most actively engage with English lyrics could offer valuable market intelligence and deepen our understanding of participatory culture.

5.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has demonstrated that English in NCT 127's title tracks is far more that a convenient tool for global market penetration. It is a dynamic, evolving and multifaceted element that is central to their artistic identity, commercial strategy and connection with a global fandom. Through a calculated process of phonetic experimentation, cultural bridging and conceptual saturation, often facilitated by a sophisticated network of Western composers and lyricists, NCT 127 has developed a unique linguistic fingerprint that embodies their "neo" ethos.

Their journey from the disruptive hybridity of *Fire Truck* (2016) to the refined conceptualism of *Fact Check* (2023) and the gritty reset of *WALK* (2024) illustrates a group and a corporation that is relentlessly innovative, refusing to be confined by a single successful formula. They have mastered the art of wielding English not as a symbol of Western cultural dominance, but as a pliable resource for their own creative expression and community building. In doing so, NCT 127 offers a powerful blueprint for cultural globalisation in the 21st century; one that celebrates hybridity, rewards artistic risk and proves that the most resonant global messages are often those that remain authentically, and complexly, local at their core.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – *Fire Truck* (2016)

https://youtu.be/_psXn_VJ_AE?si=mYhdj34a8pfGqeTT

Lyrics:
Get it lifted
What, what, what, what
Fire truck
어딜 봐, Mr. Fireman on the floor?
불을 지펴봐 이 열기를 식혀줄게
불만이 가득 찬 곳 더 화끈하게
저 사이렌소리에 느끼는 내 기분은, 음
애써 빼는 척은 곤란해
미지근한 분위기는 no, thanks
흔들리는 내 달궈진 backseat
태운 뒤 빈틈없이 we get it
Ayy-yeah-yeah-yeah-yeah
Hands up if you feeling the vibe now
Ayy-yeah-yeah-yeah-yeah
One step, two steps, go
오늘 밤 너와 나 모두 다 빠져들지
언제든 달려가 소방차 you can call me (anytime)
몸을 움직여, pick it up
리듬 느끼는 대로 흔들어
뜨거워지는 순간 크게 소리쳐
What, what, what, what
Fire truck
What, what
What, what, what, what
Yeah, be anywhere, everywhere, 부르기만 하면 돼
Look at, look at how 그냥 불장난 같아
Bling 하면 나타나, just blink for me
시원하게 네 화를 풀어줄 테니
Just hold up
자꾸만 밀면 다쳐 get higher
열기는 마치 로켓처럼 뜨거워
이 공간은 폭발하기 10 초 전
Ayy-yeah-yeah-yeah-yeah
Hands up if you feeling the vibe now
Ayy-yeah-yeah-yeah-yeah
One step, two steps, go
짜릿한 이 음악 네 맘 확 불태우지
외쳐봐 소방차 어디든 달려가지
Maximum 으로 turn it up
리듬에 맞춰 흔들어
전율 느끼는 순간 크게 소리쳐
What, what, what, what
Fire truck
Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey
What, what
Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, hey
What, what, what, what
Fire truck
What, what
What, what, what, what
Fire truck
멈추지 마 밤이 새도록
Maximum 으로 turn it up
(Ma-maximum 으로 turn it up)
All right 이 음악 속에 모든 걸 던져
Dance my party people
What, what, what, what, what
소방차
소방차
소방차
소방차
What, what, what, what
소방차
소방차

Korean Wordcount	: 173
English Wordcount	: 151
Total Wordcount	: 324

Percentage of English Wordcounts in *Fire Truck* (2016):
151/324 x 100% = **46.60%**

*Highlighted in green are English words in the song.
*Highlighted in pink are interjections in the song.

Appendix 2 – *Fact Check* (2023)

https://youtu.be/vGuJuW0bDWA?si=WZxS9iCCKnBJ-Ju4

Lyrics:
That's in the vibe
Hold up (hold up, hold up)
Yeah, iconic move, my motion
늘 뭔가 색다른 옷 전시해
Soul, emotion
Bad kid with a strong ego
깎아내려 봐도 (glow)
싹 다 보란 듯이 GOAT (GOAT)
That's my check, full with the facts
접어 의심 그냥 보고, fact check (fact check)
띄워, question, question, question marks in everywhere
How you do that? 아마 그건 DNA
Mona Lisa never cry, don't you see?
Tap, tap, you tappin' all day, 내 패는 stand, black jack (ah!)
Check the facts, go check that, check the facts, go check that
Check the stats, go check that, check that, check that
Check the facts, go check that, check the facts, go check that
Check the stats, go check that, check that, check that
난 불가사의, check that, check that
Go ask the world and check that
Check that, check that, I'm fine, 그냥 제패
난 프레임을 깨 like Banksy, 또 한 번 저질러, get back, get back
걸어둬 날 루브르에, next to the Lisa, touché
이 시간이, 살아 숨 쉬게 영원히
띄워, question, question, question marks in everywhere
I don't answer, 와서 직접 보게 해
어떻게 봐도, 늘 빛나는 gem
깎아내려 봐, 더 정교해질 뿐야, babe (ah!)
Check the facts, go check that, check the facts, go check that
Check the stats, go check that, check that, check that
Check the facts, go check that, check the facts, go check that
Check the stats, go check that, check that, check that
난 불가사의, check that, check that
Go ask the world and check that
(Ooh) 난 불가사의, check that, check that
Go ask the world and check that
한계 따위 없어 난
날 끝없이 새겨, 새롭게 피워내
Something different, 모든 틀은 깨져
모든 시간 속에, 우릴 숨 쉬게 할 테니까
그리 놀랍지도 않게, 내가 태우던 밤, 내가 발화점
Paint like Gogh, 나를 담아낼 수 있게, 더 뭐든 갈았지, no fake show
Ready or not (ready or not), do or we die, we 'bout to fly (whoa)
나를 믿어봐 더, take it slow, come and check it, 작품은 나
Check the facts, go check that, check the facts, go check that
Check the stats, go check that, check that, check that
Check the facts, go check that, check the facts, go check that
Check the stats, go check that, check that, check that
Go ask the world and check that
(Ooh) 난 불가사의 (we back), check that, check that (alright)
Go ask the world and check that

Korean Wordcount	: 204
English Wordcount	: 313
Total Wordcount	: 517

Percentage of English Wordcounts in *Fact Check* (2023):
313/517 x 100% = **60.54%**

*Highlighted in green are English phrases in the song.

*Highlighted in pink are examples of Gen-Z jargons in the song.

Appendix 3 – *Regular* (English Ver.) Music Video

https://youtu.be/gj-VU9oK2Yo?si=S6ltrF2JEtwCKIev

Appendix 4 – *Regular* (Korean Ver.) Music Video

https://youtu.be/Gif0E6jYakM?si=dIY_8eHhCAIZG8G4

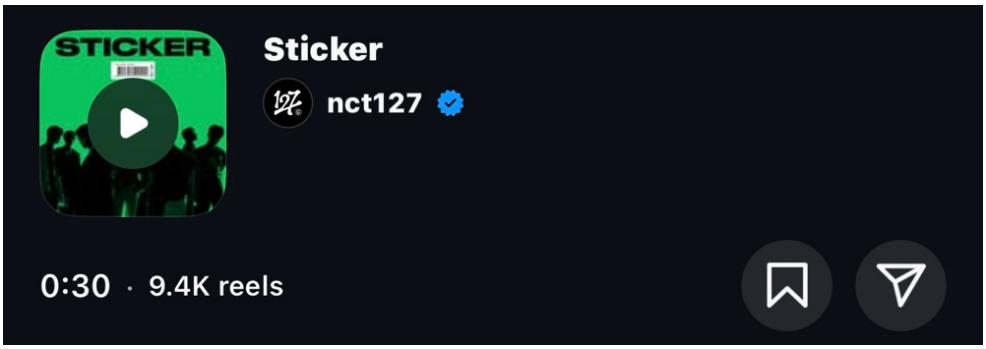
Appendix 5 – *Highway to Heaven* (English Ver.)

https://open.spotify.com/track/0JBwBDqzRWv8Yd6CgPEaUo?si=18bab5ca7c6f44fc

Appendix 6 – *Highway to Heaven* (Korean Ver.)

https://open.spotify.com/track/12ksjJ2DDQZu0a1fvJnTRE?si=8db7df0eb08a4c58

Appendix 7 – Number of reels generated using *Sticker* audio on Instagram



Appendix 8 – Highest-viewed reel generated using *Sticker* audio on Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/reel/CT9JJOKpY4u/?igsh=MWt0Mnd5MnoxcXI5NA==

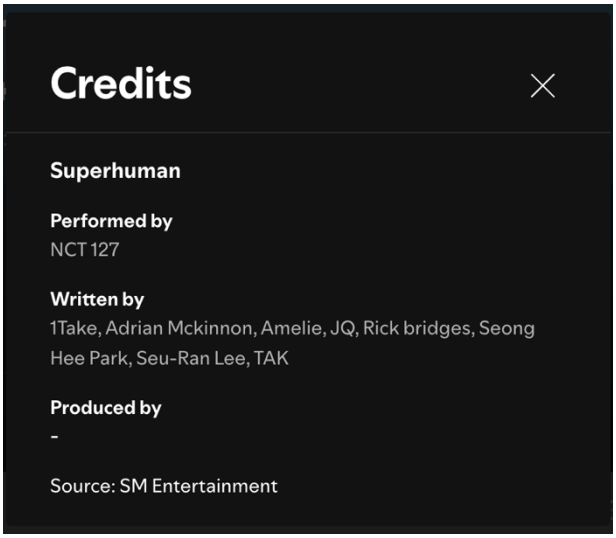
Appendix 9 – Number of reels generated using *Fact Check* audio on Instagram

Appendix 10 – Highest-viewed reel generated using *Fact Check* audio on Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/reel/C0D7ogBB8-Q/?igsh=MXV2Y2RrazFna3RkbQ==

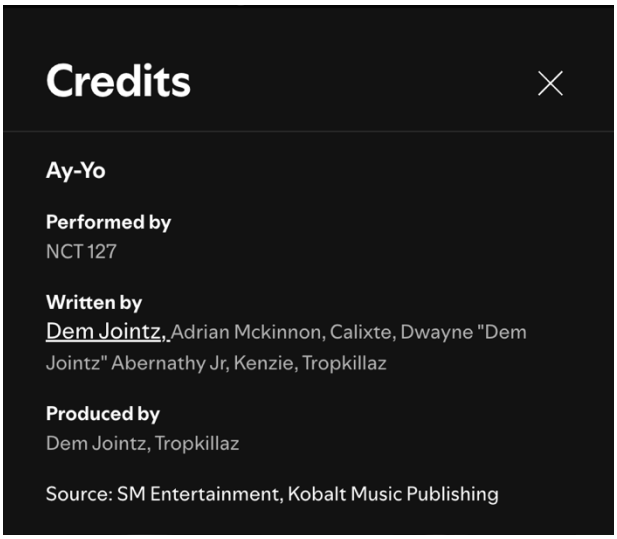
Appendix 11 – Song Credits for *Superhuman*

https://open.spotify.com/track/0TU7xhMfZbI1okpLyHptFV?si=605f5f1f1a0c4887



Appendix 12 – Song Credits for *Ay-Yo*

https://open.spotify.com/track/3ePLUHZ0wpewHpAg6P3wUE?si=50cd1a1b76a64517



Appendix 13 – *Sticker* (2021)

https://youtu.be/1oYWnbTSang?si=febuHPsDAqjn0Upw

Lyrics:
Sticker, tagging, tagging, tagging, tagging

I got what you need
원하는 걸 골라 붙여
I can show you need
Hip 하지 나란 sticker
Bang, bang 한껏 힘을 준 애들 좀 봐 봐
NCT we will show you the vibe, hi
우리들의 로고를 총 모양으로 woo, woo

Baby (yeah, yeah, yeah)
겁을 내지 말아 줘 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
Think about 네 별이 (yeah, yeah, yeah) oh!
잠식되지 않아 정말
난 더 환하게 널 만들어 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
두 세계 융화라는 거 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
지구 말로는 그거 L.O.V.E ah (yeah, yeah, yeah)
네 맘이 시키는 대로 말해
뜻대로 움직여도 된다는 말이야

우리끼린 달달하게 팍 팍 sugar
눈치 따윈 보지 말고 네가 boss 란 말이야
걱정하지 말고 그냥 팍 팍 믿어
너만 그래도 돼
원해 그럼 너의 것이야 (hoo)

내 옆에 너 꼭 붙어 있어봐
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (ho!)
내 작품의 주인공은 너니까
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (yeah)
골 아픈 세상은 신경 꺼 (꺼)
너와 나의 역사만 써 내려가 (hoo, hoo)
사랑한단 말 말곤 아껴 둬
내 말 맞다면 throw your hands up

섣불리 말고 세게 붙여
Know that I ain't falling off (falling off)
애착심이 솟구치네
Who put this all together
I'm the sticker for your love
그니까 보인다면 ho
들린다면 바로 대답해 like baby

Baby (yeah, yeah, yeah)
이끌리는 느낌 쎄 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
Talk about 너의 중력 oh (yeah, yeah, yeah)
너무 세게 당겨 난리
아주 까리한 내 태도가 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
정신도 못 차리는 걸 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
거부할 수 없다고 baby girl, ah (yeah, yeah, yeah)
You treat me like a boy
꿈을 좇는 어른 아이처럼 말이야

Fallin' into my love, my sugar
들어봐 봐 이건 절대 입에 발린 말이 아니야
커져왔던 내 모든 감정들은 널 맞이하기 위한 것
네가 boss 란 그 말이야 (hoo!)

내 옆에 너 꼭 붙어 있어봐
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (ho!)
내 작품의 주인공은 너니까
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (yeah)
골 아픈 세상은 신경 꺼 (꺼)
너와 나의 역사만 써 내려가
사랑한단 말 말곤 아껴 둬 (yeah)
내 말 맞다면 throw your hands up

모든 고민들은 bye, bye, bye
흘러가는 대로 bye, bye, bye
말해 뭐해 이미 우린 정해져 있는 걸
낮과 밤의 존재처럼 자연스러운 걸
You will gotta be only one I love
This mellow drama
너 없인 관객이 하나도 없는 그런 mono drama
우리 같이 둘만의 파티를 열어
오직 너만 V.I.P.
걱정 마 준비가 됐어
곧바로 천국을 봐봐
Let's go, let's go

Roll up to the party, roll up, roll up
Roll up to the party, roll up, roll up
Roll up to the party
Roll up, roll up to the party
Roll up to the party
Roll up, roll up to the, yeah, yeah, yeah (hoo!)

내 옆에 너 꼭 붙어 있어봐
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (oh yeah)
내 작품의 주인공은 너니까
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker
골 아픈 세상은 신경 꺼 (꺼)
너와 나의 역사만 써 내려가 (hoo, hoo)
사랑한단 말 말곤 아껴 둬 (사랑한단 말 말곤 아껴 둬)
내 말 맞다면 throw your hands up (oh yeah, yeah)

Like a sticker, sticker, sticker

Non-lexical English Vocables Wordcount	: 60
Total Wordcount	: 529

Percentage of Non-lexical English Vocables in *Sticker* (2021):
60/529 x 100% = **11.34%**

*Highlighted in green are non-lexical English vocables in the song.

