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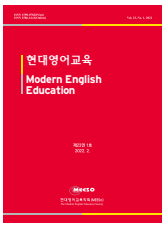

Hip-hop and English Education for Korean EFL Learners: An Investigation of Hip-hop English Content on YouTube

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ABSTRACT

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The majority of English as Foreign Language (EFL) practitioners think hip-hop and English education in South Korea are incompatible, partly due to the lack of academic discussion about the use of hip-hop for EFL education. This paper examines how hip-hop is utilized in online discourse to teach Korean learners English. This study's findings showcase that hip-hop provides Korean EFL learners with unique opportunities to learn the English language and culture in an original way that may look different from the public English education method. In terms of language, hip-hop content is used to teach hip-hop community vocabulary, localized English, the translanguaging of vocabulary pronunciation, English expressions in certain contexts, and rap poeticism via rhyming. Regarding culture, hip-hop content is used to explain the tension between Asians and Black Americans in the US, and provides an Asian woman's narrative of Black culture. The findings suggest that hip-hop benefits Korean EFL learners in many ways. There is a strong need for more in-depth research on the best ways to utilize hip-hop for Korean EFL curriculum and to provide practical guidelines to practitioners.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hip-hop, which originated in the US as an urban youth culture (Kearse, 2006) to be "a way of expression in dance, music, word/song" (Westbrook, 2002, p. 64), has attracted global audiences and created the global hip-hop nation (GHHN) (Alim et al., 2009) that evolves new comprehensive culture. Among many East Asian countries is Korea where hip-hop has been a prominent localized culture (M. S. Song, 2019). Hip-hop localization research in the field of applied linguistics has recently explored various issues ranging from the localization of African American English (AAE) (Lee, 2007, 2011) and strategies of using linguistic resources for rhyming (J. Park, 2016; J. Park, 2020) to recontextualization of American hip-hop ideologies (J. Im, 2020a; Lee, 2010). Available literature, however, suggests that hip-hop has not been strongly appealing as a language teaching tool for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) researchers and teachers, made obvious by the extreme scarcity of published articles and conference presentations debating its pedagogical value.

Educational discourse in the US, for example, has actively sought to reframe literacy education from hip-hop perspective, inviting researchers, teachers, students, and artists to flesh out how to make education more inclusive and focused on critical thinking (Petchauer, 2009). Narrowing the scope to literacy education, hip-hop seeks to demystify its misunderstanding about inappropriateness as a source of teaching (Love, 2015) and highlights a poetic perspective of literacy practice (Bradley, 2017), pedagogical benefits that increase literacy skills (Alex-

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ander-Smith, 2004; Hill, 2006; Stovall, 2006), function as a safe space for marginalized students to express their voices (Alim, 2007; Belle, 2016; Petchauer, 2020), and the coexistence of street knowledge into public education (Grewal, 2020). In contrast, teachers and learners of English in Korea seem to be less interested in exploring educational potential of hip-hop for English education in a *hip-hop* way. Although there is some research on the use of hip-hop for improving linguistic aspects of EFL learners (e.g., T. Hwang, 2017; D. Jeong & B. Lee, 2011), it seems that not only was their curriculum based on a superficial understanding of hip-hop, but there was also a discrepancy between Korean EFL education and hip-hop-based education (HHBE) in the US regarding what it means to *be* and *do* hip-hop for education. While hip-hop in global educational contexts, including the TESOL setting, is often regarded as a comprehensive culture and an approach that must embrace critical understanding of race, language, identity, and power issues (e.g., Barrett, 2013; J. Im, 2020b; Pennycook, 1999, 2021), Korean English language teaching (ELT) may not fully grasp the crux of hip-hop as a comprehensive culture. This lack of interest could result in the overlooking of diverse practical and critical aspects of EFL learning that hip-hop can bring to Korean EFL speakers.

We may guess the cause of the exclusion of hip-hop in the EFL contexts from previous research that revealed how native-speakerism is locally realized in the expanding circle where English is not spoken for intranational communication. For example, Black teachers often experience discrimination due to their "blackness" (Charles, 2019), and white Caucasian English teachers are highly preferred in job markets (Ruecker & Ives, 2015). Moreover, public educational discourses tend to exclude non-white American cultures, as shown in textbooks (I. Lee, 2011; H. Song, 2013) and the English immersion program (J. Im & C. Jung, 2018) where hip-hop and African American culture are not considered necessary components of American and global culture that EFL learners today need to know.

Despite a dearth of evidence of hip-hop used for English education in many public educational settings in Korea, online discourse, as will be discussed throughout the paper, has begun encompassing the presence of hip-hop in teaching English. Online discourse has been suggested as an educational platform that plays a critical role for language education particularly whereby learners can be invested in developing multiple identities that go beyond a traditional sense of language learner (Lam, 2000). Unlike traditional public educational discourse that has more strict regulations and thus is not easy to take a literal stance toward a new phenomenon like hip-hop, online platforms as affinity spaces that welcome and engage new members and resources to be part of learning (Gee, 2017) should be relatively free to transform a seemingly unrelated pop culture into something that has educational value. To add more to the academic discussion on the issue of hip-hop and EFL education, this study aims to explore the ways hip-hop is used for Korean ELT via the popular online platform YouTube. This is an investigation of the out-of-class discourse whose importance is rapidly increasing in the era of online digital education. The expected outcome is to provide educators a chance to make better sense of how hip-hop in youth culture creates new ways of teaching and learning English. The following two questions were used to facilitate this research:

1) Which aspects of English teaching and learning are fulfilled by the hip-hop English education content?
2) How is hip-hop contextualized on YouTube when it is used to teach English to Koreans?

In the following section, the review on how hip-hop has been used to teach language and culture in both US educational discourse and Korean ELT will be provided. After reviewing previous studies, a procedure of collecting YouTube contents of hip-hop English teaching will be followed by an analysis process. Findings will be presented using a two-pronged approach. The first prong is language and the second is culture. This paper ends with teaching implications and directions for further research on this topic.

