

LF (Looking for) a Sociolinguistic Analysis of K-pop BNS Twitter in the Philippines

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Abstract

The global popularity of K-pop has meant a growing market and an increasing demand for idol (group) goods. K-pop fans have established a buy-and-sell or BNS community for merchandise on social media and even created their own jargon. This research specifically investigates the Filipino K-pop BNS group which has a notable presence on Twitter. It aims to produce a general profile of the members, to study their used and preferred language and communication style, and to analyze whatever linguistic influence on their transactions. Public tweets and online survey responses are examined for this study. It has been learned from these that the community is made up of people of different ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and genders. Nonetheless, the common K-pop BNS participant would be a middle-class female young adult who collects merchandise. The members use English, Tagalog, and Taglish depending on their message and have varying attitudes towards each language and code-switching. Taglish is the norm, however, and their communication style is informal. The communication-related factors that affect transactions are found to be rudeness, overfamiliarity, and unclarity. These are reflected in the omission of some terms and the use of non-standard linguistic forms.

1 Introduction

The steady rise of Korean media and culture all over the world is unmistakable and palpable, with more content becoming accessible thanks to translators and streaming platforms and both local and international brands getting idols and actors as ambassadors. In the Philippines, K-pop and K-dramas are so popular that it is hardly surprising anymore to see billboards of Korean celebrities on EDSA, fan-organized cupsleeve events at coffee or milk tea shops, and a wide array of K-food products at grocery stores. These seem to be familiar sights at this point, and *Hallyu* or the Korean Wave in the country is more apparent than ever.

Focusing on K-pop, fans of this genre as a whole or of certain idols and groups attend concerts and fan-meetings and start an album or merchandise collection if they can. These activities naturally involve money and importing. However, physical stores for

official K-pop albums and goods in the Philippines can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. Fans resort to ordering from South Korea- and Philippines-based websites directly by themselves or joining group orders (GOs) to save on shipping costs and to pay through convenient means. These are the typical ways fans are able to procure albums and merchandise.

But where can fans look first to find what is on their wishlist and build their collection? Veterans will most likely recommend a trustworthy shop or individual seller from Twitter. The said platform is a space for fans to interact with each other and their idols, but it is also a place for simple non- to low-profit trading of goods or conducting small- to large-scale businesses, even for non-official items. Twitter's 280-character limit for tweets and overall nature affect how the people communicate in this marketplace, however. For example, K-pop fans have jargon, most of which are acronyms. This research looks into the community of Filipino K-pop fans engaging in buy-and-sell (BNS) on Twitter and their linguistic behavior and preferences.

1.1 Background of the Study

The K-pop BNS community in the Philippines is not new, but it is relatively young. In the early 2000s, K-pop groups began to gain followers in the country (Vergonia, 2018). However, official merchandise was difficult to come by, and it was only during the 2010s that collecting became a possibility and a practice, with offline stores and online sellers starting to distribute merchandise (Gloria, 2021).

Fans would understandably want to be in possession of albums and idol goods which are "products or mementos that are manufactured to gratify the desires of fandoms and include the facial images of stars, such as on cups, towels, or souvenirs" (p. 4) as defined by Kim et al. (2018). Purchasing merchandise is a form of support, and just owning some type of it can reinforce fan identity. Collectible merchandise has already been suggested before to act as "an object for trade, nostalgia, and personal identity" (Geraghty, 2014, as cited in Xiong, 2020, p. 9).

On the topic of the K-pop BNS domain, it would have changed over time due to emerging social media and e-commerce platforms. Based on Statista (2022), the top five most used social media platforms here are Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter. Only Facebook and Twitter will be discussed in this section because these are arguably where K-pop BNS is thriving the most.

In contrast to Facebook, Twitter lacks an actual marketplace feature, although it once tested out a buy button and recently unveiled plans for "Live Shopping" and other e-commerce functions (Hoang & Rao, 2021; Miranda, 2021). Facebook users either follow pages, join groups or explore a literal marketplace where products on sale can be displayed the same way on shopping websites, and commerce profiles can be viewed. Pertinent information like the location of the seller and the option to turn on alert notifications are also available on Facebook. On the other hand, product listings on Twitter are generally seen by potential buyers when they purposefully search using the appropriate tags or keywords or when a tweet shows up on their feed as a retweet, quote retweet, or as a paid advertisement. To know more about the person one is transacting

with, referring to a pinned tweet where customer feedback and more are linked or visiting another website like Carrd which contains basic information may be necessary. It might seem inconvenient then for both buyers and sellers.

Yet because Twitter is home to K-pop stans, it is the ideal place for BNS. For context, the word *stan* originated from the American rapper Eminem who had a song with that title about an obsessive fan; and although originally a blend of stalker and fan, it has evolved semantically and undergone amelioration (Bellos, 2018; Holt, 2020). Stans are dedicated fans who are on social media, usually collectors of merchandise, and highly knowledgeable and updated about their idols; but they do not literally follow them around during unofficial schedules. The idea of a stan being a stalker is lost, which can help explain the term's widespread use today.

With the meaning of stan clarified, we can now go back to how Twitter is apt for BNS due to its function as a community space for K-pop stans. Basically, the target market is already there, and with tweets being public, these can easily gain decent engagement. On Facebook, K-pop BNS groups and posts tend to be private and regulated, whereas the opposite is true for Twitter.

In an article on Preen.ph, a local women's lifestyle website, K-pop BNS Twitter is described as a "sub-community of K-pop stan Twitter" and distinguished from other marketplaces with its offer of anonymity and opportunity for friendship (Cruz, 2022). K-pop BNS as a whole rests on the foundation of stan culture and the hobby of collecting so it can be said that between the buyer and seller, there is a sort of personal connection brought about by a shared interest. K-pop BNS can be further divided into sub-communities as well based on the same interview-formatted article. Every K-pop group has its own, and this is reflected in the existence of many BNS groups on Facebook and merchandise retweet (RT) bots on Twitter.

K-pop BNS is diverse not only because of the great number of K-pop groups but also the socioeconomic classes and age groups participating in it, which is something the researcher wants to look into more, as these variations would have an impact on language.

What is known about K-pop BNS language is that it has an expanding and predominantly English jargon. This is even put together by the community in dictionaries. Some examples are *payo* and *mod*, which stand for 'pay as you order' and 'mode of delivery' respectively. Acronyms and abbreviations are common presumably as the number of characters in a tweet must not exceed 280. A few terms and expressions may occur in other BNS contexts too, but that of K-pop would still have its unique vocabulary with the type of products being circulated in this marketplace.

Articles related to K-pop BNS focus on defining acronyms and calculating numbers, while studies on the fandom deal with economic, sociological, and political elements. This research strives to dissect the sociolinguistic aspects of the Filipino K-pop fandom on Twitter, its BNS subgroup to be specific. With Filipinos code-switching regularly, leading different lifestyles, and having cultural expectations, how all of this translates into their online interactions and transactions is interesting.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The researcher intends to find the answers to three questions which are as follows:

1. What are the background and the identity of K-pop BNS community members?
2. What kind of language can be observed on K-pop BNS Twitter?
3. Are the members' buying and selling decisions affected by the language used by the person they are interacting with? In what way and to what extent?

1.3 Research Objectives

This research aims to accomplish three objectives. The first is to identify and describe the K-pop BNS community on the social media platform Twitter. Therefore, the researcher considers some personal information, mostly with regard to socioeconomic status and K-pop BNS experience. The second is to examine the standard and preferred language and communication style of the members of this community in the context of their online marketplace. Whether the members use English or Tagalog or code-switch (Taglish) more is studied. The level of formality is additionally touched on. Lastly, the third is to determine the influence of language on the transactions between them. The researcher is interested in how the members' linguistic preferences tie into their choices to buy or sell an item.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is important as it can help people understand one facet of K-pop fandom subculture and language. K-pop fans are known to use jargon such as *bias* (favorite member of a group) and the like, but they have a set of terms and expressions reserved for buying and selling goods in particular. These do fall within the scope of the research.

Going beyond such jargon, the research concentrates on the use of English and Tagalog and the phenomenon of code-switching on K-pop BNS Twitter as explained in the previous section. It will thus prove to be of value to future researchers of these linguistic topics, not only of the K-pop fandom in the Philippines.

The research also explores Twitter as a unique online marketplace. The exchanges on K-pop BNS Twitter are different from those on other social media platforms and appear to be more personal and direct. This side of Twitter deserves to be studied.

1.5 Scope and Delimitations

The available resources and ethical factors were considered to easily narrow down the scope and decide on the limits of the study.

