Word Formation Processes and Meanings in English-Based K-Pop Group Names

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the formation and meaning of English-based K-pop group names through morphological and semantic approaches. As K-pop has become a global phenomenon, it is undeniable that English plays a significant role in shaping its international identity and image. Therefore, this study attempts to identify the types of word formation processes used in English K-pop group names and describe their meanings. This study applies Yule's (2020) theory of word formation, which consists of compounding, blending, clipping, acronyms, and other processes, as well as Leech's (1981) theory of meaning. Thirty K-pop group names were collected from official and valid online sources and analyzed qualitatively. The results show that the most dominant process is compounding, followed by acronyms and blending. These processes are commonly used because they make group names shorter, more creative, and more memorable. Semantically, the most frequently found meaning is connotative meaning. This reflects how K-pop names contain emotions, identity, and creativity beyond their literal or direct meanings. In general, this study shows that K-pop group names do not happen by chance; instead, they have been carefully designed to reflect symbolism and branding. Therefore, this study highlights that linguistic creativity through morphology and semantics is an important factor in shaping how language can create meaning, bind cultures, and play a vital role in global entertainment.

Abstrak

Makalah ini menganalisis pembentukan dan makna nama grup K-pop berbasis bahasa Inggris melalui pendekatan morfologis dan semantis. Karena K-pop telah menjadi fenomena global, tidak dapat disangkal bahwa bahasa Inggris memainkan peran penting dalam

membentuk identitas dan citra internasionalnya. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini mencoba mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis proses pembentukan kata yang digunakan dalam nama grup K-pop berbahasa Inggris dan mendeskripsikan maknanya. Penelitian ini menerapkan teori Yule (2020) tentang pembentukan kata, yang terdiri dari penggabungan, perpaduan, pemotongan, akronim, dan proses lainnya, serta teori makna oleh Leech (1981). Tiga puluh nama grup K-pop dikumpulkan dari sumber online resmi dan valid serta dianalisis secara kualitatif. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa proses yang paling dominan adalah penggabungan, diikuti oleh akronim dan perpaduan. Proses-proses ini umum digunakan karena membuat nama grup lebih pendek, lebih kreatif, dan lebih mudah diingat. Secara semantis, makna yang paling sering ditemukan adalah makna konotatif. Ini mencerminkan bagaimana nama-nama K-pop mengandung emosi, identitas, dan kreativitas di luar makna harfiah atau langsung. Secara umum, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa nama grup K-pop tidak terjadi secara kebetulan; sebaliknya, nama-nama tersebut telah dirancang dengan sangat hati-hati untuk mencerminkan simbolisme dan branding. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini menggarisbawahi bahwa kreativitas linguistik melalui morfologi dan semantik merupakan faktor penting dalam membentuk bagaimana bahasa dapat menciptakan suatu makna, mengikat budaya, berperan penting untuk hiburan global.

INTRODUCTION

The popular industry in Korea, known as K-pop, has become a global cultural phenomenon that transcends linguistic and geographical boundaries. As K-pop groups aim to attract international audiences, the use of English is increasingly found in various aspects, including song lyrics, album names, and most importantly, group names. The creation of unique English-related group names is not only to gain global interest but also to reflect linguistic creativity on a morphological scale (word formation process) and the meaning contained in each word. In the context of K-pop, group names are not just labels, as the phenomenon has grown rapidly in the 2000s, but each has its own branding element with symbolic and strategic value. Iconic names like BLACKPINK, ONEUS, BIGBANG, to innovative names like

STRAY KIDS, show a deliberate word formation process in names using blending, compounding, acronym, or clipping.

According to Katamba (1993), morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies the structure of words and their formation processes in a language. The main goal of morphological theory is not only to understand words in a speaker's language but also potential words that may not be used in daily conversation. According to Lieber (2016), morphology not only includes the analysis of word formation but also the processes used to create new words. On the other hand, Yule (2020) classifies word formation processes into ten types: acronym, back formation, blending, borrowing, clipping, coinage, compounding, conversion, derivation, and multiple processes. These processes illustrate how words can be created in various ways, from connecting words to creating new words, all of which contribute to the dynamic and creative development of language.