Before proceeding to the review of literature, it must be clearly noted about the scope of hip-hop in this paper. Hip-hop is never simply a genre of music but a comprehensive culture that is still evolving and cannot be easily defined. This study focuses on the presence of hip-hop in EFL education in online discourse and seeks to approach hip-hop as a type of musical and visual media that largely represents an aspect of American culture. This is because, as will be seen in the findings, hip-hop is limitedly understood and only certain aspects of it are used for the purpose of teaching English in non-US educational settings. Thus, instead of allocating space to the discussion of the history of hip-hop and its growth as a global youth culture, this study acknowledges the limited understanding of hip-hop the Korean YouTube channels have when using it as ELT materials (see Chang, 2005 for a detailed chronicle of hip-hop).

II. REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

1. Hip-hop for Language Learning

Previous studies on using hip-hop for language teaching showcase its usefulness for teaching vocabulary. Studies found ways to help both native speakers of English and EFL learners engage in meaningful learning. For teaching native English speakers high-level vocabulary, hip-hop's rhythmic language presentation can be fully utilized to help students retain difficult words and expressions in the long run (Baugh, 1999). Dependency on hip-hop-based representation of linguistic cues is also reported to be helpful in improving such aspects as phonological awareness and letter and sound recognition for young EFL learners

and in positively influencing the learners' affective domain (T. Hwang, 2017; D. Jeong & B. Lee, 2011). Despite reported usefulness from the research on Korean EFL learners, it was less clearly defended if their way of teaching English could be based on hip-hop. That is, a question remains if rap-like language input to EFL speakers is either a part of traditional song and chant method or a new hip-hop-based teaching practice.

Two more examples of using hip-hop for EFL learners in Korea were set at a local radio program and a classroom both of which employ the same technique as shown from the aforementioned two research. Regarding the former, Busan English Broadcasting provides a program called *Hip-Hop English* produced by Canadian radio producer Chad Kirton, aka DJ Chad, according to his self-introduction. In his show, DJ Chad presents certain English expressions over a hip-hop beat, rapping simple phrases multiple times. In 2017, it was announced that this show, which at the time had approximately 90 episodes, would be provided to elementary, middle, and high schools in Busan, Korea with the expectation that learners could discover useful expressions through stress-free and culturally trendy content. Similarly, another program from the Korean Educational Broadcasting System (EBS) that looks for the best English teachers in public education selected a male middle school teacher, Mr. Park, to showcase how his class aimed to improve their English proficiency by giving a hip-hop concert[1]. In an episode that broadcasted Mr. Park's class, he used a similar technique to DJ Chad, repeatedly providing grammar patterns and vocabulary over a rhythmic beat. Students in his class enjoyed learning English by actively participating in a multimodal way. What made their class active was that students not only consumed the beat-based language input, but they also dressed like a hip-hop artist and produced their own English sentences that contained target expressions in order to perform a short concert in the classroom. These two cases are the example of how hip-hop has been regarded as a source of Korean ELT. Hip-hop is arguably always understood as no more than a way of presenting linguistic elements, in which students' language background was not included nor was that of teachers.

Regarding the variety of English dialects, English dubbed animations such as Lion King and Dumbo can provide Korean EFL learners with a chance to taste the diversity of the English language, including AAE (J. Baik, 2001). In the animations, some characters speak AAE, with which Korean learners of English may not be familiar. Having this learning opportunity would be beneficial to help raise Korean English learners' awareness of world Englishes (H. Ahn, 2017; K. Y. Lee, 2012) to disrupt the one-language-one-nation myth and to figure out how AAE is localized in Korean hip-hop too (Lee, 2007, 2011). One important thing to note about using this type of pop culture media is that AAE in animated movies is closely related to the bias representation of race and ethnicity in the US in that many villain characters speak AAE. Thus, not only would media materials with different English accents and characters be helpful for language awareness but they can also be used to create a discussion about how a certain group of people's language is discriminatively selected to describe their identity negatively.

The empirical studies and teaching practices reported in Korea both commonly use hip-hop for teaching English by delivering English input to EFL learners via the hip-hop music beat. Hip-hop's musical aspect is always foregrounded as an effective avenue to help keep learners inspired, which eventually resulted in the exclusion of other complicated and dynamic aspects of hip-hop and the conceptualization of hip-hop as a mechanical teaching technique.

2. Hip-hop for Culture Learning

The crux of teaching culture by using hip-hop, particularly from the perspective of HHBE in the US (e.g., Love, 2015), is to invite students with their collective funds of knowledge into the classroom (Moll et al., 1992) and allow students and teachers to mutually construct and join communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The students' home narratives become a source through which others can understand American society from Black people's perspectives. Also, Black students are given a platform to express their voices regarding social issues they experience in the form of hip-hop performance, which can be empowering for them (Kelly, 2020). Hip-hop is also used as, what Atkinson (1997) and Pennycook (1999) call, a critical approach to develop criticality of learners, urging them to consider the ways power relations in society and various social issues caused by it are addressed in text. That is, showcasing a certain type of hip-hop is useful for learners to develop the ideological point of view – the "set of values, or belief system, communicated by the language of the text" (Fowler, 1996, p. 165) – about their own cultural and social issues. Stovall (2006), for example, used lyrics of less commercially oriented hip-hop music and challenged students to use critical thinking to discover the link between hip-hop and the literary works that they were reading in school. In this way, the students were able to find similarities and differences in how African Americans have reacted to social justice issues in the US, making this an interactive "critical and criticism-stimulating activity" (Shor, 1980, p. 95). In a similar study, Morrell and Duncan-Andrade's (2002) classroom activity showed how teachers can combine literature and hip-hop for a literacy class. By using American writer T.S. Eliot and DJ and rapper Grandmaster Flash's accounts of devastation in their communities, the instructor was able to fa-

[1] An English teacher who uses hip-hop elements in teaching middle school English from EBS show The Best English Teacher https://home.ebse.co.kr/best_teacher/replay/3/list?courseId=ER2011T0BET01ZZ&stepId=ET2011T0BET0101#mp4_player (accessed in July 2021)

cilitate students' discussion about linkages between social commentary in canonical poetry and hip-hop music.