The researcher found that there are already community-made BNS "dictionaries" accessible on Twitter. Web articles likewise have lists albeit not as comprehensive. Thus, jargon is not the primary concern of this research. Not every existing term or expression is defined in the body. This study briefly discusses select common acronyms and

notes interesting or new jargon encountered in the data, but its focus is the overall language and the communication style in the context of a transaction. Nonetheless, a glossary developed from the tweets, articles, dictionaries, and survey data is provided (see Appendix).

Username are not examined in the paper either. Although these would make a good topic, one should keep in mind the privacy and anonymity of the community in question.

It should be noted here as well that no attempts to contrast Standard American English (SAE) and Philippine English (PE), which is assumed to be the variety dealt with in this study, are made. Lastly, tweets with words from Philippine languages aside from Tagalog are excluded.

2 Review of Related Literature

Presently, the information on K-pop BNS Twitter is limited, coming only from web articles which are cited in this literature review. However, works that have to do with the linguistic situation in the Philippines and the place of language in business are consulted and considered here as well. The discussion of the pertinent information in these makes up the first part of the section.

2.1 On the K-pop BNS Community, Its Culture and Language

This subsection sheds light on the culture and language of the K-pop BNS community. A number of acronyms have been integrated here and enclosed in parentheses.

Looking closely at who participates in K-pop BNS, many are young females (Cruz, 2022). Twitter's age requirement is 13 years old and above which means minors use the app. The community might consist of people as young as that.

Although a bit about merchandise has been mentioned in the beginning, it is further tackled here for a clearer picture of K-pop BNS. A variety of items are sold to fans of K-pop. The most collectable and in demand though would be the *photocards* (PCs) followed by the *albums*. Photocards are standard inclusions of albums but may also come with other merchandise or are preorder benefits (Gloria, 2022). These are normally random which encourages fans to buy more albums and have been compared to NBA cards (Gloria, 2021). If fans want a certain photocard, they can turn to traders or sellers who have it.

It has been pointed out that collecting is a hobby that a lot picked up over the pandemic as a way to cope and/or to beat boredom (Cruz, 2022; Gloria, 2022). Those on K-pop BNS Twitter are generally photocard collectors, a mix of newbies and the experienced, and they may be template collectors or "sparks" collectors (Cruz, 2022). What distinguishes them is whether they get all their bias' photocards or not. A template is a digital fan-made compilation of every officially released photocard of an idol. It serves as a checklist for collectors. Some collect everything there, whereas others focus on what would "spark joy" or cause *kilig*, which is a feeling similar to butterflies in the

stomach. The concept of *prio*, an abbreviation of ‘priority,’ is related to this. It is the photocard that a collector wants to have the most.

Because K-pop BNS forms a subset of the K-pop stan population, it can be fun but toxic, exhibiting *cancel culture* and misusing private information (Abad, 2022). In a Rappler article, these two negative practices of the community are expounded.

On K-pop BNS Twitter, threads detailing an issue with message screenshots and other supporting evidence are rather common, and people can be vicious in their comments. The reasons someone is canceled vary, but to name a few, scamming, item pricing, and poor packaging can put a person in a bind. Scamming is inexcusable, of course, and the threads related to it are for awareness. These are meant to warn others so they do not have bad transactions.

As for K-pop BNS pricing, it can be shocking to non-fans and non-collectors as photocards are sold for as low as two-digit prices to tens of thousands of pesos depending on demand, rarity, and origin among others; some are bought from fans abroad, typically residing in South Korea, Japan, and Thailand where the market price is different (Gloria, 2022). It is often debated by the community itself too. This is one reason why more people are learning about K-pop BNS.

Photocards can be *overpriced* (op) but still be bought. The buyer and the seller risk being criticized though. Member pricing is frowned upon also, but unfortunately, it is undeniable that certain group members’ photocards are not easily sold. Hence, to make up for possible financial losses or to avoid being *lugi* ‘(financial) loss,’ sellers decide to increase the price of the more in-demand photocards. Then, there is *bidding* which is a practice that not all community members approve of (Abad, 2022). The aforementioned observations on K-pop BNS indicate the diverse socioeconomic backgrounds of the community. Others can afford to sell at cost price or less, and well-off collectors can splurge and bid.

When it comes to packaging, what matters is its ability to protect the item yet whether it is aesthetic is important to some buyers; the inclusion of freebies similarly affects their satisfaction (Abad, 2022; Cruz, 2022). Packing and unboxing pictures and videos on Twitter and TikTok arguably have a part in the construction of the ideal package which should look cute or tasteful. While these are subjective adjectives, here is an example of what a photocard buyer might look forward to receiving: a photocard inside a topper that is decked with stickers or taped onto a card cut out from an official album photobook page, covered with colored heart bubble wrap, and finally placed in a carton box also containing many freebies and a thank-you note. Sellers with a *packing/packaging fee* (pf) on top of the item price are especially expected to beautify parcels and offer gifts. However, they ask for extra payment because even the basic and often less *aesthetic* materials (e.g., corrugated cardboard, card sleeve, bubble wrap, mailer) cost something; they cannot always shoulder the additional expenses.

Speaking of the actual materials used, this is where a positive characteristic of K-pop BNS comes in. The community is conscious of its activities having consequences on the environment. In the Preen.ph article, one interviewed collector comments on that (Cruz, 2022). Overall, the environmental concern is demonstrated by the people’s suggestions and efforts to invest in eco-friendly materials and to recycle as much as

possible.

On the misuse of information, this is connected to scams and threats (Abad, 2022). It pays to be careful when interacting with anyone online because the person on the other end is a virtual stranger who might not keep your information confidential and use it for bogus orders and other bad purposes.

To navigate K-pop BNS, it is imperative that one is familiar with its language. Perusing the relevant articles and community-made dictionaries, the following acronyms seem to be the most essential:

wt	want/willing to sell
lfb	looking for buyer
wtb	want/willing to buy
lfs	looking for seller
wtt	want/willing to trade
lft	looking for trader
mop	mode of payment
mod	mode of delivery

(Abad, 2022; acornragi, 2021; Perez, 2021; yonkaibnz, 2022)

Everything besides the last two explains what the poster intends to do with the item, and these terms hasten the search process or ideally do. Some community members may want a wider reach so they add tags despite not being applicable to the item. This is a bigger problem on Twitter than Facebook because in the groups, administrators monitor and reject posts with misused tags.

The list above only has English terms, but a small number of words are in Taglish. For example, *payo* can be *bayo* or ‘bayad as you order’ (Perez, 2021). Photocards are alternatively called *papels* (Abad, 2021a). It is a clear combination of the Tagalog word for paper *papel* and the English pluralizer *-s*. Another would be *kilabot line*, and while *kilabot* means ‘goosebumps,’ this has been described to be “a term of endearment that Filipino fans use to refer to the more popular members of a specific group” (Abad, 2021a, para. 21). These members’ photocards also quickly sell out, regardless of the price. *Pi* is one more interesting word that exclusively occurs in the K-pop BNS context; it is a misspelled version of the Tagalog respect or politeness marker *po* (Cruz, 2022). Such terms evidence the linguistic background and creativity of the community.

2.2 On Bilingualism/Multilingualism and Code-switching in the Philippines (Oral and Digital)

In consideration of the second research objective which is to study the language on K-pop BNS Twitter, literature about the Philippines’ linguistic situation is reviewed.

In a country where there are 186 native languages, with two having gone extinct (Eberhard et al., 2022), the notion that society would be bilingual or multilingual is easy to grasp. They would need to know a lingua franca besides their mother tongue at

some point in their lives. This is usually Filipino, the national language also commonly referred to as Tagalog.

Tagalog and English, another official language, are widely spoken and mixed as can be observed in the streets, institutions, and mass media. The K-pop BNS terms cited in the previous section are proof of this too. According to Bautista (2004) who has extensively studied this code-switching phenomenon, Taglish is “the language of informality among middle-class, college-educated, urbanized Filipinos” (p. 226) and has the functions of building rapport and signaling solidarity. It can be deficiency- or proficiency-driven, meaning people code-switch to make up for the lower competence level in one of the two languages or to take advantage of their command in both and maximize “communicative efficiency” (Bautista, 1999, as cited in Bautista, 2004). This, she explains through function words, content words, idioms, and linguistic play. To add, a much older work, that of Goulet (1971, as cited in Bautista, 2004), states that code-switching is done for “for precision, for transition, for comic effect, for atmosphere, for bridging or creating social distance, for snob appeal, and for secrecy” (p. 228).