Appendix 14 – *Gold Dust* (2022)

https://youtu.be/k7LYjZDdIWs?si=qrwNr1Ep0TN-fwy_

Lyics:
잘 자 내 달빛
이리 와서 안겨 깊숙이
밤이 수 놓인
잔물결 위로 누워
아마 너는 모르지
얼마나 네 빛이 예쁜지
금세 잔뜩 닿아 반짝이잖니
금색 길을 내어 나를 빛내지
널 만나기 전엔 그저 어두웠지
칠흑 같은 바다 밑을 본 적 있니?
일렁이는 얼굴 표정 없는 매일
괜히 흘러갈 뿐 기대 없던 내일
그런 어느 날 내 위로 쏟아지던 은하수
안녕하고선 빤히 날 바라보는 눈망울 (oh, ooh)
그제야 눈치챘어 손에 물든 빛
별이 뜬 게 아냐, 이건 너야
짙은 밤 내게 와서 너를 새기던 길
금빛이 된 바다 달이 떴네
시간이 멈춘 것 같았던 그 즈음 (oh-oh-oh)
단번에 널 떠올리곤 (oh-oh-oh, ah, ah)
이게 사랑일까 해? (이게 사랑일까 해?)
잘 자 내 달빛
이리 와서 안겨 깊숙이
밤이 수 놓인
잔물결 위로 누워
아마 너는 모르지
얼마나 네 빛이 예쁜지
금세 잔뜩 닿아 반짝이잖니
금색 길을 내어 나를 빛내지
물기 어린 내음 고갤 들게 해
어김없이 생긋 웃어주는, 너, 나나
왜일까 네게서 바다 향이?
어젯밤 나에게 묻은 건지
코끝을 맴도네, give it to me, give it to me
Ooh, 오늘도 다시 올까?
소란한 그 빛 벌써 스러져가 아득한데
감은 눈 뜨면 순간 너와 하늘이길
금빛 길을 따라 네게 갈게 (yeah)
잘 자 내 달빛
이리 와서 안겨 깊숙이 (찬란한 밤)
밤이 수 놓인
잔물결 위로 누워 (잔물결 위로 누워)
아마 너는 모르지
얼마나 네 빛이 예쁜지
금세 잔뜩 닿아 반짝이잖니 (ooh)
금색 길을 내어 나를 빛내지
무한하게 반짝여 넌, like magic
그 환함에 전부 다 잊어, bad things
그런 너를 좋아해, 이미 알지
꿈에서도 아른거리는 달빛

Oh-ah, oh-ah
어디 한번 물어봐 파도 위에 손 대봐
고요하던 물결이 요동치는 것을 봐
오직 널 향해 흘러, 그 중력의 힘에 내 바다가 다 말라도
잘 자 내 달빛
이리 와서 안겨 깊숙이 (oh-oh)
밤이 수 놓인
잔물결 위로 누워 (잔물결 위로 누워, whoa)
아마 이제 알겠지 (이제 알겠지)
얼마나 네 빛이 예쁜지 (oh-oh)
금세 잔뜩 닿아 반짝이잖니 (ah, ah)
금색 길을 내어 나를 빛내지 (ooh, whoa)
Gold dust up my sea
금색 가룰 뿌려 찬란히
밤이 수 놓인 잔물결 위에 뿌려
아마 이제 알겠지
얼마나 네 빛이 예쁜지
금세 잔뜩 닿아 반짝이잖니
금색 길을 내어 나를 빛내지

Non-lexical English Vocables Wordcount	: 18
Total Wordcount	: 369

Percentage of Non-lexical English Vocables in *Gold Dust* (2022):
18/369 x 100% = **4.88%**

*Highlighted in green are non-lexical English vocables presented in the song.

Appendix 15 – *Cherry Bomb* (2017)

https://youtu.be/WkuHLzMMTZM?si=d8VKgWSdTY-d1Bv5

Lyics:
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
시간이 됐지 반드시
I'ma do my thing
대기실 앞은 바글거려 다들 눈 못 떼
모두 따라와 yo hands up in the air
We back get away
이제 막 터질거야 everywhere
나를 삼켜봐 그리곤 느낀
Stomach 꽤 오래 절여진 cherry bomb
언제 언제 터질지 몰라
Popping your head like 킹스맨 chip
No fireman 이건 fireworks
Cherries in the sky high
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands yo (in this beat)
If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands (in this beat)
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit
모두 다 쉿
터지기 직전의 스릴
It tastes like a cherry bomb
쉽게 보다가는 큰일 나
이미 넌 빠져들어 가
팽창하는 지금 폭발 직전인 기분
죽이네 do do that
노랠 불러야지 na na na
꽂힌 안전핀들 다 뽑아냈지
다 깜짝 놀라겠지 모두가 we gonna make it
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands yo (in this beat)
If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands (in this beat)

빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
끝이 어디인지 어디까지 갈 수 있는지 (yeah, yeah)
이제 시작해 just the half of it
뒷걸음질 치는 모습 it's over
떠들기 바쁜 세상 속에 갇혀 헤매고 싶지는 않아
단 한번의 불꽃으로 내 전불 태워
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit, yeah
Uh, hard rock scalp
Head shot pop
No talk 어딜가나 숙이는 삶
주변 탐색하는 자들께 박수
Ay 너네 덕에 분명히 정신을 차렸네
쫓기는 거 싫어서 이젠 앞에서 말해
허리는 너 앞에서 안 굽힐게
Keep watching 맨날 보기를 바래
Hater hater talk talk
뭘 먹어도 너네껀 소화 잘돼 take a fist or stone or a gunshot
독해져버린 Nine 받아봐 cherry bomb
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
Yeah
If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands yo (in this beat)
If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands
If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands yeah
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
빨리빨리 피해 right
Cherry bomb feel it yum
Na na na na na na
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
Na na na na na na
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage
Na na na na na na
어서 빨리 피해 right cherry bomb
Na na na na na na
어서 빨리 피해 right cherry bomb
I'm the biggest hit
I'm the biggest hit on this stage

*Highlighted in green are AAVE-derived phrases presented in the song.
*Highlighted in pink are fragmented English phrases in the song.
*Highlighted in blue are the use of children's rhyme "If you're happy and you know it" in the song.

Appendix 16 – *Be There For Me* (2023)

https://youtu.be/tBOWEX2bz80?si=VwPO1KR4UEsIAyBO

Lyics:
여긴 이미 제법 겨울이야
초록을 감춘 Roadside
아무도 눈이 온 걸 몰라
그 하얗던 골목
그게 많이 기억나
Uh 기다림은 많이 했어
맘이 가는 곳
그런 건 처음부터 너뿐인 걸
있잖아 혼자는 그만하고 싶어
But don't know
If this is what you want, too
So I need to know
Are you down to ride?
새벽녘 별과 피어난 눈꽃이
흩날리는 곳에
내게 달려와 포근히 안아
상상하는 그 길
Would you be there for me?
서울은 지금 펑펑 눈이 와
네가 없음 차라리 추운 게 나아
Rock-a-bye baby
눈 뜰 때쯤엔 네 옆에 있을 테니
Now I'm in my feels babe
코 끝이 찡한 우리 추억이
가슴 터질 만큼 많아
머뭇거릴 시간은 없어
When I'm on ya
같이 뛰어들자
If we don't, baby I'm a gonner
Are you down to ride?
새벽녘 별과 피어난 눈꽃이
흩날리는 곳에
내게 달려와 포근히 안아
상상하는 그 길
Would you be there for me?
Me! Me!
Would you be there for me?
(be there for me)
Me! Me!
Would you be there for me?
(be there for me)
앨범 속 널 보고 또 보네
둘이 참 많이도 돌아다녔었네
너만 아는 Hashtag
넌 나만의 Bae
다시 넘쳐나는
우리만의 Like, like ooh
Look 발 디딜 틈 없이
붐빈 명동 혼자 걷다 보니
석양이 진 남산 아래
반짝이는 별의 도시
I'll be there for you,
약속했잖니
If you're there for me
그건 이 밤이
아름다운 이유일 테니
Are you down to ride?
새벽녘 별과 피어난 눈꽃이
흩날리는 곳에
내게 달려와 포근히 안아
상상하는 그 길

Would you be there for me?
I wanna know
Would you be there for me baby
If I need you now?
I wanna know
If you'd be there for me
내 맘은 벌써 거기야
I wanna know
Would you be there for me baby
If I need you now?
I wanna know
If you'd be there for me
그 세상은 더 빛이 나
Are you down to ride?
새벽 별과 눈꽃 속의
Would you be there for me?
내 맘은 벌써 거기야
I wanna know
Would you be there for me baby
If I need you now?
I wanna know
If you'd be there for me
그 세상은 더 빛이 나
Are you down to ride?
새벽 별과 눈꽃 속의
Would you be there for me?
이제 다 왔어
점점 추울 거란 매년 겨울 속에
Would you be there for me?
Me! Me!
Would you be there for me?
Me! Me!
Would you be there for me?

Appendix 17 – *Rock With You* (2021)

https://youtu.be/WpuatuzSDK4?si=ucJm46CRJrP6c1_M

Lyrics:
지금 이 노래가 내가 될 수 있게
만들어 준 네가 다가온다
셋 둘 하나
뭐든지 다 주고 싶어
나에게 너만 있다면
Won't let them break your heart, oh, no
네가 없다면 난 아무것도 아냐
No words are enough for you
노랫말로 담고 싶어
So 모든 나의 감정
너로 읽고 쓰게 해줘
I just want to love you
널 혼자 두지 않아 난
I just want you, I need you
이 밤은 짧고 넌 당연하지 않아
I tell you
This time I wanna rock with you
Moonlight 이 밤에 shine on you
Tonight I wanna ride with you
그 어디라도
Baby, hold on, baby, hold on 어디에서도
Baby, hold on, baby, hold on 어디서라도
세상이 끝나더라도
I wanna ride with you
널 위해 달리고 있어
널 위해서라면 뭐든 (뭐든)
숨이 멈출 때까지 난 너만
No words are enough for you
멜로디로 담고 싶어
So 너의 모든 감정
내가 들을 수 있게 해줘
I just want to love you
널 혼자 두지 않아 난
I just want you, I need you
이 밤은 짧고 넌 당연하지 않아
I tell you
This time I wanna rock with you
Moonlight 이 밤에 shine on you
Tonight I wanna ride with you
그 어디라도
Baby, hold on, baby, hold on 어디에서도
Baby, hold on, baby, hold on 어디서라도
세상이 끝나더라도
I wanna ride with you
Fall into your eyes
모든 순간들이 오로지 널 향해 있어
나는 너 하나로 충분해
당연한 건 하나 없어
나에게 너만 있어서
Won't let them break your heart, oh no
그 어디라도 baby, hold on, baby, hold on
어디에서도 baby, hold on, baby, hold on
어디서라도 세상이 끝나더라도
I wanna rock with you
I wanna rock with you
I wanna stay with you

*Highlighted in green are the use of song title and repetitive English phrases in the song.
*Highlighted in pink are the use of song title in the song.

Appendix 18 – *Feel Special* (2019)

https://youtu.be/3ymwOvzhwHs?si=_TNVfLgOItVPL5uN

Lyrics:
그런 날이 있어
갑자기 혼자인 것만 같은 날
어딜 가도 내 자리가 아닌 것만 같고
고갠 떨궈지는 날
그럴 때마다 내게
얼마나 내가 소중한지
말해주는 너의 그 한마디에 (hey)
Everything's alright
초라한 nobody 에서 다시 somebody
특별한 나로 변해
You make me feel special
세상이 아무리 날 주저앉혀도 (앉혀도)
아프고 아픈 말들이 날 찔러도
네가 있어 난 다시 웃어
That's what you do
Again I feel special
아무것도 아닌 존재 같다가도 (같다가도)
사라져도 모를 사람 같다가도
날 부르는 네 목소리에
I feel loved, I feel so special
자꾸 숨고만 싶어서
마주하기가 싫어서
모든 게 의미를 잃은 듯이
내가 의미를 잃은 듯이 가만히 주저앉아 있을 때 (oh)
그때 내 앞에 나타난 너의
따뜻한 미소와 손길에 (hey)
Everything's alright
초라한 nobody 에서 다시 somebody
특별한 나로 변해
You make me feel special
세상이 아무리 날 주저앉혀도 (앉혀도)
아프고 아픈 말들이 날 찔러도
네가 있어 난 다시 웃어
That's what you do
Again I feel special
아무것도 아닌 존재 같다가도 (같다가도)
사라져도 모를 사람 같다가도
날 부르는 네 목소리에
I feel loved, I feel so special
Uh, you make everything alright
구름이 쫙 낀 햇살 한 줌 없는 날
네가 바로 나의 shining light
That's what you do
아무리 어두운 밤도 다시 낮
I owe it to you
Because you make me feel (make me feel special)
세상이 아무리 날 주저앉혀도 (앉혀도)
아프고 아픈 말들이 날 찔러도
네가 있어 난 다시 웃어
That's what you do
Again I feel special
아무것도 아닌 존재 같다가도 (같다가도)
사라져도 모를 사람 같다가도
날 부르는 네 목소리에
I feel loved, I feel so special

*Highlighted in green are the use of song title and repetitive English phrases in the song.
*Highlighted in pink are the use of song title in the song.

Appendix 19 – _*WORLD* (2022)

https://youtu.be/VCDWg0ljbFQ?si=NY2XKoeCSvgP2d-Y

Lyrics:
Hey, 아까부터 널 봤어
우린 처음이지만 모든 재미를 느낄 수 있어, 더 알고 싶어
Hey, 웃지만 말고 말이야 (yah)
가본 적이 없는 곳에 너를 데려가 줄게
Come with me, put it on, put it on me
You got this, put it on, put it on me
결국 내 손을 잡을 거야
'Cause I know that you've been dreaming
마치 천국의 déjà vu
지금부터 난 널 만나 interview
네가 원한 모든 걸 다 줄 수가 있어, 너의 어두운 모습까지도
Come, come into my world
Won't let you down
Won't let you down
내게로 와
In my, in my, in my new world
Knock, knock, knocking on heaven's door
Whipped cream, 구름 손끝으로 쓸어
내 All Star 밑에 딛고 날아 sunset
넘 빠름? I'ma take it slow
슬픔이 없는 곳에서 이대로 춤을 춰
박자에 맞춰 박수
넌 영원을 내게 줘 기쁨의 맛을 더
영원에 영원을 더 더 더 더
Come with me, put it on, put it on me
You got this, put it on, put it on me
결국 내 손을 잡을 거야
'Cause I know that you've been dreaming
마치 천국의 déjà vu
지금부터 난 널 만나 interview (널 만나 interview)
네가 원한 모든 걸 다 줄 수가 있어, 너의 어두운 모습까지도
Come, come into my world
Won't let you down
Won't let you down
내게로 와
In my, in my, in my new world
We got the heart, we got the soul
이대로 우리 맘을 열어, 너에게 넌 나에게
새로운 미래를 열어줘, 나 손을 놓지 않을게
Trust in me, baby, I can see (oh)
마치 천국의 déjà vu (oh, whoa)
지금부터 난 널 만나 interview
네가 원한 모든 걸 다 줄 수가 있어, 너의 어두운 모습까지도
Come, come into my world
Won't let you down
Won't let you down
내게로 와
In my, in my, in my new world

*Highlighted in green are the use of English phrases/sentences in the song.