Several previous studies show various approaches to word formation in the context of branding and communication, but there are limitations in the in-depth analysis of K-pop group names and the cultural identity formed through these names. For example, (Panggabean, Deliana, & Nasution, 2023) examined word formation processes in advertising, but this study did not link word formation to broader meaning, culture, or social aspects, as in the K-pop context. (Azzahrah, Febrianti, Yannuar, & Zen, 2022) focused on the language choices of K-pop fans on social platforms, but did not discuss the morphological processes underlying the formation of K-pop group names or how they relate to the meaning of K-pop group names. Other research, such as (Indrian, 2022), examined word formation in application branding, but this context is very different from the world of music and K-pop. Similarly, (Ningsih, Rafli, & Boeriswati, 2021) focused on the linguistic creativity of foreign students, but there was no connection to global cultural phenomena like K-pop or the identity built through group names. Studies like (Syaputri, Sari, & Zetira, 2023) only examined word formation processes in product branding, (Trousdale & Norde, 2025) examined the relationship between linguistic creativity and changes in morphological constructions, but this research is not directly related to the phenomenon of K-pop group names. Then (Wijayanti,

Asmara, & Fatimah, 2025) provided a linguistic learning approach in economics classes, but this focused more on teaching than on real application in a global pop culture context like K-pop.

On the other hand, research by (Pratiwi, Beratha, & Antari, 2025) is one of the more relevant studies because it examines how word formation occurs in the K-pop community on social media. Although its focus is on fan communication, it provides an important understanding of linguistic processes within the K-pop ecosystem. However, this research is not deep enough to connect morphological processes in K-pop group names with the symbolic meanings produced. From this review, it can be seen that although there are various studies discussing linguistic creativity and word formation, few specifically focus on the analysis of K-pop group names and how these morphological processes shape the word formation process and reveal the meaning of each K-pop group name. This research will rely on Yule (2020) as the main foundation in analysing morphological processes in the formation of K-pop group names. Processes such as clipping and acronyms will be analysed to see how they create attractive and easily recognizable group names. In addition, Leech (1981) will be used to analyse the semantic dimensions of these group names, exploring the symbolic meanings and associations contained within them, as well as how these names function in constructing deep meanings through the use of English words.

Morphologically, the study of word formation processes focuses on how new words are created, while semantic analysis examines how these meanings are formed and interpreted. By combining these two perspectives, this research seeks to understand how linguistic creativity plays a role in the cultural and commercial context of K-pop. Although K-pop has spread globally, research specifically addressing the linguistic construction of K-pop group names, especially those using English, is still limited. Therefore, this research contributes by (1) analyzing the word formation process and semantic meanings found in English-based K-pop group names. (2) Through morphological and semantic approaches, this research aims to reveal how language functions not only as a communication tool but also as a tool for constructing word meanings, images, and global appeal in the K-pop

entertainment industry. (3) The results of the research are expected to contribute to the understanding of linguistic creativity in popular culture and the role of language in shaping the transnational appeal of K-pop.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive design. The purpose of using this approach is to describe and interpret the morphological creativity found in the names of selected K-pop groups that use English and to analyze how each name conveys meaning and what type of meaning it represents. The qualitative descriptive method allows researchers to analyze linguistic phenomena in their natural context and provide detailed explanations of meaning without measuring data.

The dataset of this study involves the official groups' names of around 30 K-pop group names written fully in English. The names were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on groups whose names show clear wordplay or morphological creativity. To ensure variation, maximum variation sampling was also applied by including groups from different generations and from both large and small agencies. All 30 names were chosen based on the following criteria: (1) the group name must be officially regocnized by the agency; (2) the name must be fully English (mixed Korean-English names were excluded); (3) the name must show uniqueness or wordplay creativity; (4) the sample must represent diverse agencies and generations to capture naming trends across time. The data sources include official or public sources such as entertainment websites/applications, verified social media (e.g., Instagram app, Pinterest app, and Spotify), and fan-created sources (e.g., Kprofiles, Wikipedia, Weibo, and Weverse).

The data collected are analyzed using Yule's (2020) theory of word formation, where morphological processes are divided into ten types: derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, back formation, conversion, acronym, multiple processes, coinage, and borrowing, coupled with semantic interpretation. Although ten word formation types exist, only seven processes appeared in the dataset, which are derivation, compounding, blending, clipping, acronym, coinage, and multiple

processes. In order to maintain consistency, the researchers developed a very defined set of criteria that was used to identify the word formation processes present in each group name. These criteria ensured that each name was classified by means of transparent and repeatable rules. For example, a name that was a result of two separate words put together is identified as a compounding, while blending was applied when two root words were merged into a shortened form. Clipping is used for names that were the short form of an existing word and coinage terms that didn't have a traceable morphological background. In the case of names that went through more than one morphological change, they were classified as multiple processes. By applying these guidelines to the full data set, we were able to analyze in a very consistent way, which also reduced subjectivity in the result.