Diving into the more technical aspects of Taglish code-switching, Bautista (1980, as cited in Bautista, 2004) conducted a study on radio broadcast interviews and discovered that the points of switching involve structural convergence. Essentially, similarity and compatibility are necessary. When the structures of the two languages have something in common, switching is permitted. She also mentions the need to identify the base language through word order and major and minor constituents.

Bautista (2004) revisits these concepts, looking at them from the more recent and fleshed out perspectives of Poplack and Sankoff (1988) and Myers-Scotton (1998) on code-switching. She notes that “switching at equivalence points” and “smooth switching” are the terms that the first two aforementioned scholars use for the convergence-rooted switches she previously described. From Myers-Scotton, it is the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) Model which Bautista remarks on. The matrix language that serves as a grammatical frame corresponds to the base language in her dissertation, and she admits that system morphemes are more telling indicators than major and minor constituents.

Myers-Scotton’s Markedness Model (1998) is also relevant, and with this, a return to sociolinguistic motivations is made. Under this framework, five maxims guide the speakers’ code decisions. To simplify and summarize these, there are the *marked* and *unmarked* maxims applied by speakers when they reinforce or deviate from certain rights and obligations. An *exploratory choice* is available as well, in which switching is done on the occasion of ambiguity with respect to the unmarked choice. The last two maxims are *deference* and *virtuosity*. The former is rather self-explanatory, with positions and context influencing the expression of respect through a certain code. The virtuosity maxim pertains to sustaining and encouraging speaker participation. Now, to differentiate the *marked* and *unmarked* codes, the latter would have higher frequency and therefore be the expected choice. Markedness is about divergence in the linguistic sense. In the case of the Philippines, Taglish is believed to be unmarked as opposed to straight English or Tagalog (Bautista, 2004; Sanchez, 2013; Smedley, 2006).

Because this research deals with language on Twitter, it is important to understand

code-switching in the online context, and Dorleijn and Nortier (2009) have reviewed literature and written about this. They say that computer-mediated communication (CMC) is deemed informal; hence, the occurrence of colloquial forms and features of spoken language. It then makes sense that code-switching, likewise having an informal nature, is observed in CMC. Dorleijn and Nortier acknowledge also that since CMC is written, the author is conscious to an extent, and so code-switching's connection to identity can be brought to the fore. They mention the concepts of "we-code" and "they-code" that Gumperz (1982) proposed. These are for the insider and outsider or group distinctions. On markedness, they refer to the work of Hinrichs (2006) among others which analyzed English-Jamaican Creole exchanges and saw that English is unmarked in the digital sphere. That does not hold true for the CMC of Filipinos. Bautista (2004) identified the code-switching in the emails she looked at as unmarked, and Smedley (2006) had a similar observation and analysis for web blogs. In general, the literature has described Taglish as unmarked regardless of whether it is spoken, written, or CMC. With that said, considering the context is always necessary in order to determine what is marked or unmarked.

Delving into the language on Philippine Twitter, several studies have been done. Notable would be that of Andrei et al. (2015). Although it deals with tweets posted during Super Typhoon Haiyan and focuses on emotions as expressed through language, the findings can be of use. After all, both papers are concerned with data from the same social media platform and the use of English, Tagalog, and code-switching. With the help of Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) and other tools, Andrei et al. (2015) were able to collect a huge amount of data, around 1.2 million tweets, and from these, they learned what the Filipino people felt and talked about pre-, mid- and post-typhoon disaster in 2013. Their analysis aligns with that of Bautista (2004) in terms of the reasons behind code-switching, communicative efficiency. Their main argument though is that English is a "broadcast language," as well as a transnational one. Many of the English tweets were said to be from international users, and pre-typhoon ones were public service announcements. The tweets made after the typhoon communicated support and sympathy. By labeling English as a broadcast language, the authors seem to imply a heightened awareness of an audience. On the other hand, Tagalog or Filipino as they prefer to call it is a "visceral language," as it facilitates emotional and cultural expression, highlights the connection to home, and exudes nationalism.

This research analyzes the language of a fan community and presumes its passionate character manifests in how they communicate. However, given that the primary activity is BNS in which the market is fundamentally the audience, English may be the preferred medium.

2.3 On Language and the Marketplace

Because BNS is a form of business, works on the language of marketing and advertising would still provide valuable information.

Dayag (2008) studied 74 ads for non-consumer durables from the *Corpus of Asian Magazine Advertising: The Philippine Database* and observed a tendency to employ par-

ticular structures and linguistic features in these. Dayag presents the following structures:

- Identifying Product Name/Features + Citing Positive Benefits;
- Creating a Need/Purpose + Recommending Course of Action;
- Describing Company/Product + Identifying Product Name;
- Creating a Need + Identifying Product Name; and
- Giving Reason/s for Buying + Citing Positive Benefits (or Cause + Effect)

The linguistic features include introducing, lexical novelty, lengthy noun phrases, code-switching, and speech acts. Dayag states that even though only 12 ads demonstrated Taglish code-switching (both inter- and intra-, and interchanged matrix languages), they were for different product types. Regarding speech acts, it is assertives and directives that appeared. Dayag says that the ads “reason,” alluding to the typology of Simpson (2001). Rather than “tickle” or indirectly attract buyers through humor, emotion, and mood, the ads have to do with rationalizing. Despite that analysis, Dayag brings up Tanaka’s (1994, 1999) concept of “covert communication” and the turn to informative, persuasive tactics that involve manipulating the language.

K-pop BNS may differ in this respect with the motivation for a purchase being the desire to complete a collection. Moreover, on Twitter, the lengthy noun phrases are not appropriate due to the character limit. However, code-switching is relevant, and perhaps, so would the use of directives in print ads. The generic structures that Dayag lays out in his work can be helpful for when the K-pop BNS tweets are examined as well.

From Pogacar et al. (2018) is an illuminating and concise chapter that references many researchers and describes how marketing language affects brand attitudes and choice specifically. The linguistic devices they write about are plenty, but the focus here would be assertive language, politeness, bilingualism, and code-switching.

For the first, Pogacar et al. suggest to hedonic brands the use of such as it has been found to be more persuasive. Hedonic products are “associated with experimentation, enthusiasm, satisfaction and pleasure, typically leading to emotional gratification” (do Vale and Matos, 2016, p. 224), and K-pop merchandise would belong to this category. When people are in a positive mood, assertiveness is preferred (Pogacar et al., 2018). It would then be believable that the language in K-pop BNS reflects that.

Politeness is also a step forward in persuading consumers to pay for a product (Pogacar et al., 2018). A request communicated in the way a listener expects it to be is more likely to be fulfilled. The authors mention dispreferred markers as an example since they can demonstrate politeness and etiquette and improve attitudes towards the speaker and product, resulting in a sale. People who looked at reviews with these markers preceding negative information were willing to pay more compared to when the softening words or phrases were absent. However, politeness in the Philippines

is first seen in the usage of the markers *po* and *opo*. These would have an effect on consumers which is similar to that of dispreferred markers.

On bilingualism, what Pogacar et al. (2018) say is that the native language has a significant link to sentiment and the self overall, therefore positively influencing a consumer's attitude and behavior. This actually reiterates the "visceral language" idea of Andrei et al. (2015) despite the varying context. For code-switching though, valence and direction make a difference. For example, between Spanish and English, the association with affluence would be pinned to the latter. Thus, when the ad switches from Spanish to English, the attitude tends to be better than the reverse situation.

Finally, for communication style in social media marketing, the research of Deng et al. (2020) is important. They analyzed the language used in nearly 6000 Facebook posts of 42 brands and the consumer engagement (likes, comments, shares). They referred to the communication accommodation theory (CAT) and considered the linguistic styles of informality, emotionality, complexity.

CAT relates to bridging or widening social distance, and it can be split into the strategies of convergence and divergence (Giles & Ogay, 2007). Convergence involves adapting with the aim of similarity in terms of communicative behavior whereas divergence is about emphasizing differences. The former strategy is generally associated with positive evaluation, efficiency, and cooperation. How does this fit into the study? Again, CMC is largely informal or casual (Dorleijn & Nortier, 2009), and Deng et al. (2020) initially proposed that the brands' consumer engagement would improve when they choose to accommodate that linguistic style. However, they found that it did not have much of an impact possibly because of the consumers being accustomed to informality already. Meanwhile, emotionality is significant when the like count is examined. More consumers liked posts which expressed positive emotionality. The last factor of complexity is something to mind also. The more complex the post, the less engagement it receives.

