

## K-Pop V Fansubs, V LIVE and NAVER Dictionary: Fansubbers' Synergy in Minimising Language Barriers

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### ABSTRACT

*The translator's role in delivering K-Pop related content to an international audience has become more important since the expansion of the K-Pop industry throughout the globe. Fans' anticipation of translated versions of K-Pop videos has led to active subbing activities. The NAVER company in Korea has invented a V Fansubs application for assisting V LIVE video subtitling. V LIVE is a digital media hub that gathers K-Pop celebrity-produced videos on a single platform. The unique tools in V Fansubs and V LIVE applications have made fansubbing of videos, which are mainly delivered in Korean, much easier than before. Netizen communities sharing the same interest have revamped the translation practice by collectively working to provide subtitles using V Fansubs software. This research employed descriptive analysis using Bangtan Sonyeondan's (BTS) channel in V LIVE as the main sample in explaining V LIVE, V Fansubs and NAVER Dictionary application functions in detail. This research has successfully showcased technical descriptions in modern fansubbing platforms which are scarcely discussed. The linguistic data recorded in these applications have created a mass data corpus linked to the NAVER Dictionary application that is beneficial for Korean language learners. The software is embedded with special functions where phrasal examples extracted from V LIVE and V Fansub contents can be viewed at the same time. The outcome of this research will hopefully shed some light on fansubbing practices that have previously received mixed reactions among scholars.*

*Keywords: Korean language; K-Pop; Bangtan Sonyeondan (BTS); translation; fansubs*

### INTRODUCTION

Observing South Korea's (henceforth Korea) phenomenal music expansion to the global audience, the question that is probably most widely asked by non-Korean pop music (K-Pop) fans is "How did K-Pop content dominate the internet?". There are a few web portals created in order to deliver K-Pop content smoothly. Other than the K-Pop artists' own labelling companies, a few Korean companies have also played important roles in increasing K-Pop popularity. One such example is the 1theK which is a division of LOEN Entertainment Inc. that distributes and handles music services. In May 2016, 1theK won the Innovation in Brand Renovation category awarded by The Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards (LOEN Entertainment Inc. 2017). LOEN also developed the Melon application for digital software where K-pop listeners can download and stream their favourite artists' songs. Launched in November 2009, this music portal has been ranked number one for eight years in the Korean Brand Power Index chart hosted by the Korea Management Association Consulting (LOEN Entertainment Inc. 2017).

Besides LOEN Entertainment Inc., MNet (abbreviated from Music Network), which is a music portal managed by the CJ E&M company division (Mnet K-Pop 2017), is also responsible for the growth of K-Pop content. One of their official YouTube channels, MNet K-Pop, offers various K-Pop music performance videos which have been broadcasted via television broadcast. Currently, the channel has 4,911,914 subscribers (as of October 2017). Some of their television show highlights are simultaneously aired on the internet. The power of internet broadcasting cannot be taken lightly, especially when it comes to K-Pop related content. For example, during the live streaming of the Bangtan Sonyeondan (BTS) Comeback Show on the 21st of September 2017 at 8:30 p.m. (Korean Standard Time, KST), there were 50,823 users streaming the channel simultaneously (MNet K-Pop 2017).

NAVER Corp. also actively produces internet-based applications and is constantly upgrading their software to cater to international fans who are hungry for K-Pop related content. Serving as a Korean online search engine since 1999, NAVER Corp. has launched a few applications such as LINE (an instant messaging software for digital devices) which is operated by LINE Corp., a NAVER Corp.'s subsidiary internet company that is based in Japan.

The company has moved even further with their latest streaming software, the V LIVE application, which can be downloaded on smart phones. This application is a one stop hub in delivering video content from Korean artists to fans. V LIVE application (<http://m.vlive.tv/home>), developed by NAVER Corp., also has the similar function of providing live streaming content to netizens. However, the broadcasted videos are not related to television programmes like Mnet's video content.

Each artist creates his/her own channel and fans can subscribe to the V LIVE channel in order to get quicker notifications of newly uploaded videos from the artist. The video content can be in any form, such as pre-recorded or a live stream video. What differs between the V LIVE app and other social media platforms such as Facebook Live, Instagram Live or YouTube is that its content is well organised with many useful features such as subtitling, messaging and the heart button which is similar to the LIKE button on Facebook, but it can be pressed multiple times.

The artists can instantly communicate with their fans by reading and providing feedback to the messages sent by their fans while recording. It also has several filters that the artists can insert to alter their facial expression (like fire coming out of the ears to indicate an angry emotion, or fake accessories such as the bunny head and wigs) while talking to their fans. The interactive features that this application possesses is unique and draws a lot of attention from K-Pop lovers. K-Pop artists such as BTS has 6,370,371 subscribers, while EXO has 4,488,074 subscribers and GOT7 has 3,664,059 subscribers (as of October 2017) in the V LIVE app.