While HHBE in the US can be connected to the culture of students and teachers and its inclusion in the classroom can often be regarded as a reflection of that classroom's real-life stories, the context of hip-hop in EFL education differs significantly. This is partly because of the status of English in EFL where English is not a shared language among students and teachers. Moreover, since students and teachers may not find a direct link between hip-hop culture and their own life, it may be difficult to expect to see the same usage of hip-hop in Korean educational discourse. Thus, hip-hop is at best an indirect source for viewing American culture from different perspectives. For Korea, J. Im (2020b) suggests using American hip-hop media to teach an aspect of American culture today that EFL textbooks often neglect. His argument includes using media that contains stories of real people so students can see, for example, how racial discrimination and marginalization in society impacts people and how they seek to overcome those difficulties. In doing so, the straightforward, aggressive lyrics of American rappers can be understood, not as a mere glorification of violence, but as the only way they feel they can make their voices heard to the public. Regarding such social issues, learners can also observe how hip-hop artists have been influenced by political leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcom X, and how their messages are intertwined, suggesting different paths through which people can stand against racial discrimination. K. Kim (2007) also included a similar perspective on the use of movies in teaching English in Korea, focusing on the cultural significance. By choosing a movie and a rap song that dealt with the conflict between Black people and the Korean community in the US, the teacher could easily shift to a culture lesson and talk about the cultural tension that caused the 1992 Los Angeles riots.

In a similar vein, D. Lee and H. Lee (2020) explored a music video called "This is America" by African American rapper and actor Childish Gambino to showcase how the music video is an interactional discourse of social and political ideologies and issues. Their analysis revealed how entertainment-based modalities such as choreography were used to represent racial discrimination happening in the US where Black people's lives are in danger. It also found intertextuality which made visible the way semiotics in the music video represented America's historically constructed perception of people of color and how the artist's stance against racial discrimination had been overlooked by society. Although they did not intend for their study to be used for EFL pedagogy, the media source they critically analyzed, as suggested by J. Im (2020b), can be applied to Korean ELT for teaching culture.

Regardless of whether a study is focused on language or culture, hip-hop is seldom researched in Korean ELT which has left us unknowledgeable about how it is used in an out-of-school context. As previous research on online discourse and literacy development showcased, online discourse has functioned as an alternative to public education whereby learners can invest in creative and unconventional ways and develop new learner identities. Thus, online discourse, more specifically YouTube which provides hip-hop English education content as this study explores, is worthy researching.

III. METHODS

1. Data Collection

Paulus and Lester (2021) were referred to for general guidelines concerning conducting qualitative research in a digital space and the ethical considerations of using online data. The current study chose a specific online discourse – YouTube – because Korean people spend the most time on the platform among other social media platforms (D. Oh & H. Kim, 2019) and less explored ELT materials have been recently emerging (i.e., hip-hop-based English teaching content). The accessibility of YouTube and the existence of the users' public accounts, which differs from traditional data collection methods that require much more complicated considerations for access, made the data collection process feasible. To generate data qualitatively, the keyword searches "hip-hop education" and "hip-hop English," both typed in Korean and English, were used to search content from December 2020 to August 2021. Among many search results, 13 YouTube channels were selected because they specifically provided English education content based on both American and Korean hip-hop. From these pages having approximately 100 to 200,000 subscribers, 105 clips containing hip-hop and English education topics were selectively chosen. In determining the inclusion of a clip into the data set, the criteria depended on the content creator's own description of the purpose of their content first, that is whether they explicitly mention they explicitly state that the purpose of the video to teach English. In the generation of the data corpus, each selected clip's brief description was also made to indicate purpose, target audience, length, theme, etc. And, for those that did not explicitly mention the purpose, the researcher sought to figure out if there are pedagogically beneficial aspects for Korean EFL speakers. For example, a clip that explains hip-hop rhyming technique was originally made for amateur rappers. But its linguistic analysis of the English language and explanation on the English hip-hop terms were regarded as potential ELT materials in that they were targeted at Korean speakers who are assumed to be less familiar with English. Videos that have less to do with teaching or learning were excluded such as clips that merely provide translation of lyrics, music release news, or accounts of rappers' personal lives.

All data collected were relatively short, approximately 10 minutes long, except for those from *Brys Channel* (Table 1). All content was made by Korean or Korean-American YouTubers. Korean was the primary language of the content, while several bilingual speakers actively use Korean and English. It is acknowledged that the search results may

differ according to country lock, language restriction, an individual's YouTube subscription, the viewer's browsing history, and other elements that could influence YouTube's search algorithm.

Acknowledging flexibility in conducting digital qualitative research and that no hard-and-fast rule must be followed in dealing with ethical issues, Paulus and Lester (2021) suggest minimizing any potential harm to participants, protecting identity of participants, and reflecting the researcher's own practice. The inclusion of preexisting, publicly open content from the aforementioned YouTube channels would not cause harm to the content creators or the YouTube community nor damage their originally intended purpose because the primary focus of the study is to analyze and showcase how hip-hop is recontextualized as a source of EFL education, not necessarily to judge and evaluate the creator's English proficiency or teaching skills. Also, YouTube is a platform where creators and viewers must agree to a privacy policy that gives consent to public access to the content, which allowed this study to stand free from many restrictions, including copyright laws. The content collected for the purpose of the study were not used to yield any economic profits for the researcher, nor were they modified by the researcher to fit the interest of the study. To protect personal identities, content creators' faces were blurred in screenshots of the content presented in the paper.