Deng et al. (2020) used LIWC for emotionality and measured informality and complexity based on the features below (which were adopted from other researchers):

- Informality
 - Percentage of emojis
 - Percentage of contractions
 - Percentage of informal punctuations
 - Percentage of personal pronouns
- Complexity
 - Post length
 - Average sentence length
 - Long words (six characters or more)
 - Percentage of hashtags
 - Percentage of at-mentions

These findings and criteria are useful, as the research explores the communication style on K-pop BNS Twitter.

3 Research Methodology

The entirety of this research was done online because of the persisting COVID-19 pandemic. The data came from two sources: Twitter and a survey.

The researcher copied onto a spreadsheet 520 tweets and quote retweets made from January to March 2022 with the following acronyms: *wts*, *lfb*, *wtb*, and *lfs*. These were used in pairs as search keywords. *Kpop* (without a hyphen) and/or *PH* (the abbreviation of Philippines) were included as well for filtering purposes. The former excluded tweets from other fandoms, and the latter those from the international community.

The researcher also saved and examined 60 screenshots published from July 2021 to February 2022 by the public Twitter account @bnsstruggles. Tweets published in this account were submitted by the K-pop BNS community through direct message (DM) and anonymized by either the sender or @bnsstruggles when the content is originally part of private correspondence. The account states in its pinned tweet that it takes down a screenshot if any of the involved requests its deletion. Twitter threads, DMs, Messenger conversations, and Shopee chats are posted there, but only data from Twitter was collected.

The researcher organized and analyzed the screenshots mainly to determine the common languages and structures of K-pop BNS tweets. These were the references for the mock tweets and DMs needed in the survey. Terms and expressions that do not appear in the previously mentioned BNS dictionaries but occur in the data were studied too.

Equally vital as the first source of data is the survey created on Google Forms and shared on Twitter and Facebook. Ethical considerations led to the standard inclusion of the research and participation details and the question for consent at the beginning of the survey. These were no longer placed in another document. Although names were optional, emails were noted for the limiting of responses and the sending of personally filled-out forms. The total number of respondents reached 82, and they met the following criteria: (a) at least 18 years old; (b) living in the Philippines; and (c) has an active K-pop BNS account on Twitter.

To justify the age requirement, although minors are present on BNS Twitter based on the researcher's knowledge and consulted articles for this paper, they must first obtain their parent's or legal guardian's permission before answering the survey. The process would have been difficult and inconvenient for the respondents and their guardians, hence this decision.

For the third criterion, bearing in mind the respondents' indispensable exposure to and use of K-pop BNS language in the space it can be observed best, they should be using an account that is separate from their primary fan or stan account.

With closed and open-ended elicitation questions, the survey was designed to take roughly 20 to 25 minutes of the respondents' time and had four major sections: "Profile," "K-pop BNS Twitter," "Transactions," and "Language and Communication."

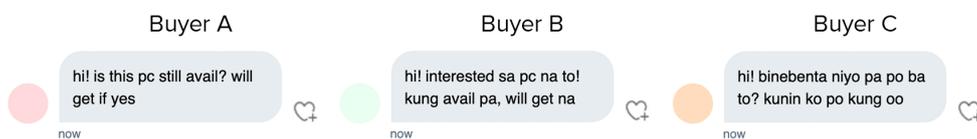
The respondents first had to provide personal data like their age, sex, occupation, languages, and monthly household income. In the succeeding section, the questions pertained to the respondents' K-pop BNS Twitter experience and estimated expenses on products and services including but not limited to photocards and delivery. This information contributed to the description of the group being researched. The third section focused on imagined transaction scenarios where the respondents acted as buyers and sellers and helped the researcher gauge language use and attitudes. They were shown simulated selling tweets and buying DMs (made with Fake Details Online Generator and TweetGen) and picked who they would interact with first out of three options.

Figure 1
Mock Selling Tweets in the Survey



The tweets were identical for the most part. One short sentence that expressed highly similar meanings served as a distinction as seen above. Seller A used English exclusively, while Seller B and Seller C code-switched. However, Seller C's sentence has one more Tagalog word than Seller B's. The verb *get* was substituted with Tagalog *bilhin* 'buy.'

Figure 2
Mock Buying DMs in the Survey



The buying DMs were different, with clearer language choices and a more personal approach. Buyer A's and Buyer C's DMs were completely monolingual, and Buyer B was the sole code-switcher in this case. Like with the selling tweets, some changes in meaning can be detected in the texts. Buyer B's DM lacks the explicit question regarding availability and the respect marker. Buyer C asked if the person is still selling the item. None of the phrases and sentences were literally translated and modified from English so as to avoid markedly unnatural constructions.

The respondents were asked to cite the reasons behind their selection, which would reveal language attitudes to a degree. Composing tweets and DMs of their own was another stage they passed in the same section of the survey. They were given prompts and situations where they inquired about a product and sent an offer to a potential buyer. The purpose of this elicitation activity was to have data demonstrating one-on-one communication in private (DMs), not only in public (tweets).

Lastly, the respondents answered a few more direct open-ended questions about the language on K-pop BNS Twitter, from styles to jargon. There was space for additional information in case they had anything else to share.

As a whole, this research is of a descriptive nature. The Twitter and survey data are analyzed in relation to the various models and theories in the literature review.

4 Key Findings and Discussion

In this chapter, the findings and analysis are presented together. Noteworthy tweets and screenshots are included, and the major results of the survey are summarized and explained. There is a subheading that addresses each of the three research problems. To simplify the content, the information here indicates who is part of K-pop BNS Twitter, how they verbally communicate, and what impacts their transactions. Remarks on language motivations and attitudes are also naturally incorporated for a rich discussion.

4.1 The Background and the Identity of the K-pop BNS Community

The survey revealed that the K-pop BNS community is dominated by young female merchandise collectors who belong to the middle class and speak Tagalog and English.

To discuss the participating age groups, the periods of development in other research (i.e., Simpson, 2018) are used as the primary reference:

Table 1
Age Groups of the Survey Respondents

Period	Age Range
Adolescence	Puberty to 18
Young Adulthood	18 to 22 or 25
Later Adulthood	Mid-20s and older

Ninety-six percent of the respondents are young adults aged 18 to 24. The most common age is 18 followed by 20 then 19. The minority have already entered their later adulthood; the three oldest respondents are 28, 30, and 31 respectively. Adolescents comprise the community as well, however. According to respondents, they have seen minors on K-pop BNS Twitter, and the youngest is merely 9 years old. Given the leading age group, not to mention the presence of minors, it is logical that most respondents are students and are still dependent. The remaining older adults are employed professionals.

Regarding biological sex, the number of females is 78 while that of males is 3. One out of 82 preferred not to say. Relatively connected to this is who they stan. More respondents were found to collect merchandise of boy groups, although some girl groups were also in the data.

Shifting the focus to the socioeconomic status of the respondents, this research adapted the income classification/data from the Philippine Institute of Development Studies (PIDS) (Padillo, 2022). In the survey, the values were rounded up and adjusted appropriately. The following table shows how many respondents are part of households receiving a certain amount of income every month and their corresponding class.

Table 2
Income Classes of the Survey Respondents

Monthly Household Income	Income Classification	Respondent Count
Php 11,000 or less	Poor	15
Php 11,001 to Php 22,000	Low Income	14
Php 22,001 to Php 44,000	Lower Middle Class	14
Php 44,001 to Php 77,000	Middle Class	20
Php 77,001 to Php 132,000	Upper Middle Income	9
Php 132,001 to Php 220,000	High Income	5
Php 220,001 and up	Rich	5
Total		82

Tallying the three levels of middle class, they form 52% or roughly half of the sample. As the income increased, the number of respondents decreased.

For language, each and every respondent unsurprisingly speaks Tagalog and English and code-switches. Eight of them know another Philippine language or foreign one: Bisaya, Kapampangan, Hiligaynon, Bahasa Indonesia, Mandarin Chinese, Korean, and Japanese. The last four would be useful to those doing international K-pop BNS.

In addition to the basic demographic information, the data suggest when the K-pop BNS Twitter community was at its peak in terms of account creation. More than half of the respondents joined the space in 2021, while the preceding year seemed to mark its official beginning. A respondent pointed out that prior to the pandemic, trades and transactions were still processed under stan accounts. Therefore, from this, it is justifiable that K-pop BNS Twitter was not formally launched until 2020.