This software, which is available on android and iOS, has gathered many K-Pop stars who broadcast their own shows or content to their beloved fans. The reliance on providing entertainment show content without being attached to television programme scheduling has somehow revamped entertainment or show varieties in this century, as the quote in the V LIVE homepage states:

*“You can see what they are seeing in real time from anywhere in the world.”*  
(V LIVE, 2017a)

The K-pop music industry has been evolving, not only in terms of music style and genre but also in the management system spectrum in which they have various platforms to connect fans with their idols. Apart from LOEN Entertainment Inc. and NAVER Corp., another Korean company called DAUM Corp. also has a big influence in connecting Korean artists with communities. The company merged with KAKAKO Corp. in 2014, subsequently

becoming one of the largest Korean internet cafés (online forum) for the DAUM Café software (KAKAO Corp. 2017). DAUM Café offers chat room portals where artists can chat and connect with their fans. However, this application runs only in Korean. Thus, it is difficult for international fans to sign up for a DAUM café account since they would not understand the website's interface.

As most of the K-Pop content in the digital media base such as fan cafés, music videos and even their official SNS (social networking site) accounts are written and published in Korean, an outsider to the K-Pop world might be curious as to how K-Pop content can be delivered to fans worldwide. Thus, the oft-asked question to non-Korean K-pop fans is “How do they understand the K-pop content?” since they do not speak the language.

The growing fandom in the K-Pop planet must be well organised in order to reach fans in every corner of the globe. In reaching out to their global fans, the official account of some K-Pop groups may sometimes have English captions in their videos. One such example is Bangtan Sonyeondan (BTS), a K-Pop group that debuted on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2013. Additionally, other K-Pop groups have their music videos (MV) subtitled by 1theK YouTube channel.

NAVER Corp. has also moved even further with their innovative extension in their V LIVE app, called V Fansubs. This system allows fans to legally subtitle the video content uploaded by their artists. V Fansubs has brought translation activities to another level. Anybody can translate the content provided into any language. The translated script will be shown in the V LIVE video and the translator's account will also be displayed. Furthermore, the translators are appreciated where their rank is showcased in terms of their translation work count. Translation work is counted in the amount of dialogue lines produced, and the ranking is displayed at the top of the V LIVE Fansubs page for each language.

The scarcity of research on fan subtitling (or fansubbing for short) activities via official platforms such as the V LIVE and V Fansubs application has motivated this study. This research investigated the translation practices via the V Fansubs platform in assisting V LIVE content that has mostly been uploaded in Korean. The objective of this research was to analyse the translation system adopted by V LIVE using the V Fansubs application in creating crowd source subtitling by the fans of K-Pop. This research analysed how the latest technologies invented by Koreans have reformed translation activities, particularly in the area of fansubbing.

These subtitling activities on V Fansubs and V LIVE have indirectly generated linguistic data which is linked to the NAVER Dictionary where Korean learners can view expressions taken from the V LIVE channel. Accordingly, the extended use of these subtitling data has indirectly benefitted foreign language studies.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Translation is a crucial process in overcoming language barriers and helping audiences understand the content of foreign language videos via subtitling (visually seen as captions) or dubbing methods (audio form) (Luyken 1991). Translation is not just the mere semantic conversion of a text. There are different aspects of language that must be considered in translation (Catford 1965), including phonology and phonetic usages that produce expressions in the form of graphology and graphitics in the text, as summarised by Halliday (2001). For example, the morpheme structure in the source language can influence the meaning of the text when translated to the targeted language. Besides textual translation, audio-visual translation can also be considered as a sub translation field. The two prominent audio-visual translation strategies are dubbing and subtitling (Gottlieb 1998). The underlying consideration of whether to dub or subtitle depends on the literacy level of the target audience.

Popular anime in Malaysia (for instance, Doraemon & Kiteretsu) are mostly dubbed rather than subtitled since the target audience is mainly children who would better understand the dubbed version due to their relatively low literacy (Sarinah 2014). However, anime such as Naruto and Bleach are aired on TV with subtitled captions since the target audience comprises of teenagers in Malaysia (Sarinah 2014). Szakowska (2005) stated that the dubbing method adopts a domestication strategy that neutralises the foreign content to the targeted culture. On the other hand, the subtitling strategy is considered as a foreignising approach that introduces the culture and language of the original film.

Currently, technology hybridisation in the mass media has developed new approaches in audio translation. ASTRO television broadcast in Malaysia, for example, has subtitling features where some anime series can be viewed in their original audio along with the subtitles, or viewers can choose the dubbed version. Nowadays, consumers of foreign video content have an option to choose the localised version of dubbed audio translation or to be exposed to foreign culture by reading the subtitles while listening to the original audio-visual.

Back in 1999, television broadcasting was technically considered an old technology that would soon be replaced by the internet (Jenkins 2006). Nevertheless, entertainment industries have found various methods for making broadcasting more appealing in order to attract audiences so that these two technologies can coexist (Jenkins 2006). Previously, television broadcasts were only available for viewers in certain countries that had paid for the use of the television channel. In this millennium, television broadcasts can be viewed via the internet by live streaming. Korean music entertainment shows, such as MNet Countdown, broadcast programmes on their official YouTube channel or homepage at the same time as in Korea. Therefore, the number of viewers of the show will increase, and of course, the commercial advertisements inserted in the shows will gain many viewers.