2. Data Analysis

The analytic focus lies in how hip-hop is used by YouTube content creators to teach English. The analysis aimed to interpret the ways hip-hop is localized to be ELT resources. Specifically, it analyzed which aspects of hip-hop were highlighted and how they were presented. The researcher conducted the following procedures. The data, first, was categorized according to the topic of the content: whether it aimed to pick up linguistic cues from hip-hop or whether it dealt with the cultural elements hip-hop is saturated with. After this first division, language-focused materials were examined to see how language from hip-hop is selected for teaching. This process is required to understand whether hip-hop is used as a teaching technique to help learners retain general English expressions or if hip-hop is the topic itself through which specific vocabulary is taught. Hip-hop-based words and expressions presented without credit to their original sources were cross-checked with AAE references (Kearse, 2006; Major, 1994; Westbrook, 2002) to determine if the YouTubers' explanations of those expressions were correct. And then, the ways language was presented were coded, centering on teaching methods. This focused on what teaching techniques the creators used in instructing meaning, form, collocation, and other aspects of vocabulary learning.

Regarding the cultural analysis, the focus was on which aspects of culture were described. It drew upon the concept of "Big C" and "small c" culture (Holliday, 1999; Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993) each of which is respectively defined as a set of observable or factual customs such as arts, holidays, sociopolitical issues, and history and as invisible, value-based shared thoughts and mindsets that frame a certain group of people. K. Y. Lee's (2009) analytic focus on the big C and small c cultural domains in investigating cultural representations from EFL textbooks was referred because his study particularly focused on Korean context. His study provides various cultural themes suggested for acquiring the culture-general (Big C Culture) and the culture-specific (small c culture) aspects of target-language culture learning. Detailed categories from his research (see K. Y. Lee, 2009 for a detailed list) were helpful to

TABLE 1
YouTube Pages and Content that Use Hip-hop for English Teaching

Names of the channel (Subscribers)	# of hip-hop English teaching content (Length shortest/longest)	Content
Kukka English (14.3k)	63 (1:57/15:46)	American hip-hop/Korean hip-hop/pop
김교포 [kimkyopho] (12.3k)	2 (3:11/6:57)	Learning English through rap
HIPHOPLE (204k)	8 (3:45/7:49)	American hip-hop
마이폴 [maiphwul] (2.13k)	6 (2:27/5:53)	American hip-hop
LeeLee's lit life (7.1k)	2 (7:35/12:43)	American hip-hop/American life as an Asian female
U&I Connected (135)	5 (5:16/9:50)	American hip-hop
Brys Channel (388)	12 (17:04/39:34)	American hip-hop lyrics interpretation
Nina's Life School (12.7k)	1 (8:22)	American hip-hop slang
Captain English (Unknown)	1 (8:02)	English vocab in Korean hip-hop
김아무개 [kimamwukay] (11.5k)	1 (10:01)	Slang expressions used in hip-hop
Harris English (16.6k)	2 (17:40/19:19)	An American rapper's music and life history
MISCVST TV (4.99k)	1 (10:41)	Slang
TRILLA GANG (12.9k)	1 (8:46)	Hip-hop terms

determine where the hip-hop content set up their goals as teaching materials. In investigating content that discussed cultural aspects of hip-hop, the topic of the content was screened to determine which aspects of culture were discussed. After this, each content topic was compared with the Big C and small c cultural elements to see how hip-hop-based content would be in line with Korean textbook culture learning. For example, a content used a song to discuss racial discrimination toward the Asian community in the US. This was initially categorized as a Big C culture content in that it deals with an observable social issue (i.e., racial discrimination), and its topic was later screened based on the Big C themes to see which information was delivered through the content. Among categories of the Big C such as "arts/crafts/national treasure," "literature," and many more, "races" was chosen because of the clip's purpose to teach how rappers specifically talk about the racial issue and stand against racial discrimination by relying on the power of music and their voice. Note that this coding was solely done by the researcher, which would marginalize the validity of analysis. Nevertheless, since the focus of the study lies more on making visible the unique ways hip-hop is utilized as ELT materials for Korean EFL learners, revealing what is regarded as a source of teaching culture from hip-hop and how it is topicalized in a YouTube content would be enough to showcase hip-hop's uniqueness shown from an online discourse in Korea.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Language

The findings show that, as seen from the previous studies that viewed it as a means of presenting the English language cues (T. Hwang, 2017; D. Jeong & B. Lee, 2011), hip-hop is mostly being used for teaching linguistic aspects of English. Within this linguistic context, the hip-hop teaching method is primarily used to focus on the following aspects: introducing hip-hop community vocabulary, examining localized English in Korea, translanguaging teaching practice for vocabulary, teaching vocabulary in context, and analyzing rap making rhyming techniques. The detailed findings of each of these aspects will be presented below along with relevant examples.

1) Hip-hop Vernacular

In the data collected hip-hop music lyrics were used to teach vocabulary that, they said, was currently trending in the US hip-hop music and among young generation. The content creators using this technique usually explained how the meaning of a certain word or expression can go through multiple changes, resulting in a use of the language that is discourse specific. The content creators often selected a list of contemporary slang and translated them into Korean. An example is the word "dope" which is used to indicate a speaker's positive and excited response to a person, object, or phenomenon. In a clip from *Maiphwul*[2] explaining the meaning of "dope" as it is used in hip-hop, synonyms were listed, including "cool," "tight," "sick," "ill," and "fire" to help Korean viewers know the AAE community uses these words to indicate a good feeling. *MISCVST TV*[3] also explains how "money" can be diversely interpreted in hip-hop by providing a list of hip-hop slang such as "Dinero," "Guap/Gwop," "Cheddar/Cheese/Cheesecake," "Mula," and "Dead president/Benjamin," all of which refer to money in hip-hop discourse. After the examples, the YouTube content also used Korean hip-hop to show viewers that they may have already heard these terms without noticing them or understanding their meanings.

In presenting hip-hop-based expressions, some YouTube creators took their role of English teacher even further through entertainment or performance (Farrell, 2011). They sometimes performed the music themselves or invited a rapper to have a conversation about the intention of the artist's language. When performing, they acknowledged that the quality of their performance could not be compared to that of the real artists. But what they sought to achieve by their performance-like-presentation of the content was to emphasize the rhythmic presentation of the words, which has been said to be helpful for vocabulary learning (D. Jeong & B. Lee, 2011).