Appendix 20 – *Highway to Heaven* (English Ver.) (2019)

https://youtu.be/iFoqGyWhMws?si=N97aYc97OgHaGP1V

Lyrics:
My body's callin', callin'
Can you pick up?
101
Your body's talkin', talkin'
Say what you want

Girl, who are you waiting for?
You know that you wanna go
Yeah

We'll take the highway to heaven
And I can't wait to love you all alone
(Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, oh yeah, yeah)
We'll take the highway to heaven
On the 101, let's see just where it goes
(Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah oh yeah yeah)

Pull up!
Baby you a bad girl (Watch your mouth)
When I'm with you it's a vibe, baby I can't lie
Hit my line, anytime
Girl, I wanna make you mine, spend some time
Look! Skrrt pull up in the coupe, beep-beep
Girl, I got your loving on repeat
And I bet you never had it like this
Real good loving, light up your wrist

Last call, are you coming with me?
I got some things you want to see
Tell all your friends that you're busy, they know
They know we got the chemistry
Love how your body feels on me
When you get back, let me get that

We'll take the highway to heaven
And I can't wait to love you all alone
(Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, oh yeah, yeah)
We'll take the highway to heaven
On the 101, let's see just where it goes
(Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, oh yeah, yeah)

We'll take the highway to heaven
Highway to heaven
(Oh yeah, yeah, yeah)
We'll take the highway to heaven
Highway to heaven
(Oh yeah, yeah, yeah)

Baby, you should know, I won't let you go
I'll show you the world if you say so
Oh, she's so bad, I'll make it last
And baby I can't leave you alone

We'll take the highway to heaven
And I can't wait to love you all alone
(Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, oh yeah, yeah)
We'll take the highway to heaven
On the 101, let's see just where it goes
(Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, oh yeah, yeah)

We'll take the highway to heaven
(Oh yeah, yeah, yeah)
We'll take the highway to heaven
Highway to heaven
(Oh yeah yeah yeah)

We'll take the highway to heaven
We'll take the highway to heaven

Appendix 21 – *Highway to Heaven* (Korean Ver.) (2019)

https://youtu.be/1eekOcpx_iQ?si=xjoXYaZTrU1VRelX

Lyrics:
네 맘이 callin' callin'
날 부르면 (날 부르면, 날 부르면, 날 부르면) I'll be there
난 이미 runnin' runnin'
너에게로 (너에게로 너에게로 너에게로)
뭘 기다리고 있어
저 하늘에 소리쳐
Yeah
We'll take the highway to heaven 언제 어디서나 널 느껴
(Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah oh yeah yeah)
너와 난 highway to heaven 함께 있는 이곳이 천국인 걸 ha
(Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah oh yeah yeah) look!
Pull up 네가 원하면 (all over the world)
그게 어디든 우린 닿을 수 있어
Now we fly to the sky
원한다면 make you high 따라와
Look! Skrrr 처럼 바로 우린 직진
실수해도 돼 그저 repeat
될 때까지 부딪쳐봐 like this
한계는 없어 we limitless
가끔씩 막막해질 땐 별일도 아니란 듯이 네 방식대로 go easy keep on
아침이 떠오르듯이 길은 이어져 반드시
I believe that we believe that
We'll take the highway to heaven 언제 어디서나 널 느껴
(Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah oh yeah yeah)
너와 난 highway to heaven 함께 있는 이곳이 천국인 걸
(Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah oh yeah yeah)
We'll take the highway to heaven
Highway to heaven (oh yeah yeah yeah)
너와 난 highway to heaven
Highway to heaven
(Oh yeah yeah yeah)
이 길의 끝에 다다랐을 때
I'll show you the world 지금부터
보여줄게 just hold my hand
날 따라와 저 하늘 위로
We'll take the highway to heaven 언제 어디서나 널 느껴
(Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah oh yeah yeah)
너와 난 highway to heaven 함께 있는 이곳이 천국인 걸
(Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah oh yeah yeah)
We'll take the highway to heaven (highway, yeah highway)
(Oh yeah yeah yeah)
너와 난 highway to heaven (take the highway)
Highway to heaven
(Oh yeah yeah yeah)
We'll take the highway to heaven (highway, yeah yeah)
너와 난 highway to heaven

Appendix 22 – *Kick It* (2020)

https://youtu.be/2OvyA2__Eas?si=vz4QpNUYYl5j57ql

Lyrics:
New thangs (ayy, what?), new thangs (whoo)
Bass kick swingin' like I'm Bruce Lee (nah, nah, no)
Bruce Lee (ayo), Bruce Lee (yo, what?)
Shimmy, shimmy, shimmy, 불이 붙네 (you know that)
불이 붙네, 이 무대 위로 뜰 땐 (you know that, ha!)
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우 Bruce Lee (ayo)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee (ha, say what?; Ayy-yeah-eh)
Comin' up, 지금 여기로
Baby, 이 느낌은 이해 못 해 머리론
Fighting for all day
아무 생각 찔러말고 너의 이야기대로 걸어
어두운 어제가 오늘을 삼켜 버리기 전에
내 목소린 더 퍼져야 해 소리치면 돼 내겐, no more trauma
Baby, we go wild (eh-eh)
127 squad (eh-eh-eh)
난 앞으로 질러 pow
좌우로 내질러 pow
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우, new thangs (ayo)
New thangs (ayy, what?), new thangs (whoo)
우리가 어딜 가든 축제 (nah, nah, no)
들어 축배 (ayo), like my birthday (yo, what?)
모두 감아 차올리지 높이 (you know that)
Where my roof at? 지붕이 우주에 (you know that, ha)
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우 Bruce Lee (ayo)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee (ha, say what?)
잃어버린 겁 (yah), 어디서든 make it poppin'
Keep it movin' like Jeet Kune (like it)
내 앞을 막을 땐 Samuel Jackson 돼 wassup?
배배 꼬인 놈, baby, you just gotta watch
"Enter the Dragon", 난 영화같이
걸음걸이마저 martial arts
Looking that everybody looking at me
Cams, action, movie, shh
쓰러뜨려 하나씩 (쉿) blows away
자비는 없지 ruthless
Droppin' the bomb on my enemies
And I'm gonna kick it like Bruce Lee
수많은 날들의 같은 장면을 반복한 끝에
어제의 날 무너뜨리고 소리치면 돼 내겐 no more trauma
Baby, we go wild (eh-eh)
127 squad (eh-eh-eh)
We ain't never gonna stop
끝이 안 보여도 가
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우, new thangs (ayo)
New thangs (ayy, what?), new thangs (whoo)
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우 Bruce Lee (nah, nah, no)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee (ayo, yo, what?)
My world 만들어가, yeah
상상조차 할 수 없었던
아주 극적인 장면 그 깊은 곳에
눈 앞에 펼쳐질 새로운 세상들
손안에 잡힐 듯 내 안으로 들어와
어둠 끝에 다시 난 새로 태어나
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우, new thangs (ayo, ayy, what?)
New thangs (whoo), new thangs (whoo)
우리가 어딜 가든 축제 (ayo)
들어 축배 (yo, what?), like my birthday (ayy)
Shimmy, shimmy, shimmy, 불이 혹
Shimmy, shimmy, shimmy, 혹
–높이, where my roof at? 지붕이 우주에
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우 Bruce Lee (ayo, ha)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee (say what?)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee

*Highlighted in green are the use of martial arts imagery and terminology in the song.

*Highlighted in pink are the use of action verbs with martial arts connotations in the song.

Glossary:
1. 찔러: To stab/thrust
2. 질러: To unleash/slash
3. 쓰러뜨려: To knock down/topple

*Highlighted in blue are the use of conceptual and philosophy of martial arts in the song.

Appendix 23 – *Favorite (Vampire)* (2021)

https://youtu.be/7uxu4Z2HAnA?si=Y9t8vuVmY3OaIMft

Lyrics:
Oh, yeah, yeah (ah)
Ah, yeah, yeah (darlin', darlin')
You're my favorite, girl
Oh, yeah (shee!)
열병같이 다가와
날 멸망 시켜 (ain't afraid at all)
내 세계 산산이 부서져
너를 탐하게 되고
Oh, 불장난이라 해 (quit that)
가시를 가졌네 (hands down)
파편이 돼 버린 crown (take that)
그 순결한 독, 난 깨물었고 들이마셔
널 사랑함은 불완전함 위태로움
비틀거리고 증오 속에 미쳐도
사랑해 또 사랑해
더 지독하게 아프고 싶어 이 운명 속에
거친 눈빛 존재 전부
Girl, you're my favorite
눈물 쏟고 무너지고
열기 속에 입 맞추면
폭풍처럼, you're my favorite
후회 없이, baby
까만 밤 when you coming with a **storm**
삼켜 버릴 듯 와봐
Just watching you never satisfy my soul
넌 아직 나를 몰라
Uh, 장미는 붉은데 (see that)
여리진 않았네 (hands down)
심장은 조각난 걸 (take that)
이 파국의 밤, 널 원한 대가 받아들여
어떻게 너를 바라지 않을 수 있어
My heart when you touch, 전율로 몸부림쳐
사랑해 또 사랑해
더 지독하게 아프고 싶어 이 운명 속에
거친 눈빛 존재 전부
Girl, you're my favorite
눈물 쏟고 무너지고
열기 속에 입 맞추면
폭풍처럼, you're my favorite
후회 없이, baby
더 뜨거워져도 돼
천국을 가져온 너
You'll always be my favorite
Girl, you know that you got me (ooh)
I can't even lie (no, oh)
내가 제일 좋아한 (no)
You'll always be my favorite
사랑해 또 사랑해
더 지독하게 아프고 싶어 이 운명 속에
거친 눈빛 존재 전부
Girl, you're my favorite
눈물 쏟고 무너지고 (ooh)
열기 속에 입 맞추면
폭풍처럼, you're my favorite
You are my favorite, you are my favorite, eh
Favorite (your love)
You are, you are, oh (your love)
You're my favorite (사랑해, 사랑해, my)

*Highlighted in green are examples of the use of direct Gothic terminologies and themes in the song.

Glossary:

1. 날 멸망 시켜: "**Destroy** me"
2. 내 세계 산산이 부서져: "My world **shattered**"
3. 불장난이라 해: "**Playing with fire**"
4. 열기 속에: "In the **heat**"
5. 가시를 가졌네: "It has **thorns**"

Appendix 24 – *Ay-Yo* (2023)

https://youtu.be/R9XpA_zXDDI?si=RFw6JHAsJBoeEpVn

Lyrics:
Ayy-yo, look
Things will never be the same, like
Are you ready? Hoo
닥쳐오는 파란 그 패러다임, ha
경고 속에, yeah, 영원했던 존재들의 반전
It's up to you, what you wanna do
How we do that? How we do that?
Clock is ticking, how we do that?
(우린 지속되어야 해) 너의 무대, 영화보다
거친 시나리오 속에 (oh)
(The show must go on) 본능대로 소리치고, 놀아대고 (oh, oh)
(Catching every eye) 뭘 자꾸 결론 내려고 하나 느껴, no doubt
그냥 불러 봐, ayy-yo
우리처럼 놀아, 여기가 Valhalla
싫은 사람, lay low
즐기는 놈인데, 누가 내게 맞서 와?
Ayy-yo, 나는 끝내 걸어가
그 발자국 뒤에 재조차 남지 않게
Ballin' big time and I say ayy-yo
Ayy-yo
파격의 걸음, 그것은 a tide of rage
갈구한 신념, 깨어진 doctrine
Perfect stranger, 양 떼를 부르니
Sick of the games, you're craving for a change up
보이지 않는 그 가치들의 무게
잘 봐, 나만의 플랜
Are you ready? Hoo
불확실한 내일의 태양에, ha
아스라이, yeah, 스쳐가 사라진 유성에
그 순간도 네가 있으니
쉽지 않을 거라나
말들이 많아, 갈수록 이거 재미나
(우린 지속되어야 해) 마치 twilight
신화 속의 존재 그들처럼 (oh)
(The show must go on) 무너져도 누군가는 일어나고 (oh, oh)
(상처 없이도) 내일은 다를 거라 그 누가 감히 말해
그냥 불러 봐, ayy-yo
우리처럼 놀아, 여기가 Valhalla
싫은 사람, lay low
즐기는 놈인데, 누가 내게 맞서 와?
Ayy-yo, 나는 끝내 걸어가 (내 길을 걸어가)
그 발자국 뒤에 재조차 남지 않게
Ballin' big time and I say ayy-yo
Ayy-yo
Hey, I see you, 너의 맘 속에 걱정들 전부
다 내려 놔, my attention's on you, babe
Tell me, babe, we can go all night long
All night long (ayy)
쉬이 모두 덮어 버릴 시퍼런 밤이 오니 (whoa)
넌 절대 눈을 감되, 잠들지 않기 (hoo)
손에 뭘 쥐었냐고, 어디로 가냐고 (yeah)
따라와 봐, 홈쳐봐 난 통과해 윔홀
새벽은 오니 (yeah)
갈망을 멈추지 마, 고민 없이
그냥 불러 봐, ayy-yo (ayy-yo, ayy-yo, ayy-yo)
우리처럼 놀아 (yeah), 여기가 Valhalla (yeah)
싫은 사람 (come on), lay low (lay low)
즐기는 놈인데, 누가 내게 맞서 와? (맞서 와, come on)
Ayy-yo (yeah), 나는 끝내 걸어가 (내 길을 걸어가)
그 발자국 뒤에 (okay) 재조차 남지 않게 (okay)
Ballin' big time and I say ayy-yo

*Highlighted in green are the use of simple English phrases in the song.