However, live streaming and broadcasted video subtitling in a foreign language, particularly K-pop or even Korean drama (K-drama) related content are usually absent in official platforms. Audio-visual translation is important in delivering the content's message to the fans outside Korea. Thus, fansubbing activities are commonly performed. Fansubbing is one of the practices of translation performed solely by fans. It was actively started by Japanese anime fans around the 1980's and can be described as a work "by fans for fans" (Diaz-Cintas & Remael 2014). Although some of the Japanese anime content was officially translated and provided in mainstream sources during that time, some fans refused to utilise it as it often missed out cultural elements (Carroll 2005 in Gonzalez 2007). The limitations of the translated version of Japanese anime in the international market further led to the massive occurrence of the fansubbing phenomenon (Ramière 2006).

The fansubbing phenomenon has been widely discussed among scholars, particularly in translation works related to Japanese anime subtitling (Gonzalez 2006, O'Hagan 2009). Literature has also focused on other subtitling works, such as the audio-visual subtitling process of Korean drama and films in the Vicki fansubbing website (Dwyer 2012). Jenkins (2006) elaborated on the fansubbing process in one of his case studies, showing that it involved many technical processes which are shared among fans to allow subtitling to progress smoothly. As described by Jenkins (2006), raw anime video and audio is first passed to the fansubbing group's FTP (File Transfer Protocol) computer server. Next, the data is viewed multiple times by the translators while creating a rough coded time and text file using specific programming. The timer then takes over the work by polishing the audio with the translated scripts so that the subtitling is synchronised with the audio. Free software such as Sub Station Alpha (SSA) is commonly employed in this process.

Afterwards, the file is transferred for the typesetting process. This step is necessary to determine the final touches of subtitling, such as the subtitle position, background, font size and colour. The editors then inspect the subtitling content and check for linguistic errors and

subtitling conditions. If the time coding or the subtitles are not in line with the dialogues, the editors will go back to the SSA programme and fix it.

Finally, fans encode the subtitling data file to embed it onto the video files and compress the data to minimise its size by employing the codec application. It is then uploaded to the internet through a distribution channel and the files can finally be downloaded and shared globally. These commonly used stages in the fansubbing process, as outlined by Jenkins' (2006) research result, are similar to the results of Diaz-Cintas and Sanchez's (2006) study. The roles of each fan in completing the subtitling work are summarized by Diaz-Cintas and Sanchez (2006) as follows:

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Raw providers             | Raw' refers to the untranslated video and the person who provides the video has most typically ripped the video off from its original source to be ready for translation. |
| 2. Translators               | Translates the raw video.   |
| 3. Timers                    | Considered as "cueing and spotting" in subtitling, where in and out times of each subtitle will be defined.   |
| 4. Typesetters               | Determines the font style and position as well as synchronizing the scene timing.   |
| 5. Editors and Proof readers | Revises the translation work to ascertain if it fits the scene; if otherwise, they would have to amend the translation.   |
| 6. Encoders                  | Utilises encoding programmes to embed the subtitling to the original screen.  |

According to these fansubbing steps, the process of downloading the original videos (raw video ripping) up to the uploading stage (distribution of the encoded video with subtitles) has to be performed before it can be widely accessed by other fans. Depending on the internet connectivity, the process may take more than one hour for rendering and downloading.

Even though the process involves many technical aspects that need to be completed, these practices indirectly promote shared files and boost the popularity of Japanese anime (Gonzalez 2006). However, it has been criticised by numerous parties, including the owners of the published videos, since the original videos are ripped off and shared without permission (O'Hagan 2009). Fansubbing practices involve several aspects and have long been debated as violating laws, since fans are not professional translators assigned to translate digital media discourse contents, such as anime, dramas, films or music videos (González 2006, Tushnet 2007). Fansubbers are even stamped with the label 'pirates' as their actions are akin to pirates because they steal other people's work and distribute it to the public (Denison 2011).

These ethical issues have affected the fansubbing communities to the point where their downloading channels or websites have been taken down by the authorities. In terms of their YouTube channel, the uploading of subtitled videos without the publisher's consent may lead to copyright infringement or violation, resulting eventually in the channel's closure. Nevertheless, the Korean entertainment industry has come up with a brilliant idea of making fansubbing a legitimate practice since they are aware of the massive data that needs to be translated in order to gain wider audiences for their artists or shows.

NAVER Corp., which invented the V LIVE application, has produced the V Fansub software where fansubbing activities can be performed freely without worrying about legal action as the subtitling process is totally performed via the official V Fansubs platform. Therefore, videos from the V LIVE channel need not be ripped and there is also no necessity for uploading the finished subtitling products to another site. In addition, fans with zero technical background of computer programming, which is required in the subtitling process as previously discussed, can also easily use V Fansubs. These latest fansubbing applications have somehow redefined 'fansub' terms as it is no longer considered as a practice that is associated with illegal piracy.

Although fansubbers are often considered as non-professional translators, experienced fansubbers might deliver good translation work since the professionalism of translation is mostly based on experience. Registered translators also agree that if you are fluent and knowledgeable in both the source and target languages, the translation experience is arguably much more important than academic qualifications (Kang & Shunmugam 2014).