This 2022, new people are taking part though, so the community is visibly continuing to grow. However, the same respondent above has a profound comment on this, wondering about the implications of the eventual return of concerts on the community. They said that collectors bought photocards since they “can’t spend on concerts.” Indeed, the fate of the K-pop BNS community on Twitter, specifically once pandemic-related restrictions are finally lifted and concerts are possible here, is something to ponder. Several K-pop groups are already holding or announcing world tours, and soon, Filipino fans might hear that the Philippines is one of the stops. Would the community easily collapse or proceed albeit operate differently? Quitting sales, ticket scalping, and the like could become prevalent. Door-to-door deliveries might drop as buyers and sellers can just communicate online but meet up and complete their transactions in person, which was done in the past anyway and may have reduced the risk of scamming. The products and processes of the marketplace are likely to evolve.

This photocard-to-concert preference when spending due to recent circumstances is neither the common nor the sole reason that the respondents are on K-pop BNS Twitter. The major motivations are personal, economic, and/or social. They are collectors and appreciate the convenience of buying, selling, and trading on this platform. They intend to generate income and funds. They like to establish clear distinctions, limiting the type of content on a certain account or facilitating transaction tracking. Boredom was mentioned again too. Others are influenced by family or friends or want social interactions.

4.2 Language and Communication on K-pop BNS Twitter

The tweets, screenshots, and survey responses exhibit the K-pop BNS community’s use of English and Tagalog, code-switching tendencies, and informal communication style. While sticking to one language exclusively is observable, this is not always standard and inconspicuous in public tweets, and more so in actual conversations between buyers and sellers. It is Taglish that can be labeled the norm, but each language, along with code-switching, is associated with particular contexts and purposes and regarded with varying attitudes. As for communication style, it is informal but arguably, attempts to give a sense of formality can be noticed sometimes. In this section, the components of a buying or selling tweet are set out first before the specifics on language and communication are further discussed.

4.2.1 The Content and Structure of K-pop BNS Tweets

The structure of a tweet on K-pop BNS Twitter is composed of most if not all of the following elements: main tags, account-specific hashtags, item name, item price, item status, item source, item condition, other fees (e.g., packing, international shipping), payment method, payment scheme, location, delivery method, ordering or offering instruction, other item-related tags, and additional messages. Their presence may depend on the purpose of the tweet, and their order is flexible. Some of the elements are not so straightforward and are elucidated below.

The main tags are the ones in the research methodology and used for filtering: *wts* and *lfb* or *wtb* and *lfs*. The other item-related tags are usually the expanded or longer versions of the acronyms and abbreviations in the same tweet. These tags notably do not have a preceding # symbol. If they do, space is kept between it and the first word. The account-specific hashtag categorizes a user's tweets so that their item catalog, wish-list, or feedback can be easily located and accessed. This is evidence that the community maximizes the features of Twitter and has a creative and systematic nature. There are lexical trends as well, with the hashtags being a combination of a username and often, the same English, Tagalog, or Taglish words: *sells*, *sales*, *onhand(s)*, and *bentables* 'item for sale.'

In *wts lfb* tweets, the additional messages can be a call for help to retweet, a statement or question for gauging interest, a simple directive to inquire or purchase, a reason why the seller is marketing a product or why someone should get it. On the other hand, the *wtb lfs* tweets can have a directive, but the interest check is inapplicable; what's more, the reason is addressed to sellers only, convincing them to make an offer to the one who tweeted. The message can also be anything else a buyer wants to say, usually an expression of their desire to have an item. Out of the types of additional messages, Dayag (2008) previously observed the directive speech act and the common citing of a reason in print ads. It is interesting that tweets, despite their need to be as concise as possible, would still include such.

Looking into why the elements are not always complete in the text, the reason could be that the omitted details are already in an attached picture, a pinned tweet, or Carrd. The poster is conscious that these might just add to the character count of a tweet or may simply not want to keep typing information that can be found on their profile with a few clicks.

The background of the study touched on the website Carrd, and a new relevant acronym was discovered in the data: *rcbyt* 'read Carrd before you transact.' Alternatively, the first two words of the sentence may be spelled out and followed by *byt*. The acronym must have been created because the sentence became mainstream and easily decipherable based on context.

What has been discussed thus far is all about linguistic text. However, it is essential to know that emojis and symbols are commonly embedded in the community's buying and selling tweets (and DMs to be tackled in a later section). These are for aesthetic purposes but have practical functions too. Each line has either, and it separates and possibly hints at the kind of information that follows.

☎ wts lfb ph | #██████sells ☎

comix a4 binder and 10pcs of preloved 9p hihaba sleeves

- 👉 P300 + lsf
- 👉 used but not abused
- 👉 dop: payo prio / 3 days res.
- 👉 mop: gcash
- 👉 mod: sco / ggx

(1) ☎ kpop photocard pc binder collection collect onhand

#██████_sells

☎ wts lfb wanna one ph

- 👉 ₱350 + pf + sf
- 👉 ₱100 dp & rb on Friday
- 👉 rcbyt ██████████.carrd.co

☞ reply mine or dm to claim/ more info ☺

(2) 📦 unsealed onhand kpop album ph w1 power of destiny romance version

wtb | lfs | ph

- a5 lucalab pink composition binder
- ok with used but must be in good condition
- budget is 800 if unused, 600 if used
- have sco or flash express as mod sana for cheap sf 🙄

dm me or reply if u have!

(3) 📦 kpop compo book photocard pc

4.2.2 Language Use and Attitudes

This part explains what languages are used on K-pop BNS Twitter and why and whether these are marked. It additionally deals with the respondents' views on the mock tweets, which tell of their attitudes towards the English, Tagalog, and code-switching.

English. Regardless of the source and the tags, K-pop BNS tweets that are only in English outnumber those that have Tagalog here and there or demonstrate code-switching. The published tweets and elicited ones are consistent in this.

It can be said that the prevalence of English is rooted in the official status of the language and the practice of borrowing. The jargon of the community is more English than Tagalog because some marketplace terms or expressions do not have succinct and

widely utilized translations into the native tongue. Instead of finding equivalents or resorting to any of the other translation techniques, the buyers and sellers who are English speakers anyway tend to just use the vocabulary as they see it, as in the mode acronyms and *used and abused* in (4). The latter is a common expression for pre-loved or secondhand goods that are still in decent condition.

#██████_sells

- ✿ WTS LFB PH
- ✿ 1P and 2P binder SET for 150 php
- ✿ MOP | GCASH
- ✿ MOD | SCO
- ✿ RSF | switching back to A5

These are used but not abused, if sensitive to scratches, please don't claim. Please manage your expectations. Pcs not included

(4)  Kpop binder colbook

The community borrows and expands the meaning and class of certain English words too, for example, *mine* in the ordering instruction of (5). The possessive personal pronoun is treated as a verb stem for an infinitive and means to claim or order the item in the selling tweet. There is also the *miner* variant, the noun form for it. Apparently, buyers may want assistance in *mining* an item. They would then look for a *god miner* or a person who a respondent said, “types fast, usually has a stable internet connection.” They would be “knowledgeable about third party apps such as Tweetdeck.” A *god miner* is implied to quickly and successfully secure an order because of these.

wts lfb

DECORATED TOPLOADERS

♥ ₱40 ea

mod: sco

mop: gcash

dop: payo / 4 days

tags: deco sticker ph for photocard pc kpop stray kids

(5) reply to mine

Considering the collected tweets, whether skeletal or packed with details and for selling or buying, English is used to convey information and appears to set a formal tone. In a way, this really does match the “broadcast” and “transnational” description of Andrei et al. (2015). The content of a K-pop BNS tweet, apart from the optional or addi-

tional message, is product or transaction specifics and frequently expressed in English which also allows the international market to connect with the local community.

The language should generally be deemed unmarked in this highly public context. However, incorporating private or two-way communication from the screenshots posted by @bnsstruggles and the elicited data from the survey in the analysis, English would be the marked language. DMs with pure English constructions totaled less than those with Tagalog or code-switched constituents. Nonetheless, here are two sample DMs composed by respondents, with (6) coming from a “sure buyer” and (7) from a seller:

(6) irene pc still avail? mine pls

(7) hi! i have this pc on your wishlist~ just reply if you're interested~!! 😊

The markedness of English is indicated by mixed attitudes towards it as well. Few respondents opted to engage with the entirely English mock selling tweet in the survey, and the way others felt about it was not that positive. Only nine respondents picked Seller A whose additional message was “pls get this.” This is already a small number, but five of them did not even pay attention to the language. They based it on the order of the mock tweets or the color of the seller’s profile. The rest described Seller A’s tweet as professional, clean, and formal, and one apologetically admitted to finding English speakers more trustworthy. Meanwhile, the negative comments are that Seller A sounded demanding, intimidating, unfriendly, and unnatural. These weaken the preliminary analysis that English is unmarked.