The analysis was conducted in a sequence of steps: (1) identification of data, by listing and categorizing all group names based on their morphological structures, including compounding, blending, clipping, acronym, and back formation, and semantic meanings, namely, conceptual, connotative, thematic, affective, and social meanings; (2) classification by grouping the names based on the type of morphological process and meaning involved; (3) interpretation, focusing on why the names fit into the respective morphological categories and identifying their corresponding semantic types; and (4) conclusion drawing by summarizing the findings with the identification of the most frequent word formation processes, the types of meanings observed, and how these reflect creativity in naming K-pop groups. Generally, the whole analysis adopts the descriptive qualitative approach suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984), encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

This research was conducted through the following stages: (1) data collection, which included collecting the names of 30 K-pop groups that use English from verified sources; (2) morphological analysis, where the morphological processes applied to each name were identified; (3) interpretation, which focused on analyzing the meaning of the names and determining the type of meaning they represent; and (4) reporting, where findings were presented descriptively with relevant linguistic discussion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Here is the table of the results of identifying the types of word formation processes and types of meaning found in some selected English-language K-pop group names.

Table 1: Types of Word Formation Proceses in some selected English K-pop group names

No	Types	Data	Quantity	Percentage
1.	Acronym	WAYV, STAYC, NCT, BtoB, AOA, AHOF	6	20%
2.	Backformation	-	-	0%
3.	Blending	RIIZE,YOUNITE, SISTAR, ATEEZ, CRAVITY	5	16.7%
4.	Borrowing	-	-	0%
5.	Clipping	UNIQ	1	3.3%
6.	Coinage	THE BOYZ	1	3.3%
7.	Compounding	STRAY KIDS, ONEUS, BLACKPINK, BIGBANG, BOYNEXTDOOR, BABYMONSTER, PICKUS, KICKFLIP, SUPER JUNIOR, HIGHLIGHT, DAY6, EVERGLOW	12	40%
8.	Conversion	-	-	0%
9.	Derivation	WINNER	1	3.3%
10.	Multiple Processes	GFRIEND, WANNAONE, GOLDEN CHILD, DREAMCATCHER	4	13.3%
	Total		**30**	**100%**

Table 2: Types of Meaning in some selected English K-pop group names

No	Types	Data	Quantity	Percentage
1	Conceptual	BIGBANG, KICKFLIP, NCT, BtoB, AOA, UNIQ	6	20%
2	Connotative	BLACKPINK, BABYMONSTER, HIGHLIGHT, RIIZE, ATEEZ, CRAVITY, AHOF, GOLDEN CHILD, DREAMCATCHER	9	30%
3	Social	BOYNEXTDOOR, SUPER JUNIOR, SISTAR, STAYC, THE BOYZ	5	16.7%
4	Affective	STRAY KIDS, PICKUS, EVERGLOW, GFRIEND, WINNER	5	16.7%
5	Thematic	ONEUS, DAY6, YOUNITE, WAYV, WANNAONE	5	16.7%
6	Reflected	-	-	-
7	Collocative	-	-	-
	Total		**30**	**100%**

Based on the table above, a total of 30 data items were collected. Out of the ten word formation processes, seven were identified in the K-pop group names analyzed. These processes include acronym, blending, clipping, coinage, compounding, derivation, and multiple processes, while borrowing, and conversion were not found in the data. The most frequent process is compounding, appearing 12 times and accounting for 40% of the total data. The second most common type is acronym, which makes up 20% of the data, followed by blending at 16,7%. Meanwhile, multiple processes contribute 13,3%, and backformation, clipping, coinage, and derivation each occur once, representing 3,3% respectively. However, no examples of borrowing, backformation or conversion were identified in the dataset.

Furthermore, in terms of meaning, five out of seven types were identified in the K-pop group names, namely conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, and thematic meaning. In contrast, reflected meaning and collocative meaning were not found in the data. The most dominant type is connotative meaning, which appears nine times and constitutes 30% of the total findings. The second most frequent meaning is conceptual meaning, found six times, representing 20% of the total data. Lastly, social, affective, and thematic meanings each appeared five times and accounted for 16.7%. Overall, this distribution shows that connotative meanings are more commonly used in K-pop group names, reflecting the groups' effort to create deeper associations and emotional connections with their audiences.