In the case of the V LIVE application created by NAVER Corp., there are 603 channels (as of October 2017). Each channel has tremendous amounts of recorded videos. The BTS channel alone has over 250 videos recorded in the Korean language as the main communication medium (as of October 2017). The approach of the V LIVE application in introducing the V Fansubs feature where fans can freely add subtitles is very helpful for both the fans and the NAVER company since their clients can get more views. Jin (2016) noted that the popular Japanese culture is slowly getting dimmer as they did not utilise many advanced technologies during their glory days. Some have also predicted that the Korean wave (K-wave) will follow a similar path. However, Jin (2016) believes that the K-wave is getting wider attention with the help of modern innovations that are locally produced.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employed descriptive analysis to explain the V Fansubs translation progress featured in their interface for assisting the V LIVE app. This research explained the translation process and showcased the uniqueness of this application, which is not only beneficial to the entertainment industries but also to fans of K-pop who speak various languages.

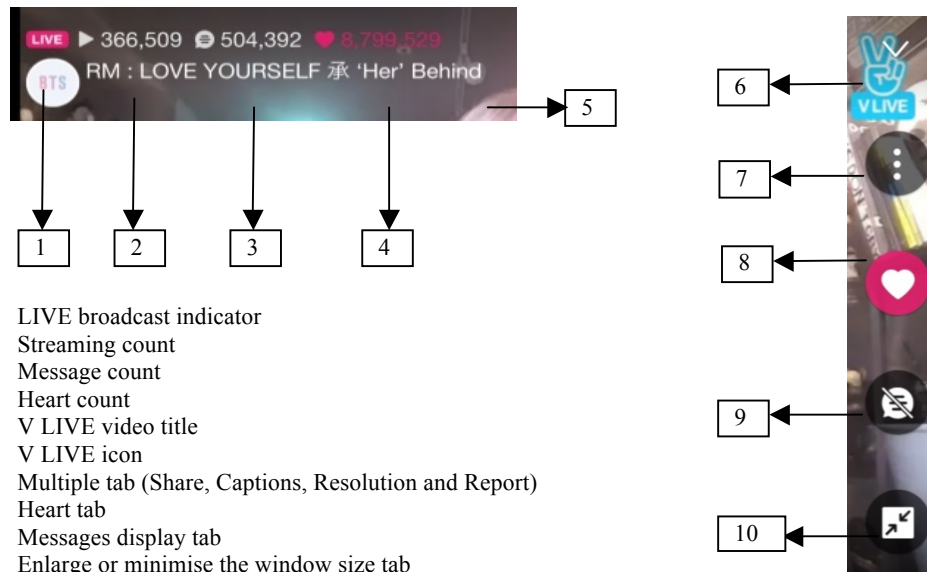
The BTS V LIVE channel was selected as the primary data sample in this research. BTS has shown their popularity among other artists featured in the V LIVE channel by winning the V LIVE Global Popularity Awards in the Gaon Awards ceremony on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2017 (BTS Japan Official Club 2017). The BTS channel in V LIVE was also marked with the highest number of overseas followers (V LIVE 2017b). This research analysed one of the V LIVE broadcasts in this channel which was recorded on 7<sup>th</sup> October around 8:45 p.m. (KST) by Kim Namjoon, a.k.a. RM, who is one of the BTS members-cum-leader of the group.

This particular video log (vlog) recording was selected because the content is related to the BTS new mini album review called Love Yourself “Her”. This album charted at no. 7 in the Billboard 200 Album Chart after being released, which subsequently placed BTS as the first Korean act to secure the rank within the international music chart (Billboard 2017). The broadcasting process and the translation process are further discussed in detail in the following section.

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### V LIVE

The broadcasting of RM’s vlog started around 8:45 p.m. (KST) on the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2017, and the video was broadcasted in real-time. The analysis began by exploring the semiotic elements on the V LIVE application interface which has a few icons on its window. This free application can be downloaded on the smartphone. The right and upper sides of the window contains some tabs and icons such







1. LIVE broadcast indicator
2. Streaming count
3. Message count
4. Heart count
5. V LIVE video title
6. V LIVE icon
7. Multiple tab (Share, Captions, Resolution and Report)
8. Heart tab
9. Messages display tab
10. Enlarge or minimise the window size tab

FIGURE 1. V LIVE window screen layout

The V LIVE window screen layout has a few tabs and icons embedded, as shown in Figure 1. Each tab and icon has its own specific function in assisting the video broadcast. The functions are as follows:

TABLE 1. V LIVE window screen layout's icons and tabs function

No	Icon	Function
1.	LIVE broadcast indicator	To indicate whether this video is a live broadcast or a reuploaded video.
2.	Streaming count	To indicate the current streaming count.
3.	Message count	To indicate the current message count.
4.	Heart count	To indicate the current 'heart' count.
5.	V LIVE video title	To indicate the title of the video.
6.	V LIVE icon	V LIVE logo icon.
7.	Multiple tab	This tab has another four tabs embedded:  <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start; margin-left: 20px;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px; text-align: center;">   <small>Share</small> </div> <div> <p><b>Share:</b> Users can share this video via Facebook, Twitter or Copy URL.</p> </div> </div> <div style="margin-right: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">   <small>Captions</small> </div> <div> <p><b>Captions:</b> Users can choose the type of language to be displayed as subtitles.</p> </div> <div style="margin-right: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">   <small>Resolution</small> </div> <div> <p><b>Resolution:</b> Users can choose resolution level.</p> </div> <div style="margin-right: 10px; text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">   <small>Report</small> </div> <div> <p><b>Report:</b> Users have the right to report the video content if it is not suitable for the audience.</p> </div>
8.	Heart tab	Users can press this tab multiple times to show their love for the featured artists.
9.	Messages display tab	Users can choose to display the messages within the video screen frame or hide it.
10.	Window screen size	Users can enlarge or minimise the displayed window screen size tab.