In cases where English-speaking hip-hop artists were invited, the YouTuber acted as an interviewer, English teacher, and learner, directly asking the hip-hop artist about the meaning of words and expressions from the artist's music. This particular style of teaching content was possible for one YouTuber named Shawna because she is a rapper in Korea. She interviewed an American female rapper, Bhad Baby, and an R&B singer, Sabrina Claudio. Shawna, who teaches English through the channel *Raptudy*, uses her bilingualism as a Korean-American and her artistic identity to her advantage. Her in-between-identity allows her to belong not only to both English and Korean-speaking discourses (M. W. Lee, 2015), but also global hip-hop discourse and Korean English teaching discourse.

The YouTube hip-hop content teaching hip-hop-related vocabulary also touched on the origin of the expressions. A clip from *Maiphwul*[4] showed the dictionary meaning of "swag," which is "stolen goods," and pointed out that the word means something else in hip-hop. Although today people use "swag" as a synonym of "cool" and "taste," the creator pointed out that the origin of the hip-hop expression "swag" is in fact Shakespeare's play *A*

[2] A clip from Maiphwul that explains hip-hop slang https://youtu.be/2mBuCa912Z8?list=PLfJXhpRz8MJeiTMGK5HK2UigCn0a9AqrQ (accessed in July 2021)

[3] A clip from MISCVST TV that explains money related hip-hop slang https://youtu.be/vHfu27mEdkA (accessed in July 2021)

[4] A clip that explains the origin of several hip-hop slang https://youtu.be/2mBuCa912Z8 (accessed in July 2021)

Midsummer Night's Dream, for which Shakespeare first invented the word "Swagg'ring." *Kukka English*[5] similarly translated the meaning of "baller" as a someone who is successful and explained that the word came from a "professional sports player" in basketball (Westbrook, 2002, p. 7). Because basketball is regarded as one important way that Black people have historically overcome poverty and other difficulties, the explanation of "baller" as "one who makes and spends large amounts of money freely and carelessly" (Kearse, 2006, p. 36) can give Korean EFL learners an idea of the close relationship between sports and hip-hop in the US.

Moreover, in focusing on slang widely in hip-hop, several words and expressions that allegedly only carry negative connotations were explained to deliver positive meanings when used in the African American community. *Nina's Life School* listed several words and phrases frequently shown in hip-hop, some of which should be used sensitively in reference to race and gender. According to her explanation, "bitch" can be casually used between female friends (Figure 1[6]) to describe a "strong, confident, secure woman" (Westbrook, 2002, p.13). She presented the target word in a multimodal way.

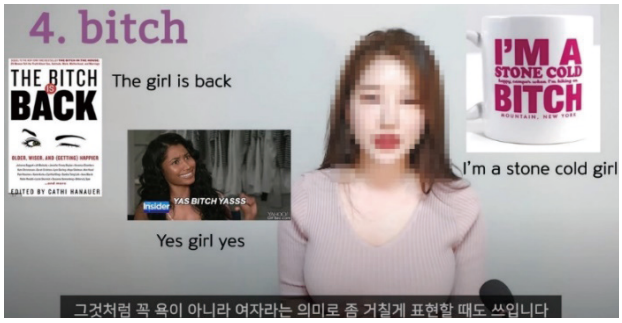

FIGURE 1 A Gender-related Term's Usage Examples

As seen in Figure 1, a book cover, a logo on a cup, and a snapshot from a media source were shown to let learners know that the word could carry a positive meaning in certain situations by a certain group of people. Additionally, she compared "bitch" with the derogatory "n-word" word that disrespectfully refers to Black people. She explained that, just as such a racially insulting word can be used positively as an indication of close relationship only within the Black community (Kearse, 2006; Major, 1994), the negative meaning of "bitch" can also be made positive only when it is used within the appropriate community and context. Therefore, the examples included here showcase how unconventional ELT resources, that is authentic language usages from hip-hop, can be turned into learning materials which would not be dealt with in textbook.

2) Localized English

Korean hip-hop shows how English is localized by Korean rappers who create a new type of English to express their identities as well as to describe local ideological themes (Lee, 2007, 2011). In a *Maiphwul*[7] clip that explains that the term "DJ" stands for "Disk Jockey," which is someone who plays the music in clubs and other group settings, the content provider explained that "BJ" was made in a similar way. The word "BJ" is widely used in Korea to refer to online streamers who broadcast their content through multimedia platforms. However, she explained that this expression is Konglish and that its meaning would only be understood by Korean speakers. According to one user-based online dictionary, *Urban Dictionary* (www.urbandictionary.com), which is considered a common online source for English learners (Li, 2005), the term is usually proceeded by "Korean" in the US (i.e., Korean BJ) to clarify that it refers specifically to Korean internet streamers. Although this was not the topic of the YouTube video, she presented a Korean-specific internet-based word connected to hip-hop to raise Korean EFL learners' awareness of localized English present in every day Korean speech.

3) Translanguaging

When pronunciation is the focus of teaching, hip-hop-based teaching content encompasses translanguaging practice which encourages speakers to draw upon all the available resources to encode and decode language (Canagarajah, 2013; Li, 2018). To teach pronunciation, vocabulary is presented translingually in which a streamer mixes and matches the elements of the shared languages (i.e., Korean and English) in an unconventional way. By intentionally breaking language syllable rules (Y. Y. Ahn, 2020), the YouTuber *Captain English*[8] describes how words should be pronounced. Figure 2 and Figure 3 respectively show that he arranges Korean consonants without vowels attached in explaining "flex" and displays an English vowel and a Korean consonant in explaining the pronunciation of the word "ice." This intentional breaking of Korean language syllable combination can be regarded as a teacher's strategy that "treats the languages as part of a single integrated system" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 403), which allows the teacher to selectively choose sources from his linguistic reservoirs and creatively incorporate them into his own teaching practice that might look deviant from authentic spelling transcription.