Appendix 25 – *Be There For Me* (2023)

https://youtu.be/tBOWEX2bz80?si=nTEDjJYNcVr1V9Jy

Lyrics:
여긴 이미 제법 겨울이야
초록을 감춘 Roadside
아무도 눈이 온 걸 몰라
그 하얗던 골목
그게 많이 기억나
Uh 기다림은 많이 했어
맘이 가는 곳
그런 건 처음부터 너뿐인 걸
있잖아 혼자는 그만하고 싶어
But don't know
If this is what you want, too
So I need to know
Are you down to ride?
새벽녘 별과 피어난 눈꽃이
흩날리는 곳에
내게 달려와 포근히 안아
상상하는 그 길
Would you be there for me?
서울은 지금 펑펑 눈이 와
네가 없음 차라리 추운 게 나아
Rock-a-bye baby
눈 뜰 때쯤엔 네 옆에 있을 테니
Now I'm in my feels babe
코 끝이 찡한 우리 추억이
가슴 터질 만큼 많아
머뭇거릴 시간은 없어
When I'm on ya
같이 뛰어들자
If we don't, baby I'm a gonner
Are you down to ride?
새벽녘 별과 피어난 눈꽃이
흩날리는 곳에
내게 달려와 포근히 안아
상상하는 그 길
Would you be there for me?
Me! Me!
Would you be there for me?
(be there for me)
Me! Me!
Would you be there for me?
(be there for me)
앨범 속 널 보고 또 보네
둘이 참 많이도 돌아다녔었네
너만 아는 Hashtag
넌 나만의 Bae
다시 넘쳐나는
우리만의 Like, like ooh
Look 발 디딜 틈 없이
붐빈 명동 혼자 걷다 보니
석양이 진 남산 아래
반짝이는 별의 도시
I'll be there for you,
약속했잖니
If you're there for me
그건 이 밤이
아름다운 이유일 테니

Are you down to ride?
새벽녘 별과 피어난 눈꽃이
흩날리는 곳에
내게 달려와 포근히 안아
상상하는 그 길
Would you be there for me?
I wanna know
Would you be there for me baby
If I need you now?
I wanna know
If you'd be there for me
내 맘은 벌써 거기야
I wanna know
Would you be there for me baby
If I need you now?
I wanna know
If you'd be there for me
그 세상은 더 빛이 나
Are you down to ride?
새벽 별과 눈꽃 속의
Would you be there for me?
이제 다 왔어
점점 추울 거란 매년 겨울 속에
Would you be there for me?
Me! Me!
Would you be there for me?
Me! Me!
Would you be there for me?

Appendix 26 – *Life Goes On* (2020)

https://youtu.be/-5q5mZbe3V8?si=WpjEfkv_x_8TtwqJ

Lyrics:
I remember, oh, ayy-yeah-yeah-yeah
I remember, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh
어느 날 세상이 멈췄어, 아무런 예고도 하나 없이
봄은 기다림을 몰라서, 눈치 없이 와버렸어
발자국이 지워진 거리, 여기 넘어져 있는 나
혼자 가네 시간이, 미안해 말도 없이, yeah
오늘도 비가 내릴 것 같아
흠뻑 젖어버렸네, 아직도 멈추질 않아
저 먹구름보다 빨리 달려가
그럼 될 줄 알았는데, 나 겨우 사람인가 봐
몹시 아프네, 세상이란 놈이 준 감기
덕분에 눌러보는 먼지 쌓인 되감기
넘어진 채 청하는 엇박자의 춤
겨울이 오면 내쉬자 더 뜨거운 숨
끝이 보이지 않아, 출구가 있긴 할까?
발이 떼지질 않아, 않아, oh
잠시 두 눈을 감아, 여기 내 손을 잡아
저 미래로 달아나자
Like an echo in the forest
하루가 돌아오겠지
아무 일도 없단 듯이
Yeah, life goes on
Like an arrow in the blue sky
또 하루 더 날아가지
On my pillow, on my table
Yeah, life goes on like this again
이 음악을 빌려 너에게 나 전할게 (ayy)
사람들은 말해 세상이 다 변했대 (yo)
Mmm-mmm-mmm-mmm
다행히도 우리 사이는 아직 여태 안 변했네
늘 하던 시작과 끝 "안녕"이란 말로
오늘과 내일을 또 함께 이어보자고
Ooh-ooh-ooh-ooh-ooh-ah
멈춰있지만 어둠에 숨지 마, 빛은 또 떠오르니깐
끝이 보이지 않아, 출구가 있긴 할까?
발이 떼지질 않아, 않아, oh
잠시 두 눈을 감아, 여기 내 손을 잡아
저 미래로 달아나자
Like an echo in the forest
하루가 돌아오겠지
아무 일도 없단 듯이
Yeah, life goes on
Like an arrow in the blue sky
또 하루 더 날아가지 (날아가지)
On my pillow, on my table
Yeah, life goes on like this again
I remember, oh, ayy-yeah-yeah-yeah
I remember, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh
I remember, oh, ayy-yeah-yeah-yeah
I remember, oh-oh-oh, oh-oh-oh

Appendix 27 – *Black Swan* (2020)

https://youtu.be/0lapF4DQPKQ?si=e2vKPUm3zzo0qb36

Lyrics:
Do your thang, do your thang with me now
Do your thang, do your thang with me now
What's my thang? What's my thang? Tell me now
Tell me now, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah
Ayy, 심장이 뛰지 않는대
더는 음악을 들을 때, tryna pull up
시간이 멈춘 듯해
Oh, that would be my first death, I've been always afraid of
이게 나를 더 못 울린다면
내 가슴을 더 떨리게 못 한다면
어쩜 이렇게 한 번 죽겠지 아마
But what if that moment's right now, right now?
귓가엔 느린 심장 소리만 bump, bump, bump
벗어날래도 그 입속으로 jump, jump, jump
어떤 노래도 와닿지 못해 소리 없는 소릴 질러
모든 빛이 침묵하는 바다, yeah, yeah, yeah
길 잃은 내 발목을 또 잡아, yeah, yeah, yeah
어떤 소리도 들리지 않아, yeah, yeah, yeah
Killin' me now, killin' me now, do you hear me? Yeah
홀린 듯 천천히 가라앉아, nah, nah, nah
몸부림쳐봐도 사방이 바닥, nah, nah
모든 순간들이 영원이 돼, yeah, yeah, yeah
Film it now, film it now, do you hear me? Yeah
Do your thang, do your thang with me now
Do your thang, do your thang with me now
What's my thang? What's my thang? Tell me now
Tell me now, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah
Deeper, yeah, I think I'm goin' deeper
자꾸 초점을 잃어, 이젠 놓아줘 싫어
차라리 내 발로 갈게, 내가 뛰어 들어갈게
가장 깊은 곳에서 나는 날 봤어
천천히 난 눈을 떠 여긴 나의 작업실 내 스튜디오
거센 파도 깜깜하게 나를 스쳐도
절대 끌려가지 않을 거야 다시 또
Inside, I saw myself, myself
귓가엔 빠른 심장 소리만, bump, bump, bump
두 눈을 뜨고 나의 숲으로, jump, jump, jump
그 무엇도 날 삼킬 수 없어 힘껏 나는 소리 질러
모든 빛이 침묵하는 바다, yeah, yeah, yeah
길 잃은 내 발목을 또 잡아, yeah, yeah, yeah
어떤 소리도 들리지 않아, yeah, yeah, yeah
Killin' me now, killin' me now, do you hear me? Yeah
홀린 듯 천천히 가라앉아, nah, nah, nah
몸부림쳐봐도 사방이 바닥, nah, nah
모든 순간들이 영원이 돼, yeah, yeah, yeah
Film it now, film it now, do you hear me? Yeah
Do your thang, do your thang with me now
Do your thang, do your thang with me now
What's my thang? What's my thang? Tell me now
Tell me now, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

Appendix 28 – *Walk* (2024)

https://youtu.be/MA_B8RU9BsQ?si=9B0kSd4rRzSU4TwQ

Lyrics:
Woah, woah, woah, woah, woah, we on
난 삐그덕 삐그덕
걸음걸이 고장 나 버린 듯이 walk (Walk)
Don't care 'bout a thing, 난 내 기분대로 walk (Nah)
걸음걸이 고장 난 듯이 삐그덕 (삐그덕-덕)
누가 봐도 나처럼 난 걷지, on the beat
박자에 맞게 미끄러져 걸음이 (Yeah)
좌우로 흔들리지, 난 metronome의 침
늘 여유롭지 원래, 내 일이 chill (Woah)
눈길을 끌지, 내가 그 원인
Get out my way, yeah, 'cause I'll be bussin'
문제는 다 pass, pass, 다 털어내 먼지
굳이 시간 쓰지 않지 난 (Oh, 난)
난 시선을 뺏어, I see you crushin'
나는 좀 바쁘, 난 wall to wall
여유가 뱄어, 언제든 난 step in
떠나보낸 good, good, good, good night
난 삐그덕 삐그덕
걸음걸이 고장 나 버린 듯이 walk (Walk)
Don't care 'bout a thing, 난 내 기분대로 walk (Nah)
걸음걸이 고장 난 듯이 삐그덕 (삐그덕-덕)
난 삐그덕 삐그덕
걸음걸이 고장 나 버린 듯이 walk (Walk)
Don't care 'bout a thing, 난 내 기분대로 walk (Nah)
걸음걸이 고장 난 듯이 삐그덕 (삐그덕-덕)
내버려둬, I just cannot stop
모든 문을 두드리지, knock, knock
쏟아지는 빛, 익숙해져 난 (For real)
내 두 손에 쏟아지는, like, like
여름에도 떠는 phone
고장 나 버려 난 삐용삐용
비켜 내 앞에 끼지 말아, 위험 위험
빨리 비켜봐, on my way, 좀 더 삐걱대게, yeah
Do my dance, do my dance, 걸음마저, step, step
눈길을 끌지, 내가 그 원인
Get out my way, yeah, 'cause I'll be bussin'
문제는 다 pass, pass, 다 털어내 먼지
굳이 시간 쓰지 않지 난 (Oh, 난)
난 시선을 뺏어, I see you crushin'
매겨 난 백 점, 상을 줘 넌
여유가 뱄어, 언제든 난 step in
떠나보낸 good, good, good, good night
난 삐그덕 삐그덕
걸음걸이 고장 나 버린 듯이 walk (Walk)
Don't care 'bout a thing, 난 내 기분대로 walk (Nah)
걸음걸이 고장 난 듯이 삐그덕 (삐그덕-덕)
난 삐그덕 삐그덕
걸음걸이 고장 나 버린 듯이 walk (Walk)
Don't care 'bout a thing, 난 내 기분대로 walk (Nah)
걸음걸이 고장 난 듯이 삐그덕 (삐그덕-덕)
걸어, walk, wa-walk
Walk, walk, 걸어, walk, 걸어
Walk, walk, 걸어, walk, you know I—
더 다르게 더 걸어, 걸어, walk
발바닥이 더 뜨거워, 더 뜨거워 (Ah)
누가 뭐라던 난 이대로 walk
난 이대로 walk, 내 길은 매끄러워 (Woo)
난 만들어내 noise, 내 이름을 불러대
No matter where I go, 모두 원해 once again, yeah
더 반응해, woah, 다 반응해, woah
내 걸음이 더 뜨거워져 뜨거워 (Oh)
난 삐그덕 삐그덕 (Ah)
걸음걸이 고장 나 버린 듯이 walk (Walk)
Don't care 'bout a thing, 난 내 기분대로 walk (No)
걸음걸이 고장 난 듯이 삐그덕 (삐그덕-덕; Oh-oh)
난 삐그덕 삐그덕
걸음걸이 고장 나 버린 듯이 walk (Walk)
Don't care 'bout a thing, 난 내 기분대로 walk (No, no)
걸음걸이 고장 난 듯이 삐그덕 (삐그덕-덕; 걸어 walk)
Ayy, get, get out my way
부딪히다간 삐끗해
Ayy, get, get off my lane
깜짝할 새 앞지르네
Ayy, get, get out my way (걸어, walk, wa-walk)
부딪히다간 삐끗해 (Walk, walk, 걸어, walk, 걸어)
Ayy, get, get off my lane (Walk, walk, 걸어, walk, you know I—)
깜짝할 새 앞지르네 (Walk, walk, 걸어, walk, ya heard?

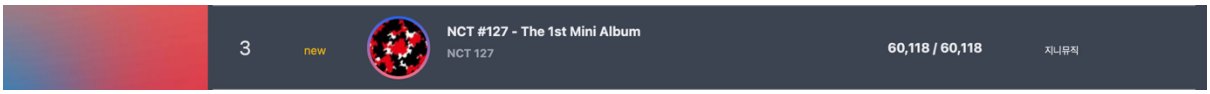
Korean Wordcount	: 495
English Wordcount	: 219
Total Wordcount	: 714

Percentage of English Wordcounts in *Walk* (2024):
219/714 x 100% = **30.67%**

*Highlighted in green are English phrases in the song.

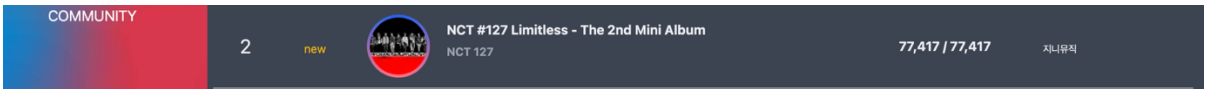
Appendix 29 – Album Chart of July 2016

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=07&hitYear=2016&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



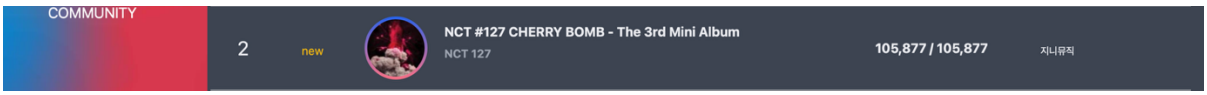
Appendix 30 - Album Chart of January 2017

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=01&hitYear=2017&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



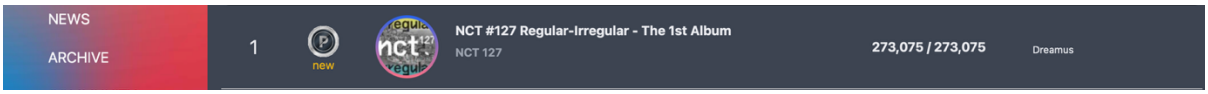
Appendix 31 - Album Chart of June 2017

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=06&hitYear=2017&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



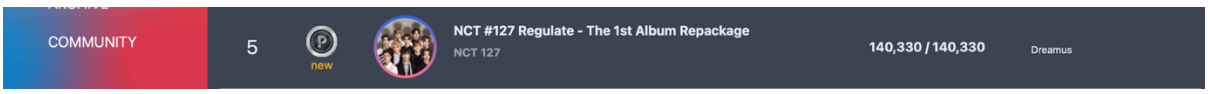
Appendix 32 - Album Chart of October 2018

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=10&hitYear=2018&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



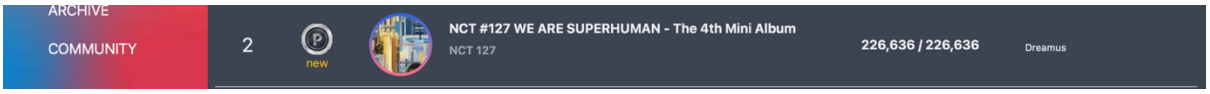
Appendix 33 - Album Chart of November 2018

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=11&hitYear=2018&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



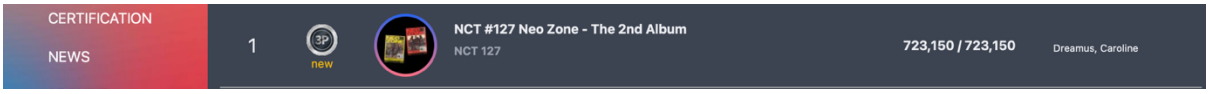
Appendix 34 - Album Chart of May 2019

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=05&hitYear=2019&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