Yet switching perspectives from a buyer to a seller, English is seen differently, and the prestige factor cannot be ignored. Buyer A was the most popular among the respondents. Their DM was “hi! is this pc still avail? will get if yes.” Although some did refer to Buyer A as the first to DM, general thoughts on them were that they seemed trustworthy, credible, polite, kind, professional, and direct. Buyer A being perceived as trustworthy is undoubtedly relevant to the English speaker stereotype in the Philippines. To quote Hau and Tinio (2003), “English is the most prestigious language in the Philippines, and proficiency in English is associated with the Filipino elite” (p. 344). Individuals who communicate in straight English would then be seen as having high socioeconomic standing and wealth. A respondent actually said that Buyer A is an “Englsher” and “most likely won’t haggle.”

Tagalog. It is hard and uncommon to forgo using English in a marketplace where terms are naturally in that language. Although a completely Tagalog construction could undeniably occur on K-pop BNS Twitter, it does so much more rarely than English, this happening mainly in the DM context and with limits. Buying and selling tweets necessitate the English jargon after all. Nonetheless, the tweet component that usually has the potential to be expressed exclusively in Tagalog would be the additional message. This is best illustrated by *wtb lfs* tweets like (8) and (9).

wtb | lfs ph only !

ni-ki ☆≡

border: hakanai blue solo jacket pc

kailan ka uuwi saken 🌀🌀🌀

- (8) 📦 enhypen engene enha kpop album photocard da dd bdo bc jay
heeseung sunghoon sunoo jake jungwon polo noot noot pout riki

wtb lfs ph svt

mingyu attacca carver wink

budget 1-1.2k slightly flexi

pauwiin niyo na 😊

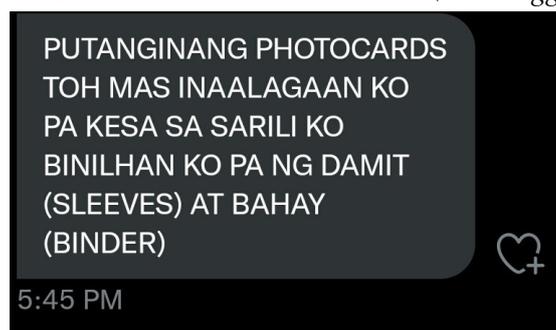
- (9) 📦 carat ver attacca pc photocard mingyu gyu seventeen bns kpop

Kailan ka uuwi saken can be translated rather literally as ‘when will you come home to me,’ and *pauwiin niyo na* as ‘let it [the photocard] come home already.’ The two sentences share the use of the Tagalog verb *uwi* ‘go/come home.’ The second has it sandwiched between the affixes *pa-* and *-in* though, and the message becomes a causative and directive.

This *uwi* concept is one of the significant parts about K-pop BNS Twitter language. Expressions with it are widespread. It is also related to two more Tagalog metaphors that the community has. In Figure 3, the person basically said that they take care of their photocards more than themselves by buying “clothes” and a “house” for them. These are individual plastic sleeves and a binder, important collector goods.

Figure 3

Screenshot of a DM About Photocard Sleeves and a Binder (bnsstruggles, 2021)



Once again, the analysis of Andrei et al. (2015) works here. It is possible to connect the *uwi* expression and the topic of home to the reason why the cited researchers dubbed

Tagalog as a visceral language. *Pauwiin niyo na* particularly hints at eagerness to buy something or frustration over not having the desired item yet. It is not only the emoji, a paralinguistic cue, which indicates the emotional content of the tweet (Aldunate & González-Ibáñez, 2017). If English is the language for information, then Tagalog is for emotion. For *damit* and *bahay*, these are personal like emotions and related to home.

On the markedness of Tagalog on K-pop BNS Twitter, it is rather variable at first glance. A selling or buying tweet is chiefly English, but the additional message may contain Tagalog terms and expressions such as those noted above which would not stand out and be analyzed as marked because they are already established and accepted by the community. In DMs, there are all-Tagalog texts and although scarce, these do look and feel normal, especially when the interlocutors are code-switching. Yet taking into account the analysis for English, communicating in one language wholly—Tagalog in this case—is just going to be the marked choice.

As for language attitudes, these were still mixed based on the survey data, comparable to the case of English. The Tagalog mock selling tweet was “*bilhin nyo na pls.*” It retained a single English word but was otherwise a monolingual construction. This was the second most chosen tweet by respondents. Friendly, approachable, familiar, considerate, trustworthy: these were some of the promising descriptions for Seller C given by the respondents. The sentence was also said to be ordinarily seen on K-pop BNS Twitter. However, it apparently had a tone of desperation, which can put off buyers. A couple of respondents avoided interacting with Seller C because of that. The opposite occurred too though. Those who recognized that desperation but were still willing to buy from Seller C thought of the urgency to get funds and the possibility to negotiate prices.

The DM “*hi binebenta niyo pa po ba to? kunin ko po kung oo*” garnered the least number of interested “sellers,” but the gap between the Tagalog and Taglish options is minimal. The most significant point from the data is that the addition of the enclitic *po* equated to respect won Buyer C respondents. The surveyed community members of K-pop BNS Twitter put much emphasis on respect, so this explanation is expected.

Code-switching. On K-pop BNS Twitter, code-switching is the conventional means of communication. Even without explicit confirmation from the respondents, this can be easily concluded from the other data. The finding is like that of Bautista (2004) and Smedley (2006). The emails and web blogs they analyzed had unmarked code-switching.

What the survey results notably prove is that Taglish is a middle-class language spoken by those who went to college like what Bautista (2004) stated. Many respondents were students, and at their ages they would be finishing senior high school, entering university, or taking undergraduate courses already. The lingua franca status of Taglish that Bautista claimed is also reflected in the data. Respondents whose first language is not Tagalog were in the sample, thus supporting yet another idea of Bautista (1999, as cited in 2004): that code-switching can be deficiency-driven.

However, K-pop BNS Taglish is more proficiency-driven; it is used for rapport and

communicative efficiency. The respondents liked friendly, comfortable, yet still polite communication which they achieved with Taglish, hence the normalcy of code-switching and preference for it. There are those who would really still adjust depending on the language of the other interlocutor though, and this particular survey finding corroborates CAT. Then, to reiterate, communicative efficiency is relevant. For example, in (10), the additional message would be longer if fully expressed in either Tagalog or English only (*kung parehong ver kukunin, 270 na lang and if getting both ver[sion], they'll just be 270 instead*). As for (11), it is not so much about reducing the words or the text length, but the message demonstrates a clearly cultural aspect through *po* and natural constituent insertion or proficient code-switching overall.

Actually, the respect marker is highly important. Some data were fundamentally English, and the code-switch was limited to the use of *po* as in (12) and (13). While this, along with a few survey responses, suggests that English is the matrix language in instances of code-switching on K-pop BNS Twitter, it is not absolute. Tagalog can be the matrix language instead.

wts lfb ph interest check!

VIVIZ Beam of Prism Unsealed Album

- P150 ea
- pb + cd + folded poster + postcard
- normal eta
- dop: payo
- if both ver kukunin, 270 na lang 🌟

reply/dm if interested! 💖

pls help rt

wtb lfs ic ph viviz sinb umji eunha kpop

(10)

may interested po ba sa txt unsealed albums? mostly chaos chapter albums pero we'll give random version po for each slot taker since limited lang po siya :)

t. bts enhypen skz exo nct astro twice itzy blackpink wts lfb wtb lfs ph onhand kpop

(11)

(12) Hi po!! can I see po the condi?? thank uuu!!

(13) hi po, mine can payo ^^
thank you so much po~

There are more examples of efficient Tagalog borrowing. *Kahati* in (14) is a Tagalog content word which if translated into English would have a less compact equivalent: someone you will share the set with. The idea is that buyers will split the total cost to get either of the items offered. *Hatian* 'the act of sharing or dividing (a whole)' is closely linked to but not identical to *tingi* culture on K-pop BNS Twitter. *Tingi* is defined

as “selling or sold at retail” (Tagalog-Dictionary.com, n.d.). In (15), through the phrase “can do *tingi*,” the seller indicated willingness to transact with a buyer who is interested in ordering only one of the two photocards.

WTS | LFB PH

Sunoo no selca and yet pola- 540

Selling as set but can look for kahati
On hand

Mop: gcash
Dop: payo / 3 days reservation
Mod: ggx / sco

(14) 📎 Enhypen Sunoo

☞ ic check! wts/lfb ph ☞ ...