Regarding the first case "flex" seen in Figure 2, there is no consonant in the Korean alphabet to represent a fricative [f], and Korean English learners often have a

[5] A clip that explains slang used in a Korean hip-hop music https://youtu.be/lVfPCu_cb74 (accessed in July 2021)

[6] A clip that explains 19 American hip-hop-based words https://youtu.be/tvFSt6mQkfw (accessed in July 2021)

[7] A clip that explains job titles used in hip-hop https://youtu.be/WOmuDdxXurE (accessed in July 2021)

[8] A clip that explains pronunciation https://youtu.be/DXsUUW0cnK4 (accessed in July 2021)

difficult time pronouncing it (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). To help Korean learners of English better make sense of the pronunciation of the word, his non-conventional Korean spelling usage to describe its pronunciation is a useful technique to maximize the linguistic repertoires of learners and teachers alike.

FIGURE 2 Translingual Use of the Korean Alphabets

Figure 3 is similar in the sense that the target word "ice" is presented by phonetic symbols in a non-traditional, translingual way. This differs from Figure 2 in that it combines an English and a Korean phoneme. To help Korean viewers understand what it sounds like to pronounce the word in a more authentic way, the content creatively combines an English vowel "I," which is expected to be pronounced as the long vowel [ai], and a Korean consonant "ㅆ," which is a voiceless alveolar fricative [s].

FIGURE 3 Translingual Presentation of Vocabulary

From the perspective of translanguaging in pedagogy, it is strongly suggested that language learning should be realized in a way that utilizes all the available resources learners and teachers bring to the table. The example shown above is a paragon of how hip-hop-based English education in the Korean context can mesh parts of two linguistic resources – Korean and English – to better represent a way to pronounce English that is similar to how Koreans use English loan words.

4) Teaching Vocabulary in Context

Hip-hop is not only used to teach non-academic vocabulary. Hip-hop music lyrics are also used in a traditional way as materials that provide a contextual cue within which learners can infer how an expression is used. In a *Raptudy* video[9], the streamer who is a rapper herself explained the expression "by any means" by translating an American hip-hop lyric into Korean. She then included a role-play situation where she played one Korean and one English speaker having a conversation to showcase the way the expression is used as caught in Figure 4. By providing the dialogue in both Korean and English and teaching how the phrase is used in a real context, she showed the linguistic idea that teaching vocabulary in context is a helpful mnemonic device. This is realized through the PPP model (Presentation-Practice-Produce): She presents words and expressions by showing authentic language usage (i.e., American hip-hop music lyrics), practices them by creating an imaginary real-life context, and encourages learners to think critically by asking them to write their own examples using the phrase in the comment section.

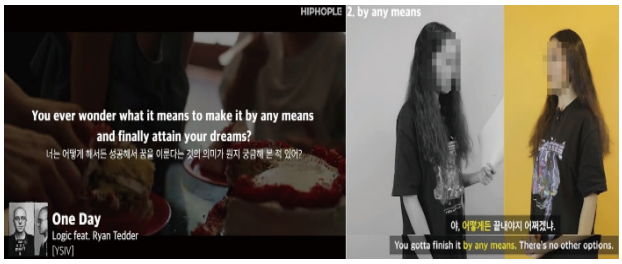

FIGURE 4 Lyrics and Role-playing Teaching

Figure 4 shows the creator's sequential presentation of teaching the phrase. Rap lyrics and the corresponding music video are played along with Korean subtitles. After the part of the song that includes the target phrase, the rapper plays two roles, speaking Korean first and English later. In presenting the English phrase with the Korean translation, the target expression is highlighted in a different color to catch the learner's attention. This method allows learners to better understand hip-hop music and recognize the use of the phrase in the new context created by the YouTuber who also provides a contextual hint when the new expression is used.

This case of teaching vocabulary from hip-hop music using real contexts is a telling example for those who might believe that hip-hop, especially the language of hip-hop, is inappropriate for formal education. It is a teacher's responsibility or choice to determine how to draw good things from hip-hop and adopt it to teach their students according to their interests.

[9] A clip whereby a rapper-teacher explains an expression via role playing https://youtu.be/jcJIP8ChDCM?list=PLhmKRkY889phO5QdM4ftjmICsQRs7ADyI (accessed in July 2021)

5) Rhyme

The content creator of the channel *TRILLA GANG* is a rapper, and he created content designed for would-be rappers, aiming to help novice artists learn basic terms used in hip-hop. He explains several words such as "rhyme," "flow," and "punchline," which are important components in designing rap. To show how rhyming is structured, the creator explains rhyming techniques by using different colors to represent the structure of different sounds (Figure 5[10]).

This allows would-be rappers and those who are interested in how rap is made to see the rhyming process. Rhyming is defined as "any chiming of the sounds of words, a specific type of conventionalized sound correspondence (rh*yme, t*i*me*), and the genre of verse that contains such correspondences at line endings" (Rickert, 1978, p. 35). By looking at perfect rhyme and slant rhyme, each of which shows how words are juxtaposed, Korean EFL speakers can get a taste of rhythmic word arrangements (for detail see Smith & Joshi, 2020; Stoker, 2015). As seen in Figure 5, "history" and "liberty" rhyme by using the vowels [i] and [y], and "hidden," "given" and "written" are located at the end of several lines to generate a rhyme scheme through the consonant ending "–en."