The V LIVE icon, which has the peace sign of the letter V, is located on the right corner of the broadcast window. With reference to Figure 1, this video, titled “RM: LOVE YOURSELF ‘承’ Behind” was being recorded live and 366,509 users were streaming simultaneously. The screen shot picture was snapped 15 minutes after the live broadcast started. The 15-minute time lapse was selected, since followers of the account may not have realised that there was a live streaming event yet. Nonetheless, the message box was already flooded with fans’ comments, reaching 504,392 counts after only 15 minutes of being broadcasted. The messages appeared on the left corner of the full screen window once the broadcast began. However, the featured artist’s image will be somewhat concealed by the message flow. Thus, there is a tool that offers users the option to hide the message box (Figure 1, No. 9).

This broadcast was mostly delivered in the Korean language. During the live broadcast of a non-pre-recorded video, the subtitles were absent. Therefore, some comments had appeared from international fans saying that they did not understand the video content but they still watched it anyway. For instance, there were comments like, “*I’m staring at his PERFECT face coz I cannot understand any*”. After the live broadcast was completed, a notification message, similar to the one in Figure 2, popped up. Users would not be able to watch the video for a while after the live stream ended. V LIVE would then inspect the content of the video which must abide by the Korean broadcasting regulation laws, before reuploading the video for users to replay.

This live video featuring RM gained a streaming count of 664,157 users (refer Figure 2). Based on this case study, the V LIVE platform is undoubtedly one of the current social media hubs that draw a lot of attention from K-Pop fans. The technology system employed is also well organised. The video content can be as short as introducing your name, to over one-hour long. It also has a notification button for the users’ favourite channels so that they can be alerted when new video content is recording. V LIVE further employs advanced technology to create an interactive function which is incorporated in the system, making the broadcast livelier.

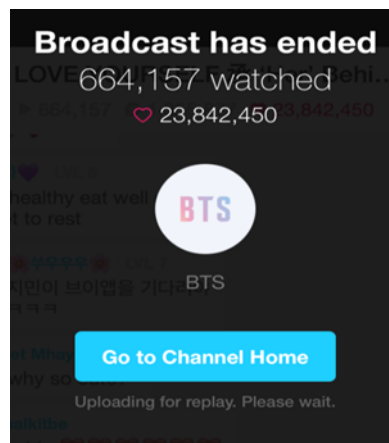


FIGURE 2. Live broadcast ended notification

Featured artists can communicate with their fans while recording by reading all the comments in the message box. For example, after the live broadcast had begun at minutes 42:15, RM wrapped up the session with a question and answer (Q&A) slot to interact with fans who were watching the video. One of the interaction samples can be seen in Excerpt 1 (occurring at minute 43:25) where he read a question left by a fan in the Korean language and



replied to it instantly (until minute 43:41). The phonetic realisation of the excerpt is according to South Korean style Romanization (also called Revised Romanization of Korean).

Excerpt 1

43:25-43:28

베스트 오브 미에서 윤기 형 노래 어땀어요?  
*Beseuteu obeu mieseo Yungi hyeong nora eottaesseoyo?*  
“What do you think of Yoongi singing in ‘Best of Me’?”

43:28-43:30 (He laughed and continued...)

43:30-43:33

하하하 이게 되게 잘했는데  
*Hahaha ige doege jalhaetneunde*  
“He did a great job”

43:33-43:36

약간 우리가 서로 어떤 평소에 노래부르는 걸 아니까 약간  
*Yakgan uriga seoro eotteon pyeongsoe noraebureuneun geol anikka yakgan*  
“But we know when each other sings.”

43:36-43:39

아마 그 정도 그럴 거예요  
*Ama geu hyeongdo geureol geoeyo*  
“I guess he feels the same.”

43:39-43:41

서로 노래부르는 거 약간 못 듣는 게 있어요 솔직히  
*Seoro noraebureuneun geo yakgan mot deutdeun ge isseoyo soljikhi*  
“We can’t stand each other sings”

In Excerpt 1, RM laughed because Yungi (Min Yoongi) is one of the rappers in BTS along with him, hence, they are unfamiliar with Yoongi’s singing voice. Usually, he is in charge of rapping verses. Nevertheless, he praised Yoongi’s effort. This live interaction with the audience is one example of a two-way communication occurrence between the artist and the fans.

He also apologised in the English language, saying that he can’t translate all of his explanations about the album review, but he assured them that the V LIVE app has a great team of translators who will be on the job. The excerpt of his statement on that matter is as follows:

“I’m sorry that I cannot translate this right away, but I know that V App got so many great translators and they will be translating...into like..they will be having some subtitles and...sorry.”

This example shows that Korean artists also rely on the V LIVE subbing team for delivering their video content to their international fans. After three weeks, the uploaded video had already been translated into 18 languages, including English. Other languages included Japanese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Thailand, Spanish, Indonesian and Arabic. Foreign language subbing is entirely contributed by fans. The fans’ user names are also displayed to give credit to the translators who took the time to voluntarily translate the video.