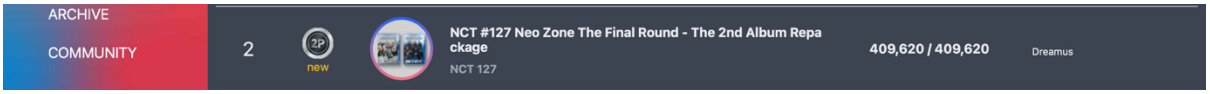
Appendix 35 - Album Chart of March 2020

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=03&hitYear=2020&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



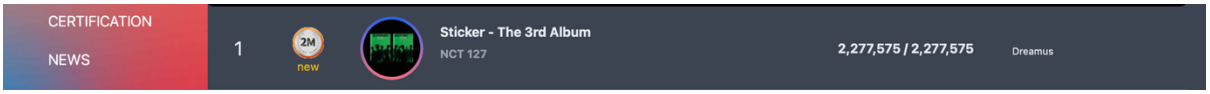
Appendix 36 - Album Chart of May 2020

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=05&hitYear=2020&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



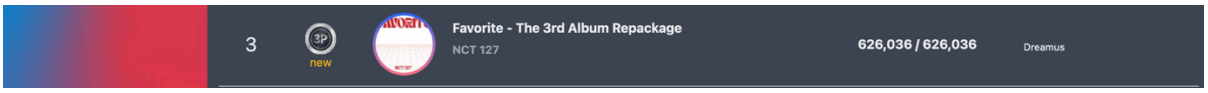
Appendix 37 - Album Chart of September 2021

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=09&hitYear=2021&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



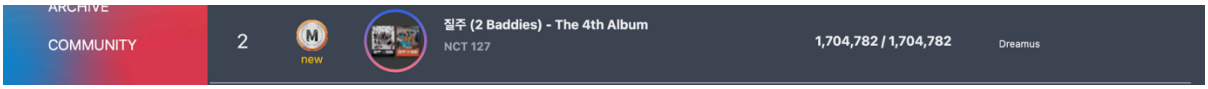
Appendix 38 - Album Chart of October 2021

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=10&hitYear=2021&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



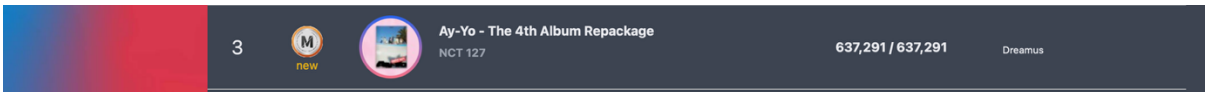
Appendix 39 - Album Chart of September 2022

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=09&hitYear=2022&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



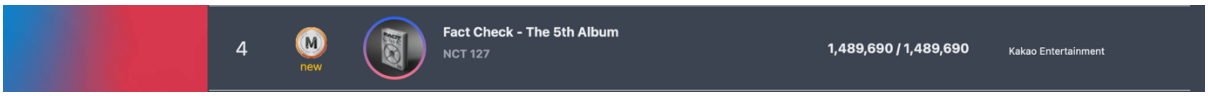
Appendix 40 - Album Chart of January 2023

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=01&hitYear=2023&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



Appendix 41 - Album Chart of October 2023

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=10&hitYear=2023&termGbn=month&yearTime=3

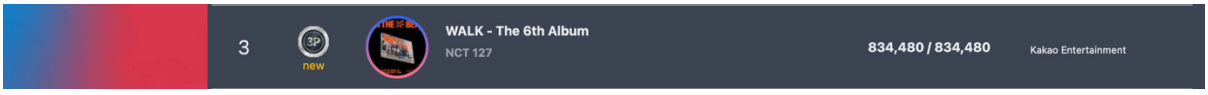


Appendix 42 - Album Chart of December 2023

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=12&hitYear=2023&termGbn=month&yearTime=3

Appendix 43 - Album Chart of July 2024

https://circlechart.kr/page_chart/album.circle?nationGbn=T&targetTime=07&hitYear=2024&termGbn=month&yearTime=3



Appendix 44 – *Kick It* (2020)

https://youtu.be/2OvyA2__Eas?si=vz4QpNUYYl5j57ql

Lyrics:
New thangs (ayy, what?), new thangs (whoo)
Bass kick swingin' like I'm Bruce Lee (nah, nah, no)
Bruce Lee (ayo), Bruce Lee (yo, what?)
Shimmy, shimmy, shimmy, 불이 붙네 (you know that)
불이 붙네, 이 무대 위로 뜰 땐 (you know that, ha!)
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우 Bruce Lee (ayo)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee (ha, say what?; Ayy-yeah-eh)
Comin' up, 지금 여기로
Baby, 이 느낌은 이해 못 해 머리론
Fighting for all day
아무 생각 찔러말고 너의 이야기대로 걸어
어두운 어제가 오늘을 삼켜 버리기 전에
내 목소린 더 퍼져야 해 소리치면 돼 내겐, no more trauma
Baby, we go wild (eh-eh)
127 squad (eh-eh-eh)
난 앞으로 질러 pow
좌우로 내질러 pow
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우, new thangs (ayo)
New thangs (ayy, what?), new thangs (whoo)
우리가 어딜 가든 축제 (nah, nah, no)
들어 축배 (ayo), like my birthday (yo, what?)
모두 감아 차올리지 높이 (you know that)
Where my roof at? 지붕이 우주에 (you know that, ha)
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우 Bruce Lee (ayo)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee (ha, say what?)
잃어버린 겁 (yah), 어디서든 make it poppin'
Keep it movin' like Jeet Kune (like it)
내 앞을 막을 땐 Samuel Jackson 돼 wassup?
배배 꼬인 놈, baby, you just gotta watch
"Enter the Dragon", 난 영화같이
걸음걸이마저 martial arts
Looking that everybody looking at me
Cams, action, movie, shh
쓰러뜨려 하나씩 (쉿) blows away
자비는 없지 ruthless
Droppin' the bomb on my enemies
And I'm gonna kick it like Bruce Lee
수많은 날들의 같은 장면을 반복한 끝에
어제의 날 무너뜨리고 소리치면 돼 내겐 no more trauma
Baby, we go wild (eh-eh)
127 squad (eh-eh-eh)
We ain't never gonna stop
끝이 안 보여도 가
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우, new thangs (ayo)
New thangs (ayy, what?), new thangs (whoo)
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우 Bruce Lee (nah, nah, no)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee (ayo, yo, what?)
My world 만들어가, yeah
상상조차 할 수 없었던
아주 극적인 장면 그 깊은 곳에
눈 앞에 펼쳐질 새로운 세상들
손안에 잡힐 듯 내 안으로 들어와
어둠 끝에 다시 난 새로 태어나
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우, new thangs (ayo, ayy, what?)
New thangs (whoo), new thangs (whoo)
우리가 어딜 가든 축제 (ayo)
들어 축배 (yo, what?), like my birthday (ayy)
Shimmy, shimmy, shimmy, 불이 혹
Shimmy, shimmy, shimmy, 훅
–높이, where my roof at? 지붕이 우주에
난 앞으로 찔러 좌우 Bruce Lee (ayo, ha)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee (say what?)
날아다녀 하루 종일 Bruce Lee

Korean Wordcount	: 327
English Wordcount	: 227
Total Wordcount	: 554

Percentage of English Wordcounts in *Kick It* (2020):
227/554 x 100% = **40.97%**

*Highlighted in green are English phrases in the song.

Appendix 45 – *Sticker* (2021)

https://youtu.be/1oYWnbTSang?si=febuHPsDAqjn0Upw

Lyrics:
Sticker, tagging, tagging, tagging, tagging

I got what you need
원하는 걸 골라 붙여
I can show you need
Hip 하지 나란 sticker
Bang, bang 한껏 힘을 준 애들 좀 봐 봐
NCT we will show you the vibe, hi
우리들의 로고를 총 모양으로 woo, woo

Baby (yeah, yeah, yeah)
겁을 내지 말아 줘 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
Think about 네 별이 (yeah, yeah, yeah) oh!
잠식되지 않아 정말
난 더 환하게 널 만들어 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
두 세계 융화라는 거 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
지구 말로는 그거 L.O.V.E ah (yeah, yeah, yeah)
네 맘이 시키는 대로 말해
뜻대로 움직여도 된다는 말이야

우리끼린 달달하게 팍 팍 sugar
눈치 따윈 보지 말고 네가 boss란 말이야
걱정하지 말고 그냥 팍 팍 믿어
너만 그래도 돼
원해 그럼 너의 것이야 (hoo)

내 옆에 너 꼭 붙어 있어봐
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (ho!)
내 작품의 주인공은 너니까
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (yeah)
골 아픈 세상은 신경 꺼 (꺼)
너와 나의 역사만 써 내려가 (hoo, hoo)
사랑한단 말 말곤 아껴 둬
내 말 맞다면 throw your hands up

섣불리 말고 세게 붙여
Know that I ain't falling off (falling off)
애착심이 솟구치네
Who put this all together
I'm the sticker for your love
그니까 보인다면 ho
들린다면 바로 대답해 like baby

Baby (yeah, yeah, yeah)
이끌리는 느낌 쎄 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
Talk about 너의 중력 oh (yeah, yeah, yeah)
너무 세게 당겨 난리
아주 까리한 내 태도가 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
정신도 못 차리는 걸 (yeah, yeah, yeah)
거부할 수 없다고 baby girl, ah (yeah, yeah, yeah)
You treat me like a boy
꿈을 좇는 어른 아이처럼 말이야

Fallin' into my love, my sugar
들어봐 봐 이건 절대 입에 발린 말이 아니야
커져왔던 내 모든 감정들은 널 맞이하기 위한 것
네가 boss란 그 말이야 (hoo!)

내 옆에 너 꼭 붙어 있어봐
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (ho!)
내 작품의 주인공은 너니까
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (yeah)
골 아픈 세상은 신경 꺼 (꺼)
너와 나의 역사만 써 내려가
사랑한단 말 말곤 아껴 둬 (yeah)
내 말 맞다면 throw your hands up

모든 고민들은 bye, bye, bye
흘러가는 대로 bye, bye, bye
말해 뭐해 이미 우린 정해져 있는 걸
낮과 밤의 존재처럼 자연스러운 걸
You will gotta be only one I love
This mellow drama
너 없인 관객이 하나도 없는 그런 mono drama
우리 같이 둘만의 파티를 열어
오직 너만 V.I.P.
걱정 마 준비가 됐어
곧바로 천국을 봐봐
Let's go, let's go

Roll up to the party, roll up, roll up
Roll up to the party, roll up, roll up
Roll up to the party
Roll up, roll up to the party
Roll up to the party
Roll up, roll up to the, yeah, yeah, yeah (hoo!)

내 옆에 너 꼭 붙어 있어봐
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (oh yeah)
내 작품의 주인공은 너니까
Like a sticker, sticker, sticker
골 아픈 세상은 신경 꺼 (꺼)
너와 나의 역사만 써 내려가 (hoo, hoo)
사랑한단 말 말곤 아껴 둬 (사랑한단 말 말곤 아껴 둬)
내 말 맞다면 throw your hands up (oh yeah, yeah)

Like a sticker, sticker, sticker

Korean Wordcount	: 349
English Wordcount	: 247
Total Wordcount	: 596

Percentage of English Wordcounts in *Sticker* (2021):
247/596 x 100% = **41.44%**

*Highlighted in green are English phrases in the song.

Appendix 46 – *2 Baddies* (2022)

https://youtu.be/FRilMXZqNhA?si=r3FevNtvUIM2bxkO

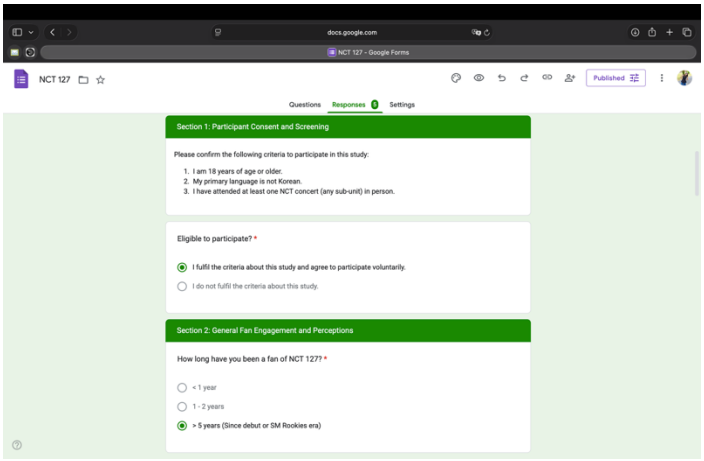
Lyrics:
Yes, ah (ha-ha)
Uh, mmm, uh
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche
몰라 난 네가 뭐라는지
있는 그대로의 멋을 봐, Don and Manner
Uh, one of a kind, 파급은 나, look in my eyes, yeah
내가 그린 기린 그림 속에서, move, yah
창밖을 봐, 문을 열어 바로 지금, yeah
I gotta go, 시간은 gold, we are the next, yeah
We pulling up and we cutting the line
빛이 안 나, it isn't mine
타이밍 맞춰서 보이는 sign
Open the keys, open the mind
Too fast, ㅠㅠ
움직임은 blues clues
Everybody jealous
따라 해보던가, new rules
위험한 생각에 맞서봐 (oh)
이번엔 피하지 않아 난 (oh-oh)
Let's get away right now
더 빠르게, yeah, yeah
그려낸 모습을 마주하게
Zero to hundred on the highest speed
가는 길 앞엔 아무도 없지
내 삶은 나를 위한 고속도로, ayy
Fill up the tank, pour that gasoline on me, rah
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche
몰라 난 네가 뭐라는지
있는 그대로의 멋을 봐, Don and Manner
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche
네가 날 본다면 알잖아
우린 다채로운 색을 봐, rainbow shade
Show me, baby, what's your style?
최고를 느껴본 다음, 너의 세상은 달라질 거야
You gon' wanna come and wow
다른 건 필요 없어
자꾸만 화려해질 거야 넌 (you, you)
Now you wanna ride these wheels
우린 계속 타, 너도 원하겠지 feel (원해 feel)
Yeah, we got no time to kill
배기음이 말해 많이 바빠 일
더 위로가 점점 위로 가 (oh)
널 잃지 마 끝까지 달려가 (oh, oh-oh)
고민하지 마, 불안할 뿐이야
Better get out of my way, you know
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche (two baddies)
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche
몰라 난 네가 뭐라는지
있는 그대로의 멋을 봐, Don and Manner
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche (two baddies)
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche
네가 날 본다면 알잖아
우린 다채로운 색을 봐, rainbow shade
열린 도로 속에 하얗게
밝혀진 길이 여길 펼쳐 놔
가려진 세상에서 벗어나
Run through the highway
Whoa-oh, 끝이 없이 밟는 중
Wanna go to the moon?
무한대로, baby, 가속되는 소리
Nothing can stand in our way, oh
Zip, zip, show me, zip it up, what you got? (Hey, hey)
Zip-zip, show me, 주파수 맞추고 (oh, hey)
Vroom-vroom, noise, 저리 가라고 (hey)
Why don't we just drive away? Oh, whoa
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche (yeah)
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche (two baddies)
몰라 난 네가 뭐라는지
있는 그대로의 멋을 봐, Don and Manner (ayy, ayy)
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche (two baddies)
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche (oh, yeah)
네가 날 본다면 알잖아
우린 다채로운 색을 봐, rainbow shade
Na-na-na-na, na-na-na-na (oh, yeah)
Zip, zip it, z-zip it and close
Na-na-na-na, na-na-na-na (two baddies, one Porsche)
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche (oh-oh-oh)
Na-na-na-na, na-na-na-na
Zip, zip it, z-zip it and close
Na-na-na-na, na-na-na-na-na (uh)
Two baddies, two baddies, one Porsche