Discussion

Each word formation process produces a unique and distinct word form. The collected data from English K-pop group names include various processes such as word combination, affixation, word shortening, and internal modification through shifts in word classes. The following section will further elaborate and analyse this word formation processes found in English K-pop group names.

A. Word Formation Processes

a. Acronym

Acronyms are the second most common data found in some of the English K-pop group names that use English in this research. An acronym is formed from the initial letters of several words and then read as a single new word, with the function of creating a more concise and memorable form of a long phrase. The following are some acronyms derived from the names of several K-pop groups using the English language.

Data 1: WAYV

Figure 1 WAYV

The name WAYV is an acronym for "We are your Vision" which consists of four morphemes. We (pronoun), Are (verb), Your (determiner) and Vision (noun). Other acronyms identified in this English language K-pop group's name are STAYC (Star To A Young Culture), NCT (Neo Culture Technology), BtoB (Born To Beat), AOA (Ace of Angels), AHOF (All-time Hall of Famer). These acronyms are all forms of initialisms made out of the initial letters of a string of words, each of which is pronounced independently. Because acronyms contain many morphemes, they are regarded as complex words.

b. Blending

Blending is the process of forming words by combining two or more words, usually by cutting part of each word to create a new, concise form with a combined meaning. Here are some examples of blending that we have taken from several K-pop groups that use English.

Data 2: RIIZE

Figure 2 RIIZE

The name of the group RIIZE is a combination of the words "rise" and "realize." This connection reinforces the group's concept of "realizing and growing together" in relation to growth and achievement. Phonologically, this form combines "ri" from "rise" and 'ize' from "realize," resulting in the new form "RIIZE." In general, K-pop groups use this kind of format to create a modern, unique, and recognizable style. Other blends identified in the names of these English-language K-pop groups are YOUNITE (you and I unite), SISTAR (sister stars), ATEEZ (teen spirit and dreams from A to Z), and CRAVITY (creativity that attracts everyone like gravity). This blending occurs because the words are created by combining two (or more) words into a new word, usually by cutting out some letters from each of the original words.

c. *Clipping*

Clipping is a word formation process in which a longer word is shortened without changing its meaning. This process often occurs to create simpler or more informal forms of words, such as *advertisement* becoming *ad* or *telephone* becoming *phone*.

Data 3: UNIQ

Figure 3 UNIQ

Clipping is also found in one of the K-pop group names. The name UNIQ comes from the word *unique*, meaning "different" or "one of a kind." In this case, the last two letters "ue" are removed to form a shorter version, *UNIQ*. Even though the word is shortened, it still keeps the same meaning and almost the same pronunciation. This kind of clipping is common in the entertainment industry to make names sound more modern and memorable.

d. *Coinage*

Coinage is the process of forming words by creating new words that have never existed before. Usually, coinage comes from brand names, products, or terms that are deliberately created to sound unique and memorable.

Data 4: THE BOYZ

Figure 4 THE BOYZ

An example of coinage can be found in the name of the K-pop group THE BOYZ. This name is not derived from an existing word, but was creatively formed as the group's identity. The word "BOYZ" itself is a modification of the word "boys," where the letter 'S' is replaced with "Z" to give a modern, cool, and more youthful impression. This process is considered coinage because the word was deliberately created for branding purposes, rather than being derived from an existing word through cutting or combining. The name THE BOYZ was created to sound different and attract the attention of fans, while also highlighting the group's concept as a group of young people with strong energy and a fresh style.

e. *Compounding*

Compounding is the process of forming words by combining two or more words to create a new meaning. In this process, words that were

originally separate become a single unit with a specific meaning, often different from the literal meaning of each word.

Data 5: STRAY KIDS

Figure 5 STRAY KIDS

One example of compounding found in K-pop group names is STRAY KIDS. This name is formed from the combination of the words stray "lost" and kids "children". Literally, stray kids can mean "lost children," but in the context of the group's name, the meaning can be deeper, describing young people who stray from the beaten path to find their true selves and create their own path in the world of music. Thus, STRAY KIDS is an example of a compound word that has symbolic and emotional meaning. Therefore, STRAY KIDS is an example of a compound word that has symbolic and emotional meaning. Other examples we found of K-pop group names that use English include ONEUS, BLACKPINK, BIGBANG, BOYNEXTDOOR, BABYMONSTER, PICKUS, KICKFLIP, SUPER JUNIOR, HIGHLIGHT, DAY6, and EVERGLOW.

f. Derivation

Derivation is the process of forming words by adding prefixes or suffixes to base words to create new words with different meanings or parts of speech. We have found one example of derivation from several K-pop groups that use English in their names.