V FANSUBS

The translation process was accomplished via the V LIVE fansubbing application called V Fansubs. This application was specially created for fans to subtitle V LIVE content. In order

to start the translation work, fans must register as users and log in to continue with the subtitling process. The registration is free of charge, but this software can only be used via computer. In subtitling, before starting the translation, the translators must create a timebar. They must cut the dialogue into a few chunks (audio starting point and ending point) according to the speaker's dialogue line. Creating a timebar consumes a lot of time and effort since they have to carefully cut the dialogue in order for it to be translated easily. Such work can now be done by fans. As with translators, the timebar contributors will also receive credit, and the amount of timebars they have created will be displayed.

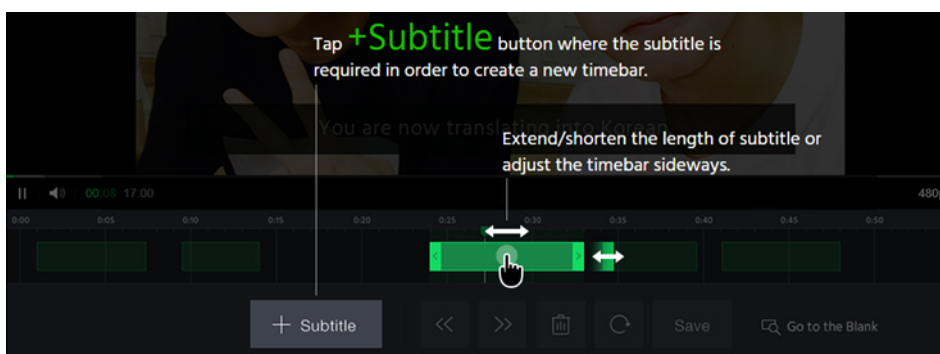


FIGURE 3. Timebar frame

The timebar can be created by tapping the subtitle button, available in the timebar frame. Move the timeline to adjust the length of time that the video needs to be cut. Fans who have no programming knowledge can also create timebars easily using this application. Once the timebar is ready, translators select the language to translate into. To enable translations to run smoothly, the translators can refer to the available languages as the source language to be translated. In V LIVE, translators do not necessarily have to translate the video from the Korean language as it can also be done from the English translation available. If the English language translation is already finished and available in the video, translators can refer to the English subtitling and translate the video content from the English language, instead of the Korean language.

In Figure 4, the subtitling frame appears on the left side of the V LIVE video in the V Fansubs application. Hence, the translator can watch the video while concurrently working on the subtitling. The video will mostly be translated from the Korean language first, since that is the main language used in the video. However, the translator can choose the source language from any available translation that was previously accomplished, as reference. For example, in Figure 4, the translator selected the English language as the source language and translated it to the target language which is Japanese. The translation was carried out by a fan and his user identification (ID) can be seen under the translation history tab. This translation was conducted on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2017 which was a day after the V LIVE video was recorded.

This application is very easy to use since fans need to only insert the translation in the box given. The dialogues are separated according to the timebar line that was done by other fans in advance. Subtitling boxes will appear in yellow to indicate that the dialogue line is being played in the video.

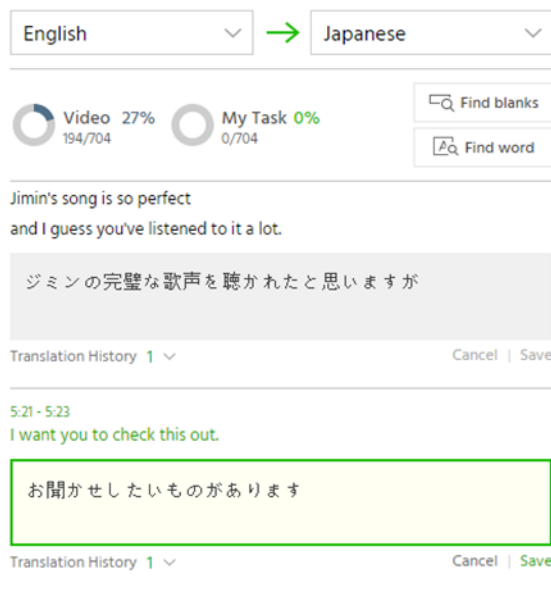


FIGURE 4. Subtitling frame

The translation from Figure 4 can be seen clearly in Excerpt 2.

Excerpt 2

5.17-5.21

Jimin's song is so perfect and I guess you've listened to it a lot.

ジミンの完璧な歌声を聴かれたと思います

*Jimin-no kanpeki-na utagoe-o kikareta-to omoimasu-ga*

5.21-5.23

I want you to check this out.

お聞かせしたいものがあります

*okikasetai mono-ga arimasu*

During subtitling, the video will automatically pause so that the translators will have time to insert the translation. After subtitling the selected timebar dialogue, the translation content will be saved. The subtitling procedure using V Fansubs is fan-user-friendly where not a lot of technical techniques need to be performed compared to the ones described by Jenkins (2006) and Diaz-Cintas and Sanchez (2006). In sum, there are only two steps that need to be performed by the fans in order to do the subtitling via V Fansubs, compared to the six steps in the traditional fansubbing practice. The two steps are:

1. Timebar Determines starting and ending conversations by dividing the dialogues into small chunks.
2. Translator Translate video content.