- ☞ op2 & carat ver pc
- ☞ ₱380 set / 360 if payo
- ☞ can do tingi 200 ea
- ☞ on hand

- * mint condition
- * mop: gcash
- * mod: ggx

— rts are much appreciated

(15) 📎 seventeen dino lee chan future of kpop carat ver pc

Communicative efficiency is shown by the use of *pasalo* in (16) and (17) as well. This term is not unique to K-pop BNS Twitter. It is “loan assumption,” “assume balance,” or literally “bearing someone else’s debt” in English (Lamudi, 2020). Buyers become sellers when they do *pasalo*. The practice is common but probably not tolerated or allowed by all because it may complicate transactions. The original seller or shop might not agree to ship out an item to the new buyer. There would be a middle man to take care of the process.

wts lfb ph

1 pasalo slot Enhypen Dimension : Senkou Solo Jacket - Heeseung

- from a trusted Kpop shop
- will give discount for slot taker (will send thru gcash)
- Weverse Global

dm me! ^^

(16) 🛒 enhypen dimension senkou solo jacket heeseung wv global

wtb lfs nct ph

- chenle reso kihno
- 700-800 max budget
- pabili po 🤔🤔🤔 desrb ko naman to chariz
- can do pasalo but for feta lang sana

(17)

The *can do* + Tagalog verb combination in (15) and (17) is reminiscent of *make* + Tagalog verb, a distinct pattern in Conyo English. For context, this is a sociolect associated with the upper classes and differentiated from Taglish for its less smooth code-switches and exaggerated and playful quality (Borlongan, 2015). When Conyo English speakers use a Tagalog verb, they may either directly apply English conjugation rules to it or insert *make* before the native term which is “low frequency,” often in root form or possibly with the causative affix *pa-* (Borlongan, 2015; Lim, 2019).

The English pluralization of Tagalog content morphemes is a Conyo English feature (Lim, 2019) that materialized in the data too. To illustrate, *lapags* takes the pluralizer *-s*. (Abad, 2021b) says that *lapag* is “used to describe when a seller is about to sell several photocards or merchandise (usually unsealed), hence, they are ‘up for claims’” (para. 20). According to a respondent, it is the “act of posting a willing to sell tweet.” With the pluralizer, the word *lapags* refers to the multiple selling tweets or the different products. One more example would be *bentables* or “things for sale” (Gloria, 2022, para. 9). Dissecting this, it is the Tagalog verb *benta* ‘sell,’ the suffix *-able*, plus the pluralizer *-s*. The term *pasabuys* can be considered Taglish linguistic play and is also pluralized according to English grammar. It is derived from *sabay* ‘simultaneous’ or ‘together.’ The change in spelling results in a clever meaning: ‘to buy together.’ *Pasabuy* is Taglish for *group order*.

One last construction that would be regarded as Conyo English is “so much” or “saur much” because of its exaggerated tone in the K-pop BNS Twitter context. It acts as an intensifier and follows a phrase, adjectival in many cases. The examples from the tweets and survey and their translations are as follows:

inch so much	very interested
need <i>pera</i> so much	I really need money
<i>pabili</i> so much	I’d really like to buy
<i>pogi</i> so much	so handsome

Conyo English is worth mentioning not only because of the linguistic evidence above but also two respondents' reference to it, looking at the Taglish mock tweet "get *nyo na pls*" and DM "hi! interested *sa pc na to! kung avail pa, will get na.*" They had relatively implicit socioeconomic assumptions about Seller B and Buyer B respectively. Being "more Conyo," Seller A was considered trustworthy and having "more personality." The second description reinforces the statement of Borlongan (2015) regarding Conyo English—that it is felt to be exaggerated and playful. For Buyer B, the remark was that they seemed to be a Conyo English speaker who had obviously been on Twitter for long so the probability of scamming was lower.

Going back to the broader type of Taglish code-switching, it was viewed positively. The mock selling tweet was the pick of most, with 44 respondents. Seller B was friendly, natural, casual, warm, and approachable to them. The respondents themselves used similar constructions also, so it was the relatable choice and what resonated. This was the explanation of some respondents who gravitated towards Buyer B, and one noted that they experienced being messaged like that by many buyers.

The Communication Style. Together with the recurring acronyms and abbreviations, emojis and symbols cement the notion that K-pop BNS Twitter utilizes an informal communication style. Recall how Deng et al. (2020) evaluated informality. They examined the percentage of emojis, contractions, informal punctuations, and personal pronouns, though only the first three were considered in this study. Emojis and symbols can be plentiful because of a conventional tweet's bullet format, and in DMs, these help make a person come across as sociable rather than stiff. CMC is said to be "cold" oftentimes; emoticons thaw it and compensate for the missing facial expressions and social cues (Aldunate & González-Ibáñez, 2017). Interestingly, in one research, they were used by friends more than strangers and frequency increased when the context was positive (Derks et al., 2008). With K-pop BNS Twitter, the relationship seems irrelevant, or perhaps, the core stan identity breaks down the stranger barrier a little, so emoticons as a whole are ordinary to the community. Contractions have a different definition from acronyms and abbreviations, but the fact is that they are shorter forms and likewise ordinarily appear. Informal punctuations are used by the community as well.

Lastly, the flouting of capitalization rules is something to consider. Lowercase letters were typically utilized even for proper nouns. While Deng et al. (2020) are not concerned with this, it is significant in tweets and contributes to the informality.

Despite these observations, some word choices such as the adverb *hence* and the verb *disclose* in (18) and (19) respectively have to be acknowledged. These suggest that there are buyers and sellers who may favor a formal style. This could be due to the nature of their activity; they are doing business, which is generally formal.

LIM

wts lfb| ph
🛒 Mark Arrival PC
🛒 Php 1,000
🛒 clean! Bought from Mercari Japan hence the price
🛒 MOP: Gcash
🛒 MOD: shopee c/o via J&T

👉 wts mark arrival nct 2020 resonance pt 2 pc ph

(18) Help rt!

wtb lfs ph

soobin tcc: freeze you photocard

- budget: 280-300: can payo :>
- minimal flaws are okay as long as they are disclosed
- pls dm me offers or reply below
- will take lowest offer

(19) # txt freeze you soobin version kpop pc photocard

4.3 Factors Affecting Transactions

Apart from lack or absence of feedback and warning signs of scamming like unresponsiveness, rudeness and overfamiliarity are the primary factors that would make the respondents think twice about pushing through with a transaction and cancel the order.

Rudeness is felt by interlocutors in different kinds of situations: when they are not addressed with *po* or *opo*, when they are exposed to profanities or any inappropriate words, and when they are being patronized or even bossed around. The survey sample mostly used Tagalog respect markers; for some, it depended on the age difference or level of closeness. Just the omission of *po* and *opo* is probably not enough to prevent a transaction. However, there were respondents who were self-aware that they may appear rude if they did not add these to their messages. Filipino culture is responsible for the habit and expectation of these markers. Buyers and sellers recognize the importance of maintaining polite and respectful communication, and *po* and *opo* are two linguistic forms that allow this. Regarding profanities and inappropriate words, these are simply unacceptable and offensive, in or outside the K-pop BNS context. For the act of patronizing and demanding, one respondent mentioned *ha*. They must have meant the Tagalog particle which requests repetition and clarification and expresses a hint of surprise or reproach (Tagalog-Dictionary.com, n.d.). The respondent did not elaborate, but they said it would be placed at the end of a sentence. A possible example for this would then be “send me the picture *ha*.” The given description does not capture how the particle is utilized here though. *Ha* functions like English *okay* with a question mark

in the sentence. The speaker wants the listener to acknowledge and confirm their understanding of the instruction, and a sense of impatience and insistence may be there.

Meanwhile, overfamiliarity has to do with slang and gendered terms that are usually reserved for close friends only and plain oversharing. Below are example terms provided by the respondents, with explanations from a Reddit post and Urban Dictionary. A respondent claimed that most scammers they encountered had used the like. This is an interesting point because scammers are possibly from a lower socioeconomic level, and slang is commonly attributed to or at least linked to it (Guzman, 2017). From another perspective, the set of terms originating from *mommy* is feminine and may not sit well with a person with a different gender identity. Part of the community is critical of non-gender sensitive language.

beh/bhiee	shortened forms of <i>baby</i>
bes	shortened form of <i>best friend</i>
ma/mamsh/mi/mii/mhie	shortened forms of <i>mommy</i>

(midziie, 2021; Samwan Ober Da Reynbow, 2016)

On oversharing, to quote a respondent, “that’s just uncomfortable since I’m here as a seller, not a friend.” This shows that even if those on K-pop BNS Twitter may be drawn to a friendly and casual communication style, they would still expect and hope for consideration of personal boundaries and formality. For the sake of a smooth professional transaction, some distance should still be kept between the buyer and seller.