Data 6: WINNER

Figure 6 WINNER

An example of derivation can be seen in the name of the K-pop group WINNER. This name comes from the root word win, which means "to win." The suffix -er is added to this root word to form a noun meaning "a person who wins." Thus, win (verb) becomes winner (noun) through the process of derivation.

g. *Multiple Processes*

Multiple Processes is a word formation process that involves more than one type of morphological process simultaneously. This means that a word can be formed through a combination of two or more processes such as blending, compounding, clipping, or derivation. We have found multiple processes in several K-pop group names that use English in their group names.

Data 7: GFRIEND

Figure 7 GFRIEND

An example can be found in the name of the K-pop group GFRIEND. This name is formed from a combination of the letter "G" taken from the word girlfriend and the word friend. The letter "G" here is the result of clipping, because it is taken from part of the word girl, then combined with friend through a process of compounding. Therefore, the name GFRIEND can be categorized as the result of multiple processes, namely a combination of clipping and compounding. Other group names that fall under multiple processes include WANNAONE, GOLDEN CHILD, and DREAMCATCHER.

B. TYPES OF MEANING

Every group name has a meaning that expresses the identity and concept of the group. K-pop group names are examined for meanings based on Leech's (1981) theory in order to determine the various meanings that each name conveys. Below is an explanation of the semantic meanings that were discovered in the data.

a. Conceptual Meaning

Conceptual meaning refers to a word's literal or dictionary meaning. It stands for the fundamental sense that enables a listener to comprehend a name's straight connection without the need for cultural or emotional interpretation. When a K-pop group name clearly conveys an idea or concept that characterizes the group's identity or mission, it is said to have conceptual meaning. For example, the name "BIGBANG" is derived from the scientific theory of the same name, which denotes a strong start or explosion, a metaphor for the group's first influence on the music industry. In a similar vein, Kpop's NCT, or Neo Culture Technology, conceptually offers a cutting-edge and futuristic system. Another example is BtoB (Born to Beat), which expressly states that the group's goal is to create music and rhythm. These names have clear references and obvious meanings, illustrating how conceptual meaning in K-pop frequently serves as a declarative kind of identification.

b. Connotative Meaning

The emotions, feelings, or other attitudes that a name conjures up in addition to its literal meaning are called connotative meanings. This sort of meaning is everywhere in K-pop, which isn't just where group names are labels but also feelings and images that by evocation does creative work for the group. Consider BLACKPINK. The name is a harmony of strong and beautiful, from two opposite color spectrums: pink - strength and black - beauty. Like this baby monster creates a vivid image of youth and full-on energy, innocence (baby) mixed with ferocity (monster). Then there is then RIIZE (rise + realize from development to aspiration), which encompasses growth and the journey to making it. These examples illustrate how K-pop idols are able to build layered

identities and engage fans on a more emotional level through connotative semantics. It's not just about choosing something interesting, but also about telling a story that resonates across cultures and gives listeners a sense of connection and connection.

c. *Social Meaning*

Social meaning exists through language because it displays how people identify themselves and their cultural background and their sense of community. K-pop groups choose their names to express their personality while creating fan connections through meaningful names. The name BOYNEXTDOOR creates an immediate impression of members who present themselves as friendly and authentic. The name SISTAR unites "sister" with "star" to create a bond between women while highlighting their glamorous and famous status. The name STAYC represents Star To A Young Culture through its modern and youthful appeal which appeals to Generation Z fans. K-pop groups use their group names to establish their identity by linking themselves to social and cultural narratives. The group uses their names to declare their identity while showing fans their place in the world they represent. Through their names K-pop groups create a space for fans to join their narrative about identity and cultural belonging.