Once submitted, V LIVE will monitor the translation work and review the accuracy of the translation, as well as check for the suitability of the translation work according to the V Fansubs guidelines (<http://subtitle.vlive.tv/guide>). The guidelines under the “translation school” on the thread of the V Fansubs sites includes ten detailed instructions on how translation can be done in certain scenario. From the utilisation of numbers, question marks, usage of brackets and linguistic explanations, the guidelines in V Fansubs can assist in educating amateur translators. Some of the examples extracted from the sites can be seen below (guideline number seven):

### 7. Korean Vocabulary

7.1 Use the Romanized spelling for Korean food. Always double check by searching the Korean food names on the Internet and feel free to give a short explanation on the dish in round brackets.

For example, *kimchi jjigae* (kimchi stew) or *gopchang* (grilled small intestines).

7.2 Korean games should be written in the English form, if possible. If the game is difficult to translate, use the Romanized spelling and give a short explanation in round brackets. For example, “Rock, Paper, Scissors” has an English name, so it is perfectly fine to use. However, *mukjjippa* (Korean style rock, paper, scissors) is not very easy to translate, so it is better to write it phonetically.

7.3 Difficult Korean vocabulary can lose its meaning if you try to literally translate it. In these situations, use the Romanized spelling and explain in round brackets to help viewers understand the meaning.

For example, “*sunbae*” is a term usually used for your seniors at work. You can write “*sunbae*” and follow it with (a Korean term for senior).

(V Fansubs 2017)

One V LIVE video can be translated by more than one contributor. In addition, the translators can choose to subtitle the whole video or just a certain number of lines. The translation progress of each translation work will be displayed under the ‘STATUS’ bar (refer to Figure 5). In Figure 5, the translation progress of the Japanese subtitling (left) and English subtitling (right) is displayed (taken on 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2017). After the ‘Last Activity’ column, the contributor’s ID list is shown.

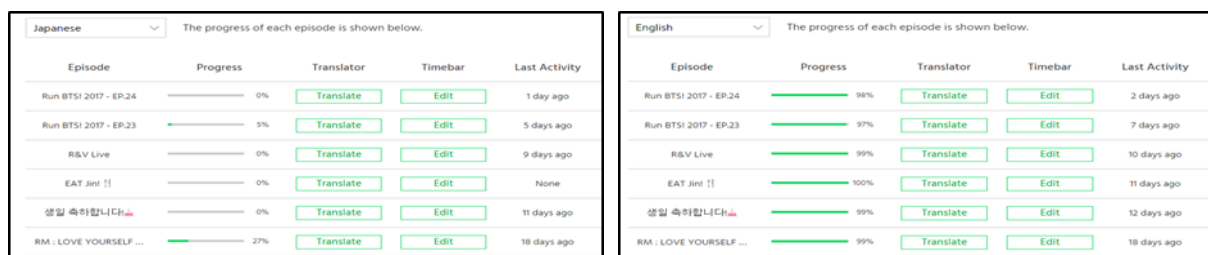


FIGURE 5. Subtitling progress

As described above, this application is well managed and fans can do subtitling without worrying about copyright issues, since the translation work is done entirely by using the V LIVE platform and saved in their channel. Unlike previous fansubbing practices elaborated by Jenkins (2006) where fans had to face many technical aspects to work on the subtitling, this application comes equipped with user-friendly functions for the translators. The translators’ contribution in subtitling is very much appreciated by the V Fansubs team who welcomes more fans to get involved in fansubbing activities, as can be viewed in the quote available on their website:

“Thanks to V LIVE fans, now we can watch a variety of entertainment shows with subtitles in different languages. Share your translation, Share your happiness.”

(V LIVE 2017c)

### NAVER KOREAN-ENGLISH DICTIONARY

The V LIVE and V Fansubs application functions have been further expanded by integrating the contents in both platforms with the NAVER Korean-English Dictionary application. This website was also developed by the NAVER Corp. company where users can look up the meaning of searched keyword phrases and learn Korean. This digital dictionary is equipped with examples of phrases extracted from the V LIVE video content, as well as translation

examples from the V Fansubs database. For instance, if a user wanted to search this Korean keyword, 평소 /*pyeongso*/ (usual), he can get the meaning, along with an example of the usage taken from the V LIVE and V Fansubs content through the NAVER dictionary website

Excerpt 3

- i. (example extracted from 2PM channel)  
평소에는...  
*Pyeongsoeneun...*  
I usually don't.
- ii. (example extracted from B1A4 channel)  
평소에요? - 네.  
*Pyeongsoeyo? - ne.*  
Usually? - Yeah.
- iii. (example extracted from SEOTAIJI channel)  
그냥 평소대로.  
*Geunyang pyeongsodaero.*  
I danced as usual.
- iv. (example extracted from BTS channel)  
약간 우리가 서로 어떤 평소에 노래부르는 걸아니까 약간  
*Yakgan uriga seoro eotteon pyeongsoe noraebureuneun geol anikka yakgan*  
“But we know when each other sings.”

In addition to this unique dictionary feature, users can click on the sentence example to get redirected to the selected V LIVE video where the dialogues have been mentioned. This innovation also enables Korean learners to listen to the actual phrasal usage and pronunciation of the searched keywords.