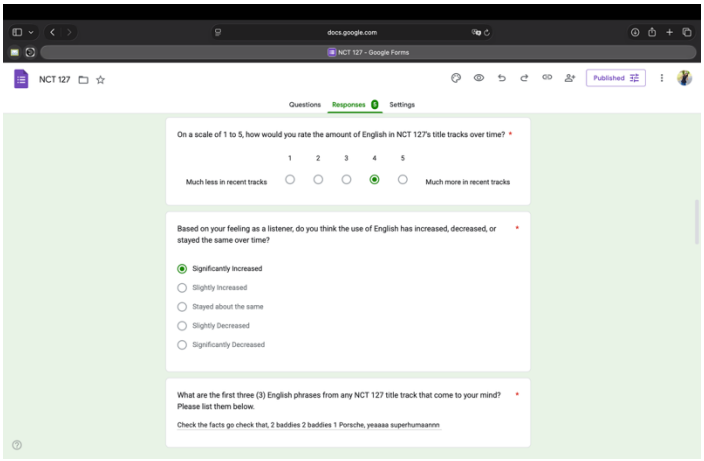
Korean Wordcount	: 383
English Wordcount	: 324
Total Wordcount	: 707

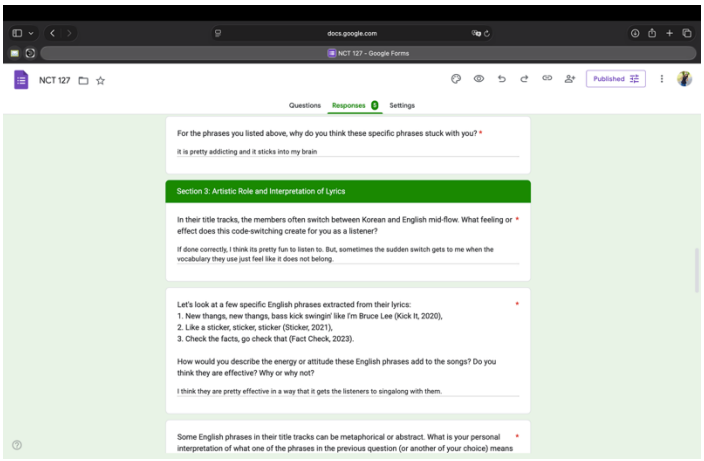
Percentage of English Wordcounts in *2 Baddies* (2022):
324/707 x 100% = **45.83%**

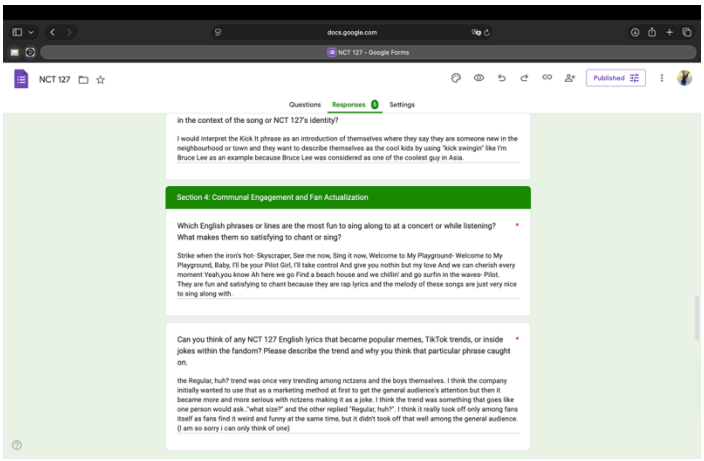
*Highlighted in green are English phrases in the song.

Appendix 47 – Output 1/5 of Survey Questionnaire





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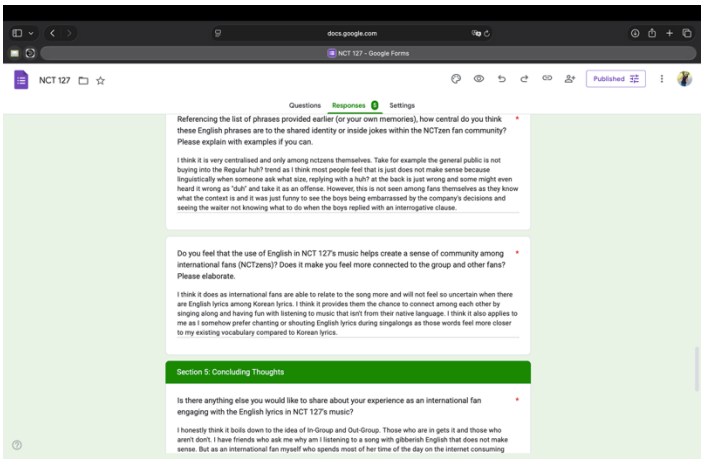
in the context of the song or NCT 127's identity?
I would interpret the Kick It phrase as an introduction of themselves where they say they are someone new in the neighbourhood or town and they want to describe themselves as the cool kids by using "kick swingin' like I'm Bruce Lee as an example because Bruce Lee was considered as one of the coolest guy in Asia.
Section 4: Communal Engagement and Fan Actualization
Which English phrases or lines are the most fun to sing along to at a concert or while listening? What makes them so satisfying to chant or sing? *
Strike when the iron's hot- Skyscraper, See me now, Sing it now, Welcome to My Playground- Welcome to My Playground, Baby, I'll be your Pilot Girl, I'll take control And give you nothin but my love And we can cherish every moment Yeah,you know Ah here we go Find a beach house and we chillin' and go surfin in the waves- Pilot. They are fun and satisfying to chant because they are rap lyrics and the melody of these songs are just very nice to sing along with.
Can you think of any NCT 127 English lyrics that became popular memes, TikTok trends, or inside jokes within the fandom? Please describe the trend and why you think that particular phrase caught on. *
the Regular, huh? trend was once very trending among nctzens and the boys themselves. I think the company initially wanted to use that as a marketing method at first to get the general audience's attention but then it became more and more serious with nctzens making it as a joke. I think the trend was something that goes like one person would ask.."what size?" and the other replied "Regular, huh?". I think it really took off only among fans itself as fans find it weird and funny at the same time, but it didn't took off that well among the general audience. (I am so sorry i can only think of one)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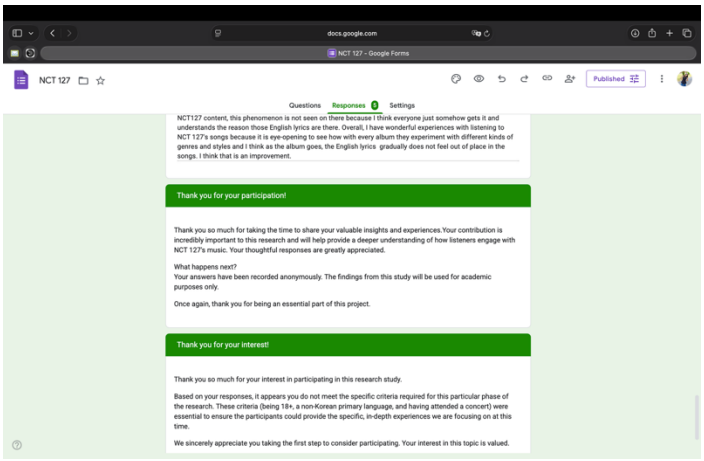
Responses 1
Settings
Referencing the list of phrases provided earlier (or your own memories), how central do you think these English phrases are to the shared identity or inside jokes within the NCTzen fan community? Please explain with examples if you can. *
I think it is very centralised and only among nctzens themselves. Take for example the general public is not buying into the Regular huh? trend as I think most people feel that is just does not make sense because linguistically when someone ask what size, replying with a huh? at the back is just wrong and some might even heard it wrong as "duh" and take it as an offense. However, this is not seen among fans themselves as they know what the context is and it was just funny to see the boys being embarrassed by the company's decisions and seeing the waiter not knowing what to do when the boys replied with an interrogative clause.
Do you feel that the use of English in NCT 127's music helps create a sense of community among international fans (NCTzens)? Does it make you feel more connected to the group and other fans? Please elaborate. *
I think it does as international fans are able to relate to the song more and will not feel so uncertain when there are English lyrics among Korean lyrics. I think it provides them the chance to connect among each other by singing along and having fun with listening to music that isn't from their native language. I think it also applies to me as I somehow prefer chanting or shouting English lyrics during singalongs as those words feel more closer to my existing vocabulary compared to Korean lyrics.
Section 5: Concluding Thoughts
Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as an international fan engaging with the English lyrics in NCT 127's music? *
I honestly think it boils down to the idea of In-Group and Out-Group. Those who are in gets it and those who aren't don't. I have friends who ask me why am I listening to a song with gibberish English that does not make sense. But as an international fan myself who spends most of her time of the day on the internet consuming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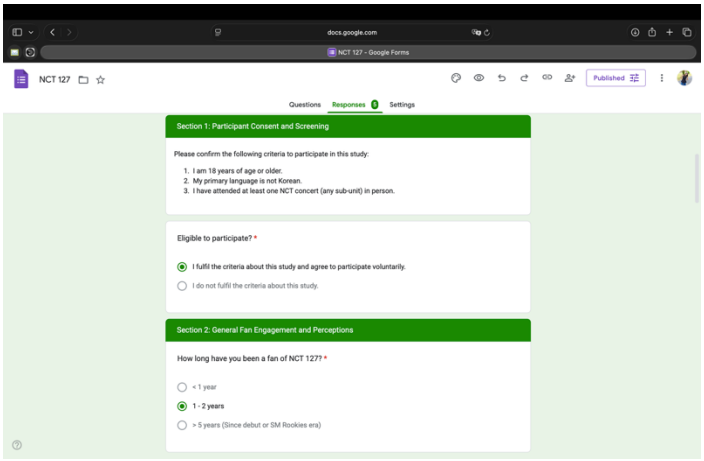
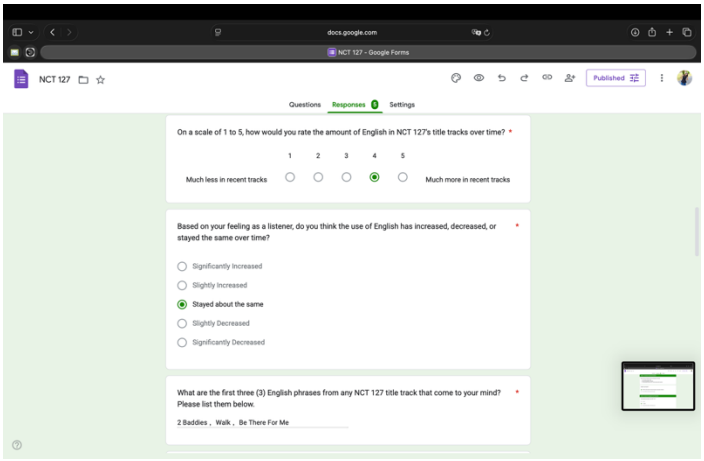
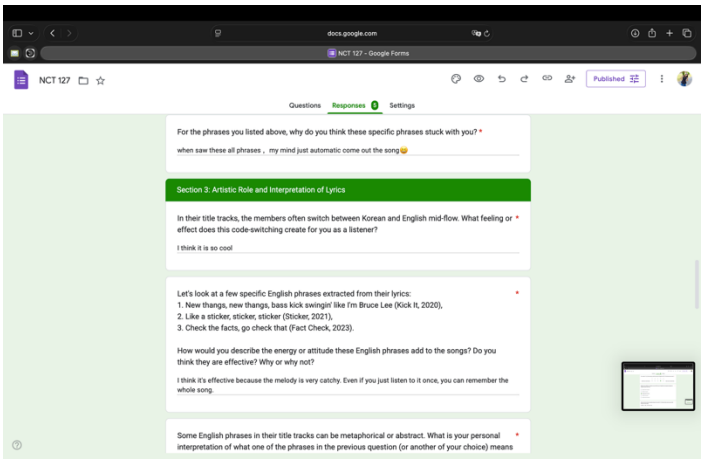
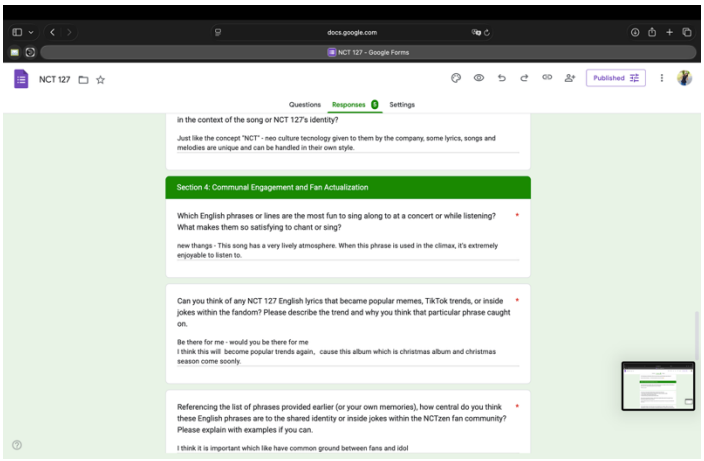
Responses 1
Settings
NCT127 content, this phenomenon is not seen on there because I think everyone just somehow gets it and understands the reason those English lyrics are there. Overall, I have wonderful experiences with listening to NCT 127's songs because it is eye-opening to see how with every album they experiment with different kinds of genres and styles and I think as the album goes, the English lyrics gradually does not feel out of place in the songs. I think that is an improvement.
Thank you for your participation!
Thank you so much for taking the time to share your valuable insights and experiences.Your contribution is incredibly important to this research and will help provide a deeper understanding of how listeners engage with NCT 127's music. Your thoughtful responses are greatly appreciated.
What happens next?
Your answers have been recorded anonymously. The findings from this study will be used for academic purposes only.
Once again, thank you for being an essential part of this project.
Thank you for your interest!
Thank you so much for your interest in participating in this research study.
Based on your responses, it appears you do not meet the specific criteria required for this particular phase of the research. These criteria (being 18+, a non-Korean primary language, and having attended a concert) were essential to ensure the participants could provide the specific, in-depth experiences we are focusing on at this time.
We sincerely appreciate you taking the first step to consider participating. Your interest in this topic is valued.