Generally unclear communication would also deter the respondents from continuing a transaction. For example, the way a message is typed or presented can be too unconventional and hard to read. One respondent put the following example: “mH3r0n p1 4Qu0h nuNg pH07oc4rD n4 h1n4h4n4p n3o.” In Tagalog, the text is ‘meron po ako nung photocard na hinahanap niyo’; in English, ‘I have the photocard that you’re looking for.’ This is Jejenese, the slang of the Jejemon subculture of the Philippines that formed in the 2010s (The Freeman, 2016). The respondent’s Jejenese example is significant, given most of the subculture’s socioeconomic status; jejemons are usually from the lower classes. It is like the analysis about the correlation between gendered terms and scamming, although a buyer or seller who uses Jejenese may just seem unserious. Perhaps, they would be perceived as pranksters rather than complete scammers. One might either play along or ignore the Jejenese user altogether.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study aimed to inquire into the identity and general communication of the Filipino K-pop BNS Twitter community. With hundreds of tweets and elicited data from a sample, notable characteristics and linguistic behavior and preferences were realized. Composing the community are fan-turned-collectors of different age groups, socioeconomic classes, and genders who speak Tagalog and English, mixing and alternating between the two. However, many of them are young female middle-class individuals.

They have their own reasons for joining and staying on K-pop BNS Twitter; these include conveniently finding sources of and markets for idol (group) merchandise and socializing with friends whether met online or known personally. The community primarily code-switches and uses an informal communication style. Nonetheless, straight English can be observed on the social media platform. Much of K-pop BNS jargon is in this language. It carries essential information to local and international buyers and sellers of K-pop goods, through public tweets which are distinctly structured and patterned. Tagalog, on the other hand, is used to express emotions and reflect what is personal, native, or cultural (e.g., *po*, *tingi*). Code-switching is done to get messages across efficiently and amicably in general, regardless of the fluency of the speaker in either of the discussed languages. It is the unmarked and preferred way of communicating on K-pop BNS Twitter, and there are two varieties present: standard Taglish and Conyo English. When a person does not code-switch, they may seem unnatural, distant, or demanding. It should be noted that in connection with socioeconomic classification, English and Conyo English are associated with those who have the financial capability to purchase a product, and so the speaker of such could appear trustworthy. The opposite applies to Tagalog as it may receive a less positive reaction when gendered terms and slang, usually traced to lower socioeconomic classes, are used. Focusing on communication-related factors that affect transactions though, the following would be the major ones: rudeness, overfamiliarity, and unclarity.

Overall, the research explained the general language use and attitudes of a particular online group and provided more knowledge about Taglish code-switching in CMC. The data pointed to the relevance of prestige and stigma, reflected cultural aspects, and showed language's potential impacts on business. Other unique terms and constructions such as *so much* were also described. The research is essentially a pioneering sociolinguistic guide to K-pop BNS Twitter and an additional reference for code-switching, both Taglish and Conyo English. It would be most helpful to future researchers of the K-pop BNS subculture, primarily linguists, sociologists, and anthropologists.

The study admittedly has weaknesses. With a manual tweet collection method and limited time, the total amount of analyzed data was not as extensive, and so the points were more generalized. The survey was flawed as well. The L1 and L2 of the respondents were not clarified, but this could have been related to the income classes. For the sample, having a bigger number of male respondents would be advantageous; perhaps there are researchers interested in using a gender-centric approach. Focus group discussions are especially recommended as a data gathering method in this case.

What else future researchers can look into would be linguistic trends and patterns in the terms and conditions or Carrd of those on K-pop BNS Twitter. The way individual sellers write and present information can be compared and contrasted with that of big, established shops. Specifically, the degree of formality of the text would be interesting.

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7 Appendix

Glossary of K-pop BNS Jargon

K-pop BNS terms and expressions encountered during the research are shown below. These are arranged alphabetically, presented with related forms, and defined based on various sources. The main ones are the community's compilations and online articles, but other tweets, dictionaries, and the survey responses also greatly helped in the making of this list.

avail	available
<i>bahay</i>	photocard binder
bayo	<i>bayad</i> 'pay' as you order
bb	buying ban
ebbg	extreme buying ban game; a person will temporarily halt buying activities for a certain time period
<i>bentable(s)</i>	item for sale
bidding	item is sold to the buyer with the highest offer
binder	storage for photocards or other paper goods
bns	buy and sell
clean	item without flaws or damage
coll book	collect book
coll break	collection break
condi	condition
<i>damit</i>	(archival) photocard sleeves
deets	details

digibook	a type of album where the photobook and CD case are combined
doo	deadline of orders
dop	deadline of payment
dp	downpayment
ea	each
equiv	equivalent
eta	estimated time of arrival
feta	fast estimated time of arrival; 1 to 4 weeks
leta	long estimated time of arrival; 4 to 7 months
neta	normal estimated time of arrival; 1 to 3 months
faq(s)	frequently asked questions
feedback(s)	transaction comments from a customer
filler	paper used as a substitute for a photocard yet to be bought or something to merely fill the empty space on a binder page/sleeve
flexi	flexible
ga	giveaway
ggx	Gogo Xpress (a mode of delivery)
go	group order
gom	group order manager
ic	interest check
inch	interested
iso	in search of
jc	jewel case (for CDs)
<i>kahati</i>	someone to split a set with
<i>kilabot</i> line	the more popular members of a K-pop group
<i>lapag(s)</i>	item for sale; selling tweet; to sell and post an item
ld	lucky draw; an official event where a buyer gets a random variation of an item
lf	looking for
lfb	looking for buyer
lfs	looking for seller
lft	looking for trader
lowballer	one who gives an offer that is lower than acceptable
lyric book	a pamphlet containing the lyrics of all the songs on an album
mail	a common term included in a buyer's hashtag for feedback on other sellers
Mercari	an online Japanese marketplace where K-Pop goods can also be found
mine	to claim or order an item
miner(s)	person who claims or orders an item
god miner(s)	someone who claims or orders quickly
mint	item is new or has no flaws

mm	Metro Manila
mod	mode of delivery
moot	mutual; someone who is following the speaker back
mop	mode of payment
mp	market price
nfs	not for sale
snfs	strictly not for sale
ob	outbox
oc	order confirmation
onhand(s)	item that is already with the seller
oomf(s)	one of my followers
non oomf(s)	someone who is not a follower of the speaker
oop	out of print
oos	out of stock
op	overpriced
<i>papel(s)</i>	photocards and other paper goods (e.g., postcards)
<i>pasabuy(s)</i>	group order; to order together
<i>pasalo</i>	to assume balance
payo	pay as you order
pb	photobook
pc	photocard; postcard
pf	packing fee which covers needed materials
<i>pi</i>	misspelling of the Tagalog respect marker <i>po</i>
po	preorder; to order an item before its actual production or official release
pob	preorder benefits; a benefit limited to preorders
poca	photocard
prio(s)	priority; one's most desired merchandise
proof(s)	customer feedback (for credibility)
qs	quitting sale
qyop	quote your own price
rb/rembal	remaining balance
rcbyt	read Carrd before you transact
res	reserve; reservation
rfs	reason for selling
saur/so much	emphasizes a statement; follows an adjective or verb
sco	Shopee checkout (a mode of delivery)
sdd	same-day delivery
sf	shipping fee
cbsf	combined shipment; multiple orders will be delivered together when onhand
isf	international shipping fee
lsf	local shipping fee

sg	season's greetings; an annually released merchandise package with assorted inclusions like a calendar and photocards
sleeve	a flat plastic protective cover for photocards
sparks collector	one who collects photocards that "spark joy" or cause <i>kilig</i>
stbo	soon to be on hand
t	tags
tc	trading card
t&c(s)	terms and conditions
template	a regularly updated digital compilation of (all) the photocards of an idol
<i>tingi</i>	to sell at retail
toploader	a plastic case for photocards and other paper goods (thicker and harder than a sleeve)
trader	one who trades merchandise
ufs	up for selling/sale
uft	up for trading/trade
ums	Universal Music Store
up	update post
wl	wishlist
wt	want/willing to
wtb	want/willing to buy
wts	want/willing to sell
ww	worldwide
yd/ <i>yangdo</i>	Korean BNS
zyz	<i>Yizhiyu</i> , a Chinese company that sells albums with exclusive benefits
zyz r(number)	<i>Yizhiyu</i> round; the sales/fansign round which the exclusive benefit is from