d. *Affective Meaning*

The emotional value of names exists through the emotional responses they create in people which include their emotional tone and their attitude and their emotional impact. Group names in K-pop serve as emotional connections to fans because they create deep emotional bonds through their carefully designed names. The name STRAY KIDS addresses young people who experience confusion during their self-discovery journey while expressing their fight for independence and their challenges of becoming adults. The group GFRIEND creates a sense of closeness with their fans through their warm and comforting energy which makes fans feel like they have a reliable friend. EVERGLOW presents itself as a positive force which represents unlimited power and self-assurance. The names of these groups function beyond being memorable because they intentionally create emotional responses that make fans feel at

home and motivated and comfortable. Through affective meaning K-pop groups establish deep emotional relationships with their audience which transforms musical sounds into collective experiences of shared identity and mutual connection.

e. *Thematic Meaning*

The way words are structured in language determines how people understand messages which makes up thematic meaning. K-pop artists create names through creative design to express concepts which include motivation and group solidarity and mutual connection. The group name ONEUS unites "one" with "us" to represent the perfect bond between members and their audience. WANNAONE uses the phrase "wannaone" to represent the group's shared goal of becoming one united team. The name YOUNITE unites "you" with "unite" to strengthen the message of unity which focuses on building connections between people. The group uses structured word arrangements to create meaningful stories through their names which exceed simple linguistic tricks. Through purposeful word arrangement K-pop groups demonstrate their artistic skills while creating emotional connections with fans who understand they belong to a community extending beyond musical entertainment.

The semantic analysis showed that K-pop group names provide the maximum scope of meanings like the types of meaning given by Leech (1981). Out of the types of meaning, connotative meaning is the most frequent meaning in K-pop group names. This indicates that many group names are made metaphorically and symbolically to show their activity, their personality, and their themes. In other words, a name is not only an expression of a group's identity in fact, but also an expression of their solidarity, aspiration, or growth. Although the reflected and collocative meanings are less visible, the social and affective meanings are important in the construction of cultural images and social ties of idols with fans. Since K-pop names are more likely to be transparent than polysemous, it seems like naming in K-pop involves more than just the morphological combination shown above. It's also a cultural strategy, to be something that people all over the world can relate to, and feel part of something bigger.

CONCLUSION

This study finds that morphological creativity has a vital role in determining which type of meaning the K-pop groups name belong to. According to the analysis, among the ten types of word formation processes proposed by Yule (2020), seven types could be discovered in the data, namely; compounding, blending, acronym, clipping, coinage, derivation, and multiple processes, while those that did not occur in this dataset were borrowing, conversion, and back formation. Among them, compounding appears as the most frequent, revealing how combining words may generate strong and catchy names such as BLACKPINK, STRAY KIDS, and ONEUS. Blending and acronymic processes, such as in RIIZE and NCT, also reflect innovation and modernity in word creation. These morphological strategies reveal how the K-pop industry has creatively used language to attract global audiences and build unique concepts for its groups.

Semantically, the meanings identified were: conceptual, connotative, social, affective, and thematic. The most frequent was the connotative meaning, which showed that K-pop group names have been made to express emotion, values, and symbolic concepts that deeply connect to fans. Morphological creativity combined with meaningful expression demonstrates that naming within K-pop does not lie simply in a choice of brand but within a linguistic process through which aspiration and artistic purpose are expressed.

The formation of K-pop group names is a linguistic and cultural phenomenon. English-based names are strategically chosen for international appeal, emotional expression, and cultural symbolism. These group names provide a summary of how language shapes creativity and meanings connected with their concepts through a complex interaction of morphology and semantics. This study emphasizes the fact that in the K-pop industry, morphological creativity goes beyond wordplay to showcase cultural storytelling and the power of languages in making each culture globally recognized.