In Excerpt 3, the V LIVE video content and V Fansubs translation data previously mentioned in Excerpt 1, also appear in the list of phrases. The usage of 평소 /*pyeongso*/ can be clearly seen in the dialogue line (example extracted from the BTS channel). Nonetheless, the translated version of this dialogue had omitted the meaning of lexical ‘평소’ by the translator. This dialogue was supposed to be translated as:

“But we know how we usually sing each other’s songs.”

평소 /*pyeongso*/ is an adjective which means ‘usual’ and it can be transformed into an adverb when attached with the case marker 에 /*e*/ and then, it becomes 평소에 /*pyeongsoe*/ (see Excerpt 3i, 2ii and 2iv).

Despite the inaccurate translation made by the fan who subbed the work, the general meaning is still understandable. Furthermore, V Fansubs provides editing services which can be performed by fans who wish to refine and edit previously translated work. Fans can submit editing requests to the V Fansubs team and get approval from the admin before correcting the instances of wrong or inaccurate translations. Some of the editing requests can be seen in the forum section of the V LIVE page. These are a few comments left by members of the V Fansubs translators:

Fansubber 1:

I would like to edit a few words of BTS (방탄소년단) LOVE YOURSELF Highlight Reel '起承轉結' in Russian

Fansubber 2:

i like it part 2 eng trans, when RM rap... is not that he said... i'm willing to edit the translation if i'm allowed to :)

Fansubber 3:

Hello!. I would like to be able to edit the subtitles of the video "고마워요 아미! Top Social A.R.M.Y!", since the current Spanish translation is not quite correct

These requests are among a few examples from the fans who are willing to edit the V LIVE videos. They are concerned about the accuracy of the translated video and want to enhance the subtitles. The V Fansubs community can share their opinion and questions through this forum platform in V LIVE. The V Fansubs application also gains recognition from fansubbers as well (refer to Fansubber 4 comment). Fans even unite and gather to make subtitles of their chosen language pairs more reliable.

Fansubber 4:

Wassup guyz, Im a 19 years fansubber and I translate BTS videos in french :) V live is a very amazing app! Thx...

Fansubber 5:

For Indonesian Fans. I think we should unite to translate Bangtan videos. So the content of subtitle turns out better. If you mind, lets have a group/team to sub...

## CONCLUSION

This research explicitly explored the V Fansubs application function, as well as its contribution to translation and subtitling areas for assisting V LIVE video content posted by Korean celebrities. All in all, this application is the effort of teamwork of all the fans involved. Fans have divided their roles in constructing timebars, subtitling and even editing. The synergism between the fans has helped in the rapid transfer of Korean video content into many languages. It is evident that the role of fans in spreading K-Pop content is significant.

The fans' commitment to producing subtitles is highly appreciated and has changed the perception of fansubbing activity, as elaborated in the research output. A common practice of fansubbing usually requires several technical processes, and fansubbers must also use different software for each step, in order to subtitle a video and upload it to the internet. However, the approach taken by NAVER, the company that invented a very useful software (V LIVE) and created a place for fansubbers to subtitle the performances of their beloved artists (V Fansubs), has benefited many parties. In the BTS channel alone, statistically, there are 54 languages available (as of November 2017). Hence, BTS fans (particularly from outside Korea) can enjoy Korean videos with subtitles in their preferred language.

Arguments highlighted among scholars on the negative aspects of fansubbing activities such as illegal downloads and uploads of videos can be put to rest if other broadcast companies take similar initiatives to build platforms for fansubbers to do subtitling. The accuracy of the translation work done under the V Fansubs application, however, is still dubious. In some cases, translators are seen having difficulties with subtitling because of the audio quality of the video that makes it hard to grasp what is spoken. Furthermore, if the artist speaks in dialects foreign to the translator, it can also lead to subtitling errors. These factors are among the research limitations of this study since it is hard to determine the accuracy of the translation. Even so, from the examples given (comments by Fansubbers 1 - 3), fansubbers on V Fansubs which is based on netizen community subtitling, can monitor each other's translations and help by editing the submitted subtitled work.

V Fansubs software really depicts the "by fans for fans" quote, and the synergy among the fansubber community has somehow changed the audio-visual subtitling field into one that is much faster and more reliable. This collective work also receives acknowledgement from the video producers (V LIVE) themselves and creates a healthy translation environment where fans can safely do subtitling without worrying about copyright

infringements or other legal matters. In addition, this study has also successfully highlighted the social practice among K-Pop fans in terms of providing translations for their favourite artists.

Furthermore, the V LIVE and V Fansubs software, which are linked to the NAVER Dictionary application, have brought subtitling practice into something that is much more meaningful and helpful for learners of the Korean language. This system has formed a mass corpora database, embedded with video and audio examples. Corpus data can be utilised as references in determining the application of certain words in actual speech. This will subsequently, be beneficial in linguistic studies (Phoocharoensil 2017). Korean technology advancement has supported linguistic development among digital users. In this century, fans from all over the world can be connected together on one platform and participate in a fan-based working hub. Korean software developers have manifested their crucial contribution in assisting K-pop's increasing popularity through the use of cutting edge technology, as can be seen in this research output. Moreover, language barriers are minimised, thanks to these innovative applications.

Future research can be carried out to assess consumer satisfaction of V Fansubs and V LIVE users in utilising these applications. The result may be useful in upgrading the application's services for better performance in the future.

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