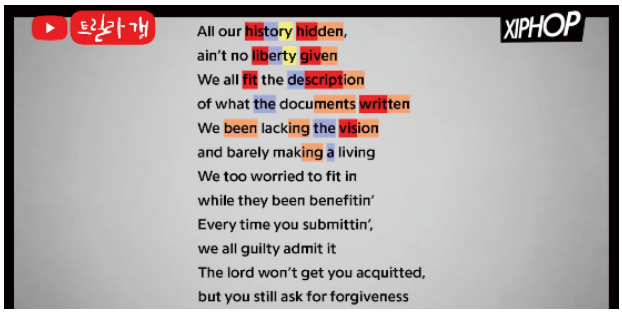

FIGURE 5 Rhyming Highlight

This is particularly useful to make Korean EFL learners aware of the poetic aspects of rapping (Bradley, 2017). Korean EFL education is often criticized for focusing too much on the structural aspects of English, which is largely a trend due to exam-oriented situations. Understanding rap as a genre that promotes literacy, as S. H. Choi (2013) suggests, can help EFL educators adopt hip-hop English learning without compromising their core goals by presenting the aesthetic potentials of the rhythm and flow of rap. In addition, although the data collection process of this study did not uncover any content that explores the rhyming technique of Korean hip-hop, previous studies on rhyming such as J. Park (2016) and J. Park (2020), along with what is presented above, would all help one understand how Korean and English are creatively arranged in the hip-hop context.

2. Culture

Culture in the literacy education field has been regarded more as social practices which allow people in the same culture to share norms and values and to engage in various events and activities for community fellowship (Gee, 2018; Street, 1993). In this vein, to EFL learners who may not be able to experience American culture directly in their own context, popular culture, including what this study examines, can be a useful tool for understanding a certain group of people's life in a particular, meaningful context (Storey, 2015). In other words, Korean EFL learners who are exposed to culture learning that usually focuses too much on big C culture (K. Y. Lee, 2009) and racially white people (H. Song, 2013) can take advantage of exploring hip-hop culture that discusses African Americans and Asians in the culture.

The bulk of the collected data focuses on the linguistic aspects of English learning through hip-hop as shown above. Content creators did not leave much space for dealing with cultural aspects. Only fragmentary parts of the data included discussions about American culture through hip-hop. Only four clips discussed racial discrimination issues that Asian people experienced when engaging with and living in a primarily Black community. The first two cases were an example of big C Culture and dealt with how race, that is "Asianness," is discriminatively employed by American rappers. The videos not only warned listeners to be more careful and critical in consuming hip-hop, but also showed YouTube streamers are able to provide content that helps listeners become more aware of hip-hop's more discriminatory aspects. The other two clips, from a small c culture perspective, invited Korean EFL learners to see what it looks like to be an Asian woman in a primarily Black community. The episodes functioned to raise awareness of an aspect of the target language culture.

1) Racial Discrimination to Asian within American Hip-hop

KUKKA ENGLISH made a video focused on Korean American rapper Jay Park's music and a social network post he wrote regarding racial discrimination in the US that specifically targets Asian people[11]. Not only did he translate and interpret the content from English to Korean, but he also presented news of Asian hate crimes in the US to help Korean EFL viewers connect the rapper's words to current social issues. This is in keeping with Morrell and Duncan-Andrade's (2002) way of incorporating hip-hop into education to teach community issues. As someone who has social influence due to his rapper identity, Jay Park's actions can be beneficial for educational discourse, particularly in teaching about the aspects of American culture for which he has special insider knowledge and inter-

[10] A clip that shows how rhyming is designed https://youtu.be/jSqkSnFqwLA (accessed in July 2021)

[11] A clip about Jay Park who stands against anti- Asian violence https://youtu.be/W1o_gLZUCrA (accessed in July 21)

cultural awareness (K. Y. Lee, 2012, 2013).

Moreover, the YouTuber highlighted several American hip-hop songs that used racially discriminatory language targeting Asians. Examples include Wiz Khalifa's "hot now," which has the line "smoke got my eyes lookin' like Korean," and Lil' Wayne's "mama me off??" that includes "my money look Arabic, blunt lookin' Cuban, my eyes look Korean," both of which used "Korean" discriminatively. J Cole's "album of the year" is another example of Asian discrimination, one song containing the phrase "I'm good at math like Asian, hate to use stereotypes, but that's light compared to what a n**** get from Caucasians," which is based on a common Asian stereotype in the US. Lil Pump's "Butterfly door" also includes a lyric that uses an expression of discrimination against Asians when he raps, "they call me Yao Ming cause my eyes real low, Chi Chong." These examples from the channel show that content using hip-hop for teaching English to Korean EFL speakers does not always glorify American hip-hop. They also do not aim to deliver hip-hop ideologies in the form of English teaching materials without thoughtful consideration. This particular kind of content is evidence of the ability of YouTubers to critically approach cultural works in the target language by bluntly facing and mentioning what is wrong, as similarly realized in Stovall's (2006) study that used hip-hop lyrics for critical analysis. Along with various media sources that contain cultural aspects of American society from Black people' perspectives suggested by K. Kim (2007), J. Im (2020b), or D. Lee and H. Lee (2020), the content of hip-hop for Korean audiences can be used to teach more nuanced social issues that would be rarely included in public ELT materials.

2) Living in the Black Community as an Asian

On her channel *LeeLee's lit life*, one female YouTuber shared her story of how she learned English through hip-hop and her experience living in Orland, Florida where she was able to interact with Black people, including hip-hop artists. In her content[12], she acknowledged that she did not like learning English in a traditional way such as through reading books. Answering her subscribers' questions about how she became fluent in English and knowledgeable about AAE, she pointed out the importance of being acculturated to the imagined community you want to belong to and invest yourself as an English speaker (Darvin & Norton, 2015). To fulfill this wish, she recommended using movies and music, not just passively consuming the content, but putting oneself in cultural situations that the movies and music describe. She gave an example of a hip-hop song that describes a playboy hesitating to express his feelings to the woman he loves. By reflecting on her own experience between her and a man that she believed to be a womanizer, she revealed that she was able to focus more on the music, lyrics, and the music video drama and think of how to describe her own emotions in a similar context in English. This content was later connected to other content in her channel which include what it looks like dating a Black man. Her personal narrative, thus, is a useful avenue for Korean audiences to raise their awareness of AAE (J. Baik, 2001) and to compare AAE before and after localization in Korea (Lee, 2007, 2011).