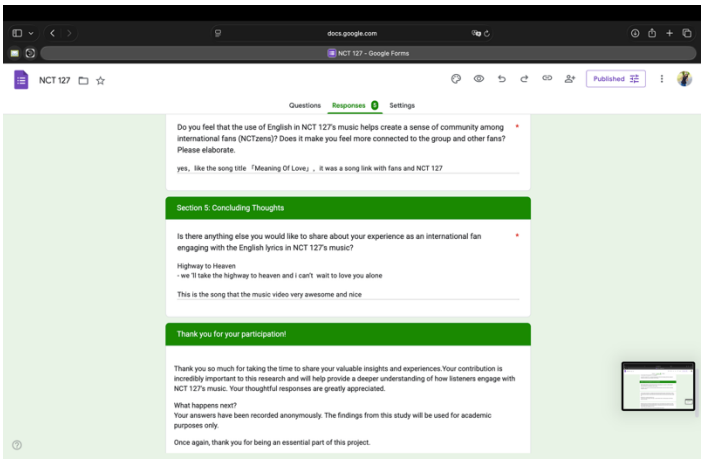
Appendix 48 – Output 2/5 of Survey Questionnaire



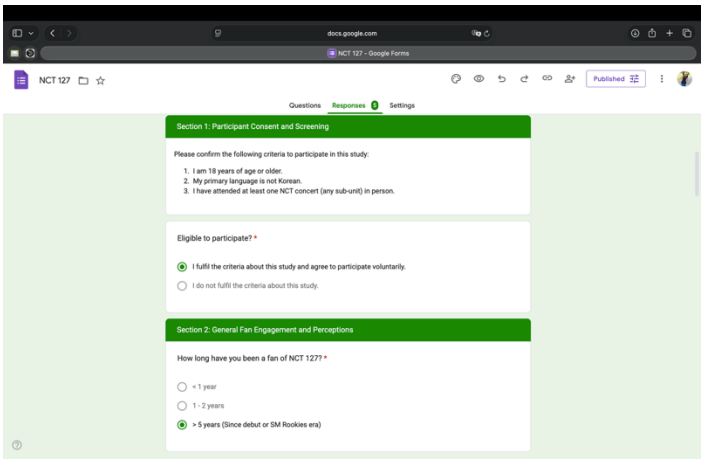


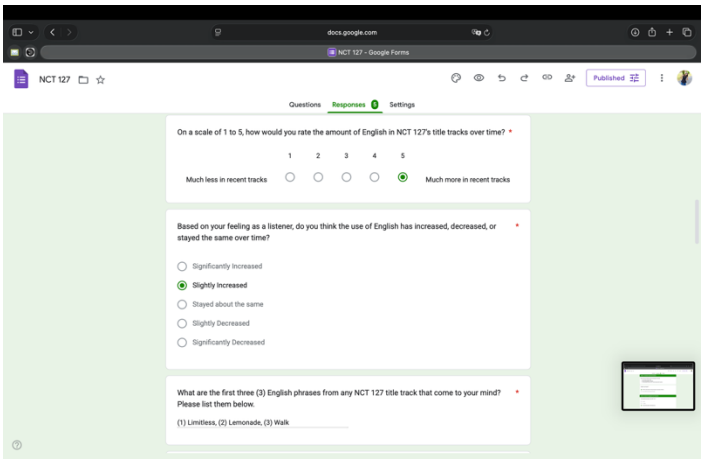






Appendix 49 – Output 3/5 of Survey Questionnaire

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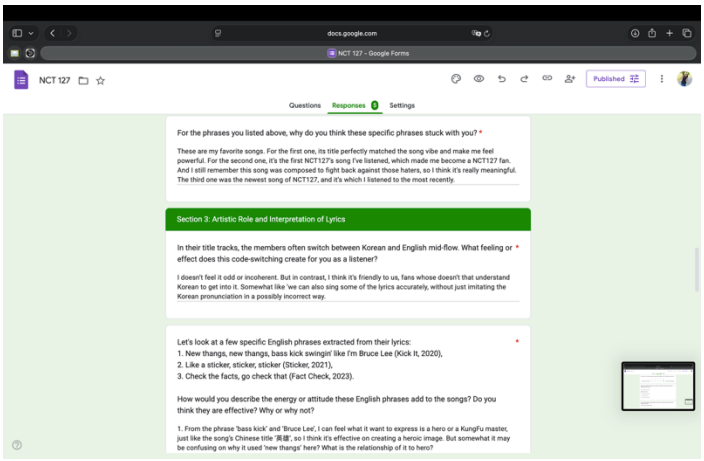
On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the amount of English in NCT 127's title tracks over time? *
1 2 3 4 5
Much less in recent tracks
Much more in recent tracks
Based on your feeling as a listener, do you think the use of English has increased, decreased, or stayed the same over time? *
Significantly Increased
Slightly Increased
Stayed about the same
Slightly Decreased
Significantly Decreased
What are the first three (3) English phrases from any NCT 127 title track that come to your mind? Please list them below. *
(1) Limitless, (2) Lemonade, (3) Walk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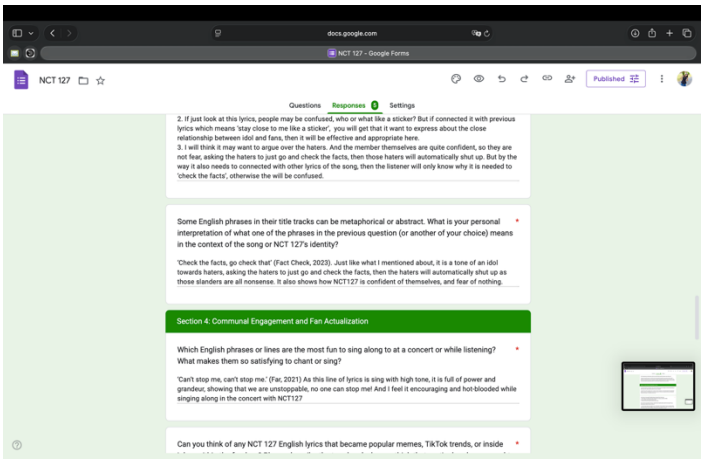
For the phrases you listed above, why do you think these specific phrases stuck with you? *
These are my favorite songs. For the first one, its title perfectly matched the song vibe and make me feel powerful. For the second one, it's the first NCT127's song I've listened, which made me become a NCT127 fan. And I still remember this song was composed to fight back against those haters, so I think it's really meaningful. The third one was the newest song of NCT127, and it's which I listened to the most recently.
Section 3: Artistic Role and Interpretation of Lyrics
In their title tracks, the members often switch between Korean and English mid-flow. What feeling or effect does this code-switching create for you as a listener? *
I doesn't feel it odd or incoherent. But in contrast, I think it's friendly to us, fans whose doesn't that understand Korean to get into it. Somewhat like 'we can also sing some of the lyrics accurately, without just imitating the Korean pronunciation in a possibly incorrect way.
Let's look at a few specific English phrases extracted from their lyrics: *
1. New thangs, new thangs, bass kick swingin' like I'm Bruce Lee (Kick It, 2020),
2. Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (Sticker, 2021),
3. Check the facts, go check that (Fact Check, 2023).
How would you describe the energy or attitude these English phrases add to the songs? Do you think they are effective? Why or why not?
1. From the phrase 'bass kick' and 'Bruce Lee', I can feel what it want to express is a hero or a Kungfu master, just like the song's Chinese title '英雄', so I think it's effective on creating a heroic image. But somewhat it may be confusing on why it used 'new thangs' here? What is the relationship of it to hero?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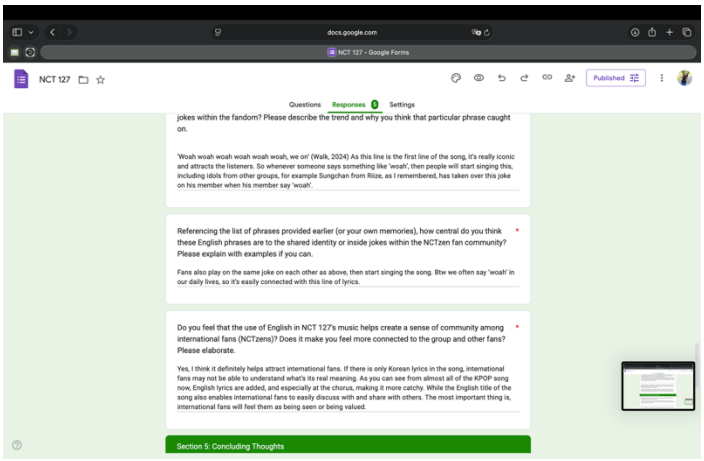
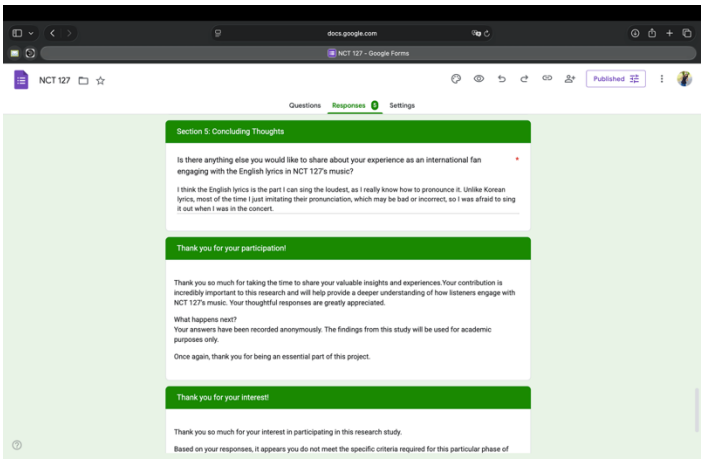
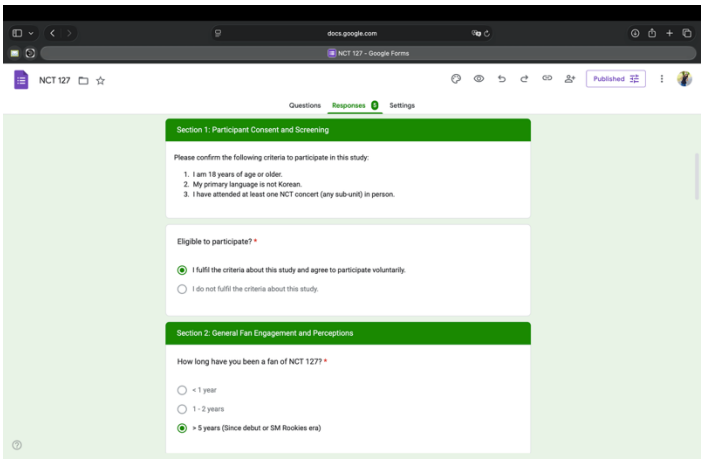
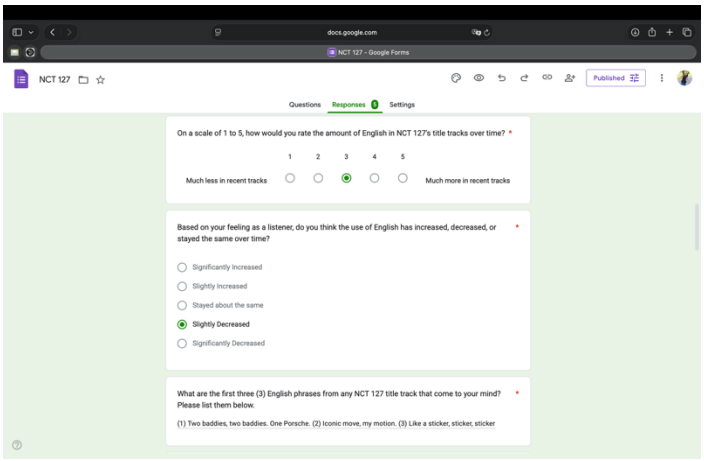
2. If just look at this lyrics, people may be confused, who or what like a sticker? But if connected it with previous lyrics which means 'stay close to me like a sticker', you will get that it want to express about the close relationship between idol and fans, then it will be effective and appropriate here.
3. I will think it may want to argue over the haters. And the member themselves are quite confident, so they are not fear, asking the haters to just go and check the facts, then those haters will automatically shut up. But by the way it also needs to connected with other lyrics of the song, then the listener will only know why it is needed to 'check the facts', otherwise the will be confused.
Some English phrases in their title tracks can be metaphorical or abstract. What is your personal interpretation of what one of the phrases in the previous question (or another of your choice) means in the context of the song or NCT 127's identity? *
'Check the facts, go check that' (Fact Check, 2023). Just like what I mentioned about, it is a tone of an idol towards haters, asking the haters to just go and check the facts, then the haters will automatically shut up as those slanders are all nonsense. It also shows how NCT127 is confident of themselves, and fear of nothing.
Section 4: Communal Engagement and Fan Actualization
Which English phrases or lines are the most fun to sing along to at a concert or while listening? What makes them so satisfying to chant or sing? *
'Can't stop me, can't stop me.' (Far, 2021) As this line of lyrics is sing with high tone, it is full of power and grandeur, showing that we are unstoppable, no one can stop me! And I feel it encouraging and hot-blooded while singing along in the concert with NCT127
Can you think of any NCT 127 English lyrics that became popular memes, TikTok trends, or inside *