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APPENDIX

Table 1: The Word Formation Processes in some selected English K-pop group names

Word Formation	Word	Word Break Down
Coinage	THE BOYZ	The (Definite Article) + Boy (Noun) + -z (Suffix). The suffix "-z" is a creative form from the original suffix "-s".
Multiple Process	GFRIEND	Clipping & Compounding: G is a clipping form from the word "Girl". Girl (noun) + Friend (noun)
	WANNAONE	Blending & Compounding Wanna is a blending form from the words Want (verb) + to (preposition). Wanna (verb) + one (pronoun)
	GOLDEN CHILD	Derivational and Compounding: Golden is a derivational form from the words Gold (noun) + -en (suffix). Golden (adjective) + child (noun)
	DREAMCATCHER	Compounding & Derivational: Catcher is a compounding form from the words Catch (verb) + -er (suffix). Dream (noun) + catcher (noun)
Blending	RIIZE	Rise (Verb) + Realize (Verb)
	YOUNITE	You (Pronoun) + Unite (Verb)
	SISTAR	Sister (noun) + Star (noun)
	ATEEZ	A (determiner) + Teen (noun) + (Generation Z)
	CRAVITY	Creative (Adjective) + Gravity (Noun)
Clipping	UNIQ	UNIQ is a clipping form from the word "Unique (adjective)"
Derivation	WINNER	Win (verb) + -er (suffix)
Acronym	WAYV	We (pronoun) + Are (verb) + Your (determiner) + Vision (noun)
	STAYC	Star (noun) + To (preposition) + A (Indefinite Article) + Young (Adjective) + Culture (noun)
	NCT	Neo (adjective) + Culture (noun) + Technology (noun)
	BtoB	Born (adjective) + to (preposition) + Beat (noun)
	AOA	Ace (noun) + of (preposition) + Angels (noun)
	AHOF	All-time (adjective) + hall (noun) + of (preposition) + famer (noun)
Compounding	STRAY KIDS	Stray (Adjective) + Kid (Noun) + -s (Suffix)
	ONEUS	One (noun) + Us (pronoun)
	BLACKPINK	Black (adjective) + pink (adjective)
	BIGBANG	Big (Adjective) + Bang (Noun)
	BOYNEXTDOOR	Boy (noun) + Next (adjective) + Door (noun)

	BABYMONSTER	Baby (noun) + Monster (noun)
	PICKUS	Pick (Verb) + Us (Pronoun)
	KICKFLIP	Kick (verb) + Flip (verb)
	SUPER JUNIOR	Super (adjective) + Junior(noun)
	HIGHLIGHT	High (adjective) + Light (noun)
	DAY6	Day (noun) + 6/six (number)
	EVERGLOW	Ever (adverb) + Glow (noun)

Table 2: The Meaning in some selected English K-pop group names

Types	Word	Meaning
Conceptual	BIGBANG	Derived from the scientific "Big Bang" theory, signifying a great beginning.
	KICKFLIP	Refers to a skateboarding maneuver that demonstrates talent and energy.
	NCT	"Neo Culture Technology", a new, clear, and futuristic concept.
	BtoB	"Born to Beat", musician's literal identity and goal.
	AOA	"Ace of Angel", refers to an excellent and grace concept.
	UNIQ	Means "unique" in literal which simple and straightforward.
Connotative	BLACKPINK	Defines contrast between strength and beauty (black for power and pink for softness)
	BABYMONSTER	Shows the duality with "baby" defines cute and "monster" refers to a powerful energy.
	HIGHLIGHT	Symbolizes brightness and succesess, being the most shining part
	RIIZE	Defines growth and realization, rising to reach dreams.
	ATEEZ	Derived from A to Z, means that they can do everything with passion.
	CRAVITY	Blends "creativity" and "gravity", symbolizing the originality and attraction.
	AHOF	Represents the 9 members and their ambition to be the legend in the industry.
	GOLDEN CHILD	Refers to the perfection and high value.
	DREAMCATCHER	Symbolizes hope, perfection, and turning bad dreams into good ones.
Social	BOYNEXTDOOR	Defines the friendliness and an approachable, ordinary-boy image.
	SUPER JUNIOR	Focuses on a young yet outstanding image in the K-pop hierarchy.
	SISTAR	Represents both the feminime unity and celebrity status.
	STAYC	Means "Star To A Young Culture", reflecting youth identity.

Affective	THE BOYZ	Symbolizes a group of self-assured boys and youth and unity.
	STRAY KIDS	Expresses emotion and youthness, gives a feeling of freedom and struggle.
	PICKUS	Shows a direct emotional appeal to the audience, "please support us."
	EVERGLOW	Represents positive feelings of eternal brightness and hope.
	GFRIEND	Creates warmth and closeness, like a comforting "girlfriend" figure.
	WINNER	Defines emotion and pride, a sense of succes.
Thematic	ONEUS	Focuses on unity, "One Us" shows connection between group and fans.
	DAY6	Refers to six members representing six days, with fans as the seventh.
	YOUNITE	From "you" and "unite", represents togetherness.
	WAYV	Symbolizes the group's connection with their fans, seeing themselves as an aspiration or a representation of the fans' vision.
	WANNAONE	Wordplay on "wanna" and "one", emphasizing ambition for unity.
Reflected	-	-
Collocative	-	-