Her channel also provides more stories about the local hip-hop community. She has uploaded parties, hip-hop events, and interviews that she participated in through which we can partly see how local people and hip-hop artists live. More importantly, her narratives about herself as a single mom and an Asian woman in the Black community describe what it looks like to be a foreigner who was not fluent in English but improved communicative competence in a way that was more suitable for the Black people surrounding her. The stories from the channel sometimes include seemingly less appropriate elements such as drinking, smoking, and love affairs, but these are the reflections of real life that might not be accurately written about in ELT textbooks. In her content where she plays a guest speaker role (K. Y. Lee, 2012, 2013) discussing her positionality in Black culture, her anecdotes can provide opportunities for Korean EFL learners to also learn about small c culture themes such as "hard work," "self-improvement," "openness," or "self-interest oriented" in that particular Black community and see the interconnection between race, ethnicity, and language to help increase intercultural awareness (H. G. Lee et al., 2015). This will allow us to approach the culture of the target language from the emic perspective and develop intercultural competence.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper explored how hip-hop music is used to teach English to Korean EFL learners via online discourse through YouTube. This online platform as an alternative mode of educational discourse for language education facilitates new literacy practices that provide content in a multimodal way (Bazalgette & Buckingham, 2013; New London Group, 1996), rendering a new language learning dynamic for those who are particularly interested in hip-hop. Learners can actively engage in learning English through watching and listening to what they consume more for leisure. When making hip-hop teaching content, YouTube creators play a teacher role, which is sometimes realized through a rap performance or an interview with a hip-hop artist. Sometimes even seemingly inappropriate language is changed into a tool for teaching and learning English. In other words, while English teachers sometimes do not necessarily see their job as dealing with cultural content (Duff & Uchida, 1997), the self-claimed English teaching YouTube streamers can be argued to voluntarily play a role of cultural ambassadors who bring less com-

[12] A clip whereby the YouTuber explains her English learning experience through hip-hop https://youtu.be/OnHt6--WLW4 (accessed in July 21)

monly talked stories in the public education in Korea.

Linguistic aspects of hip-hop in the educational content were found to be dominant over cultural aspects. Hip-hop specific words and expressions may not be easily understood if Korean learners of English solely depend on traditional references such as books and online dictionaries. Although the amount of cultural content was too minimal to suggest hip-hop is considered an alternative way to teach culture, the issues being dealt with in the content still create a valuable lens through which to look at American culture from the Black perspective. It could be argued students and teachers who watch the content may benefit from it and develop a more critical perspective and intercultural awareness of American hip-hop and American culture.

Regardless of the benefits mentioned above, it is fair to say that the exploration of hip-hop used in YouTube videos for Korean EFL learners plausibly leads us to more questions that require further in-depth research. One may ask which English learning goals within the Korean EFL context would be met by hip-hop English YouTube content. Considering almost all the analyzed content was relatively short, it is questionable how much a learner's ability to read, write, speak, and listen in English would improve. In a highly exam-oriented environment where standard English is preferred and required, it could be difficult to figure out the direct link between the usefulness of hip-hop and getting high scores on a test. Another plausible concern would be about content that contains inappropriate language. Although the selected YouTubers seem to have been careful to avoid words and expressions that were too violent or sensual, there still exists the possibility for people to misuse what they hear from hip-hop music without understanding the connotation. Furthermore, due to the characteristics of YouTube, there would be no censorship or peer-review to keep the appropriateness of the content in check.

We can also question the authenticity of the content creators' explanations of hip-hop and Black culture in the US. Not all YouTubers who provide English teaching content through hip-hop are equipped with the insider knowledge of hip-hop, nor are they professional English teachers. Most of them have not engaged with hip-hop communities, and thus they might not be considered legitimate members of the global hip-hop discourse. It is their English proficiency and their interest in hip-hop through which they endow themselves with the ability to create hip-hop-related content to target Korean, hip-hop fan English learners. Without the proper insider knowledge and experiences about hip-hop discourse, some content providers' authenticity could be called into question. Many questions emerge from the study that could be interesting research topics going forward. However, it is important that voices of schoolteachers, students, parents, researchers, the Black community, and content creators be included in these discussions.

Lastly, it must be clearly noted that this paper does not argue that Korean ELT should incorporate hip-hop language and culture into the classroom and teach mainly Black culture to replace what has been written in textbooks. It could also not be further from the intention to insinuate the presented YouTube creators are better teachers than schoolteachers in public and private schools. It is also not a claim all Korean EFL learners would want to watch the content mentioned and learn English through hip-hop. Furthermore, it will never be an argument of the paper that what has been presented in their content would have more importance than academic vocabulary used in public education just because they are shown from recent American hip-hop. The crux of the paper, instead, is to bring attention to a less-explored educational discourse and to consider alternative teaching practices which teachers as well as learners can be interested in and think of using for English learning in a different way that they have never experienced.

The expectation of this paper is to open a new chapter in the field of English education in Korea and the global community and to lead Korean ELT professionals to an awareness of, as Love (2015) criticized, what the *nice* field of English education has ignored. This paper showcased while there is the exclusion of hip-hop in Korean ELT, hip-hop is in fact being used pedagogically by youth today in online discourse. Thus, it is the right time to begin more academic discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of using hip-hop for English language education. More discussion in this realm will open the door for teachers to consider playing such roles as acculturtors (Farrell, 2011) and cultural workers (Duff & Uchida, 1997) that connect classroom teaching with real life language, which is an approach that has seldom been used for Korean ELT. This discussion also gives English learners more opportunities to reflect on their own level of critical thinking that is required for non-native speakers of English (Barrett, 2013; Pennycook, 1999), learning what to take and what to avoid when they run into hip-hop-based English education content. Local and foreign teachers, students in public and private school settings, parents, researchers, and others involved in English education need to work together to enable a robust academic discussion aimed at understanding one another better. The intent of this study was to provide such an opportunity.

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