Appendix 50 – Output 4/5 of Survey Questionnaire

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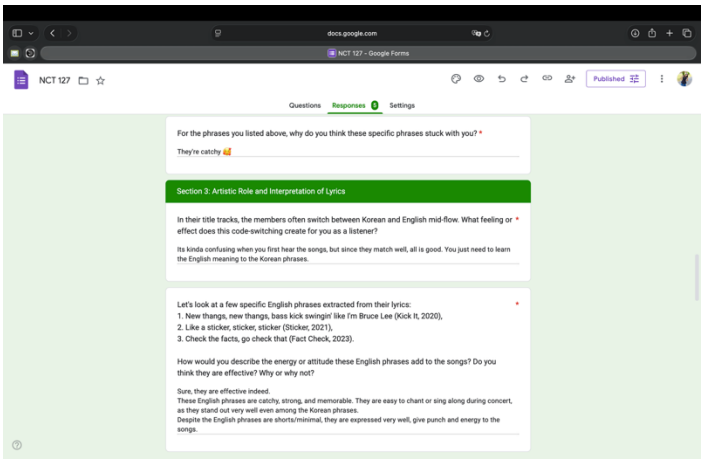
On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the amount of English in NCT 127's title tracks over time? *
1 2 3 4 5
Much less in recent tracks
Much more in recent tracks
Based on your feeling as a listener, do you think the use of English has increased, decreased, or stayed the same over time? *
Significantly Increased
Slightly Increased
Stayed about the same
Slightly Decreased
Significantly Decreased
What are the first three (3) English phrases from any NCT 127 title track that come to your mind? Please list them below. *
(1) Two baddies, two baddies. One Porsche. (2) Iconic move, my motion. (3) Like a sticker, sticker, sticker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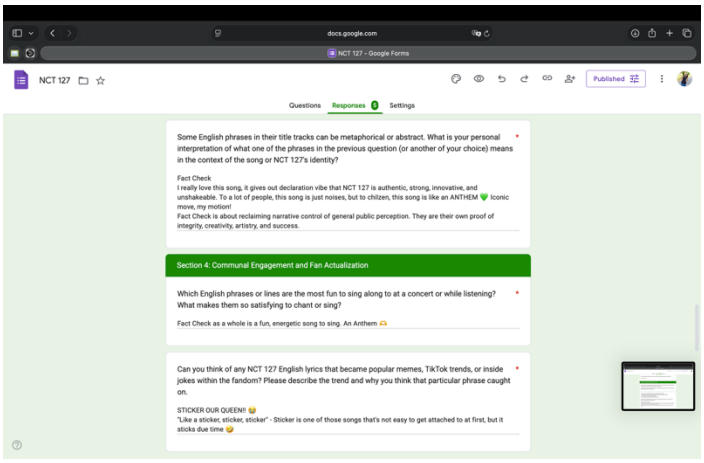
For the phrases you listed above, why do you think these specific phrases stuck with you? *
They're catchy
Section 3: Artistic Role and Interpretation of Lyrics
In their title tracks, the members often switch between Korean and English mid-flow. What feeling or effect does this code-switching create for you as a listener? *
Its kinda confusing when you first hear the songs, but since they match well, all is good. You just need to learn the English meaning to the Korean phrases.
Let's look at a few specific English phrases extracted from their lyrics: *
1. New thangs, new thangs, bass kick swingin' like I'm Bruce Lee (Kick It, 2020),
2. Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (Sticker, 2021),
3. Check the facts, go check that (Fact Check, 2023).
How would you describe the energy or attitude these English phrases add to the songs? Do you think they are effective? Why or why not?
Sure, they are effective indeed.
These English phrases are catchy, strong, and memorable. They are easy to chant or sing along during concert, as they stand out very well even among the Korean phrases.
Despite the English phrases are shorts/minimal, they are expressed very well, give punch and energy to the songs.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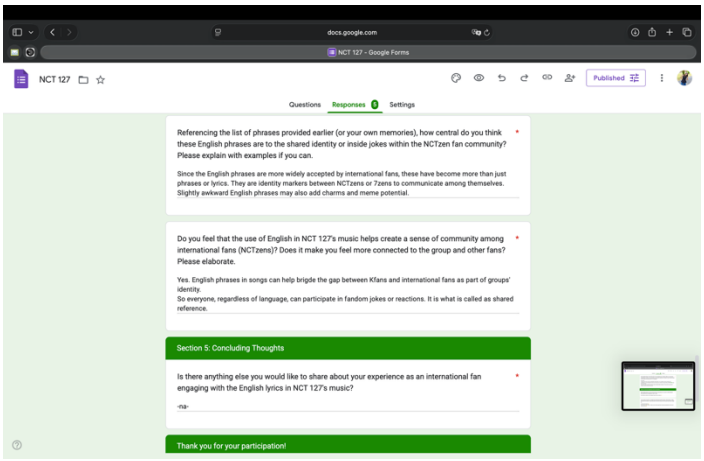
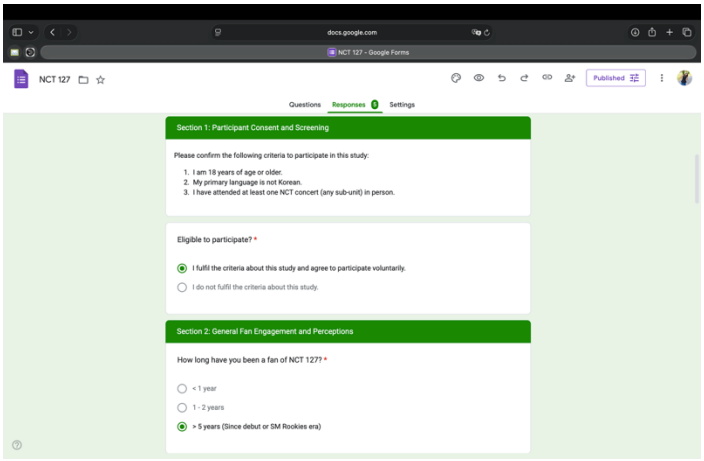
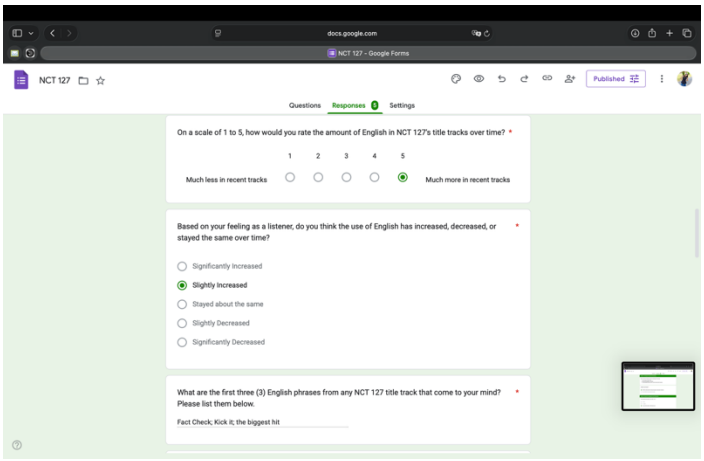
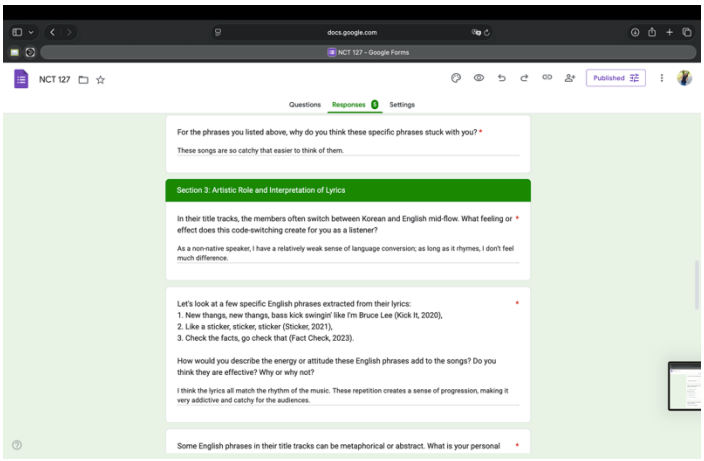
Some English phrases in their title tracks can be metaphorical or abstract. What is your personal interpretation of what one of the phrases in the previous question (or another of your choice) means in the context of the song or NCT 127's identity? *
Fact Check
I really love this song, it gives out declaration vibe that NCT 127 is authentic, strong, innovative, and unshakeable. To a lot of people, this song is just noises, but to chilzen, this song is like an ANTHEM 💚 Iconic move, my motion!
Fact Check is about reclaiming narrative control of general public perception. They are their own proof of integrity, creativity, artistry, and success.
Section 4: Communal Engagement and Fan Actualization
Which English phrases or lines are the most fun to sing along to at a concert or while listening? What makes them so satisfying to chant or sing? *
Fact Check as a whole is a fun, energetic song to sing. An Anthem 🙌
Can you think of any NCT 127 English lyrics that became popular memes, TikTok trends, or inside jokes within the fandom? Please describe the trend and why you think that particular phrase caught on. *
STICKER OUR QUEEN!! 😭
"Like a sticker, sticker, sticker" - Sticker is one of those songs that's not easy to get attached to at first, but it sticks due time 🥹



Appendix 51 – Output 5/5 of Survey Questionnaire



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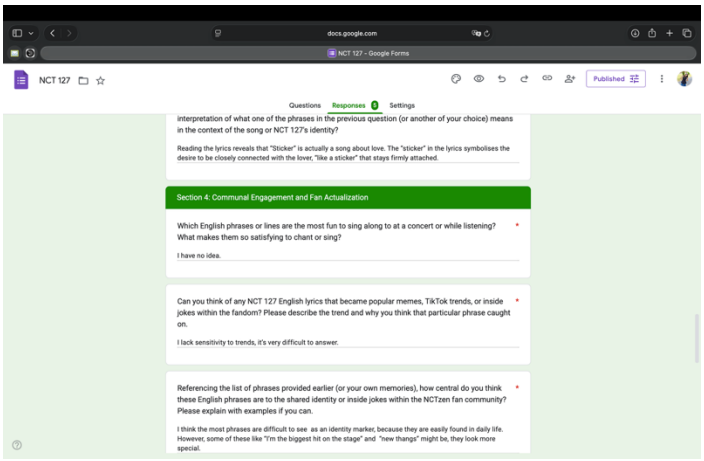
For the phrases you listed above, why do you think these specific phrases stuck with you? *
These songs are so catchy that easier to think of them.
Section 3: Artistic Role and Interpretation of Lyrics
In their title tracks, the members often switch between Korean and English mid-flow. What feeling or effect does this code-switching create for you as a listener? *
As a non-native speaker, I have a relatively weak sense of language conversion; as long as it rhymes, I don't feel much difference.
Let's look at a few specific English phrases extracted from their lyrics:
1. New thangs, new thangs, bass kick swingin' like I'm Bruce Lee (Kick It, 2020),
2. Like a sticker, sticker, sticker (Sticker, 2021),
3. Check the facts, go check that (Fact Check, 2023).
How would you describe the energy or attitude these English phrases add to the songs? Do you think they are effective? Why or why not? *
I think the lyrics all match the rhythm of the music. These repetition creates a sense of progression, making it very addictive and catchy for the audiences.
Some English phrases in their title tracks can be metaphorical or abstract. What is your personal *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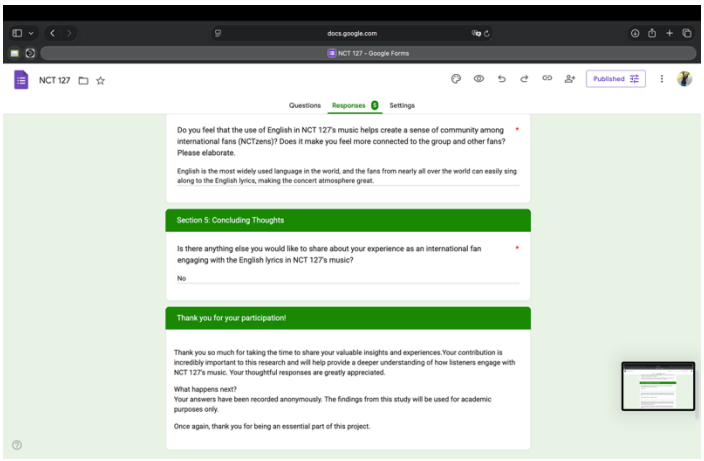
interpretation of what one of the phrases in the previous question (or another of your choice) means in the context of the song or NCT 127's identity?
Reading the lyrics reveals that "Sticker" is actually a song about love. The "sticker" in the lyrics symbolises the desire to be closely connected with the lover, "like a sticker" that stays firmly attached.
Section 4: Communal Engagement and Fan Actualization
Which English phrases or lines are the most fun to sing along to at a concert or while listening? What makes them so satisfying to chant or sing? *
I have no idea.
Can you think of any NCT 127 English lyrics that became popular memes, TikTok trends, or inside jokes within the fandom? Please describe the trend and why you think that particular phrase caught on. *
I lack sensitivity to trends, it's very difficult to answer.
Referencing the list of phrases provided earlier (or your own memories), how central do you think these English phrases are to the shared identity or inside jokes within the NCTzen fan community? Please explain with examples if you can. *
I think the most phrases are difficult to see as an identity marker, because they are easily found in daily life. However, some of these like "I'm the biggest hit on the stage" and "new thangs" might be, they look more special.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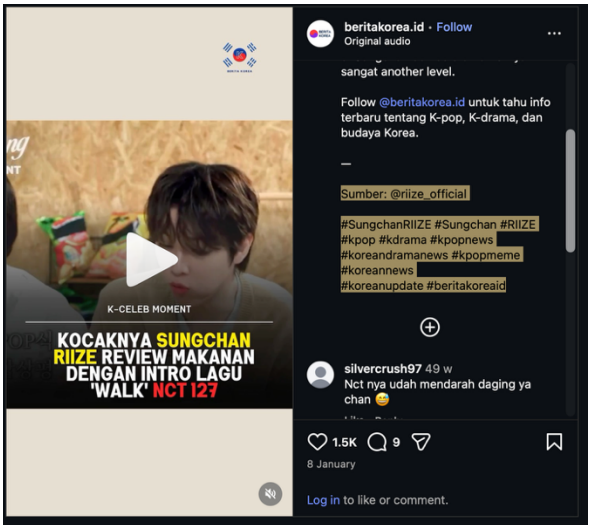
Do you feel that the use of English in NCT 127's music helps create a sense of community among international fans (NCTzens)? Does it make you feel more connected to the group and other fans? Please elaborate. *
English is the most widely used language in the world, and the fans from nearly all over the world can easily sing along to the English lyrics, making the concert atmosphere great.
Section 5: Concluding Thoughts
Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as an international fan engaging with the English lyrics in NCT 127's music? *
No
Thank you for your participation!
Thank you so much for taking the time to share your valuable insights and experiences.Your contribution is incredibly important to this research and will help provide a deeper understanding of how listeners engage with NCT 127's music. Your thoughtful responses are greatly appreciated.
What happens next?
Your answers have been recorded anonymously. The findings from this study will be used for academic purposes only.
Once again, thank you for being an essential part of this project.

Appendix 52 – The "Walk, Walk, Walk" moment with RIIZE's Sungchan and Shotaro

https://www.instagram.com/reel/DEjx8YyB5tp/



Appendix 53 – Song Credits for *Sticker*

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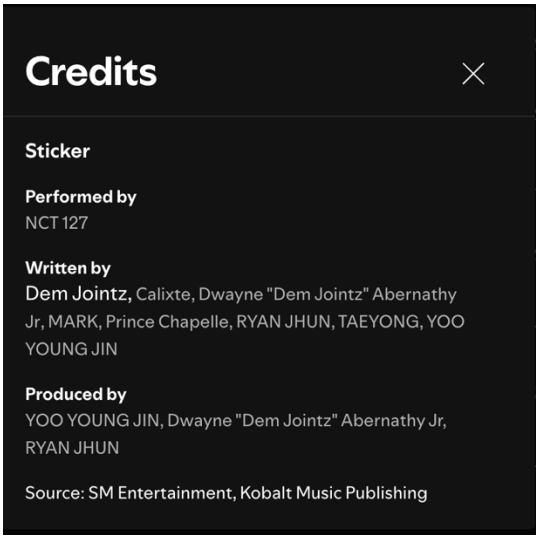
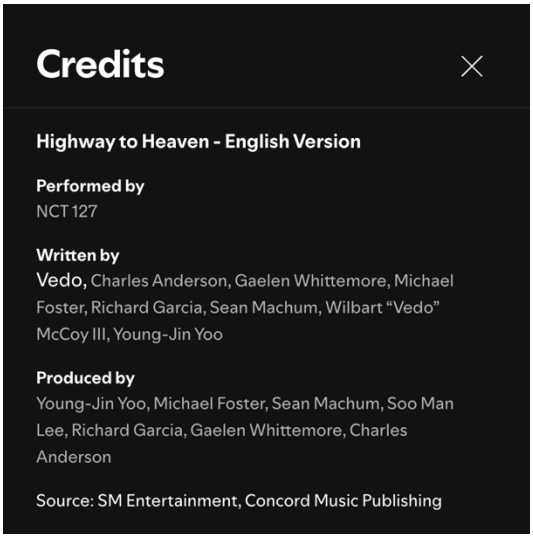


Appendix 54 – Song Credits for *Highway to Heaven (English ver.)*

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