



Animal-like Faces in Korean: Mapping Collocative Meanings of *Gangajisang* and *Goyangisang*

¹Fomi Okiya Putra, ¹*Putu Pramania Adnyana, ¹Usmi

¹ Korean Language and Culture Department, Faculty of Humanities, University of Indonesia. Jl. Prof. DR. Selo Soemardjan, Pondok Cina, Kecamatan Beji, Kota Depok, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author e-mail: ppramania@ui.ac.id

Received: January 2026; Revised: March 2026; Accepted: August 2026; Published: September 2026

Abstract

In Korean culture, individuals frequently associate facial features with specific animals to describe a person's impression or charm, a practice known as *dongmulsang* (animal-like face). Terms such as *gangajisang* (puppy-like face) and *goyangisang* (cat-like face) are commonly employed; however, such comparisons may lead to misunderstandings in cross-cultural communication. This study investigates the collocative meaning of *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* based on their significant collocates within the Korean Web 2018 (KoTenTen18) corpus, accessed via Sketch Engine. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, significant collocates were identified and categorized into nouns, adjectives, and verbs to analyze their usage patterns and semantic associations. The results indicate that both expressions are frequently used in Korean society to describe facial appearance, personality, and overall impression through animal-related metaphors. The term *gangajisang* typically denotes someone perceived as cute, warm, and friendly, whereas *goyangisang* describes an individual regarded as attractive yet aloof or chic. Such evaluations are generally positive and subjective, reflecting cultural tendencies to associate human attributes with animal imagery. In conclusion, this research demonstrates that corpus-based semantic analysis can elucidate language use and cultural perceptions embedded within everyday expressions.

Keywords: Animal-like face; Collocative meaning; Corpus linguistics; Collocation; Korean terms

How to Cite: Putra, F.O., Adnyana, P.P., & Usmi, U. (2026). Animal-like Faces in Korean: Mapping Collocative Meanings of *Gangajisang* and *Goyangisang*. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 6(3), 1307-1318. doi: <https://doi.org/10.36312/jolls.v6i3.3981>



<https://doi.org/10.36312/jolls.v6i3.3981>

Copyright© 2026, Putra et al.

This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) License.



INTRODUCTION

Language functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a reflection of speakers' cognitive and cultural frameworks. As Scarino (2010) notes, language and culture form an inseparable whole rooted in social and cultural contexts. Consequently, linguistic expressions are shaped by the cultural values and worldviews of their speakers, influencing how meaning is expressed and interpreted. These cultural underpinnings often lead to distinctive conceptualizations across languages and communities. A striking example appears in Korean and Indonesian interactions, particularly in the act of giving compliments. In Korean culture, facial features are sometimes described using animal-based expressions such as *gangajisang* (강아지상, 'puppy-like face') and *goyangisang* (고양이상, 'cat-like face') to convey admiration or charm Youn and Kim (2024). In contrast, similar expressions may sound offensive in Indonesian, where comparing a person to an animal can imply insult rather than praise. This contrast illustrates how language mirrors cultural perception. To explore how such expressions convey culturally specific meanings, this study examines *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* through corpus-based collocational analysis, focusing on the cultural connotations embedded in the concept of *dongmulsang* (동물상, 'animal-like face').

In contemporary Korean society, animal-like face expressions have become a common way of describing appearance in everyday interaction, online communication, and popular media. Previous research has shown that beauty standards and appearance-related evaluations play a significant role in South Korean society (Lin & Raval, 2020). Within this context, expressions such as *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* have emerged as culturally recognizable categories for describing and discussing facial appearance. Their widespread use suggests that they embody shared social and cultural understandings of appearance, making them a valuable subject for investigating how cultural perceptions are reflected in language use.

Leech (1981) emphasizes the importance of associative meaning, particularly collocative meaning, for understanding the relationship between language and culture. Collocative meaning emerges from the habitual co-occurrence of words, reflecting shared linguistic and cultural conventions (Hoey, 2012; Shin, 2006; Sinclair, 1991). Sinclair (2004) further explains that lexical choices are not independent because the selection of one word significantly influences the words that typically follow. This indicates that lexical items and their contextual environments are inseparable in the construction of meaning. Based on Firth's concept of prosody, Sinclair argues that meaning tends to diffuse across adjacent words, thereby generating an inherent indeterminacy within language, where the boundaries between individual meanings are indistinct.

Corpus linguistics provides a systematic methodology for investigating these patterns by examining authentic language use within naturally occurring contexts (Baker, 2020; McEnery & Hardie, 2012; Stefanowitsch, 2020). In accordance with Firth's principle that "you shall know a word by the company it keeps," collocation analysis uncovers implicit semantic relationships that extend beyond dictionary definitions (Greaves & Warren, 2010). Through this method, meanings are regarded as relational and culturally rooted, reflecting how linguistic communities encode values and social perceptions through their habitual word choices. Michaud (2013) further clarifies this concept by asserting that collocations are significant because they reveal how a word associates with specific meanings within particular environments. Consequently, collocative meaning refers to the significance a word acquires when it "glues itself" to another word, forming a cohesive and culturally meaningful phrase.

Okeke and Egbuta (2017) also demonstrates that collocational meaning extends beyond the inherent semantics of individual lexical items, as it is shaped by the specific words with which they habitually co-occur. Such collocational patterns in Igbo language used in Nigeria can yield compositional or figurative meanings that are not recoverable from the component words in isolation. These perspectives demonstrate that collocative meaning is relational, context-dependent, and culturally grounded. It arises not solely from individual words but from the patterns in which speakers habitually position them, thereby reflecting shared values, perceptions, and categorizations of the world.

Although collocation studies have been widely conducted across various languages, research specifically focusing on Korean collocations and their cultural or semantic dimensions remains limited. Kim (1999) distinguished between presuppositional and habitual collocations, emphasizing how the directional flow of meaning operates asymmetrically between a node word and its collocates. Subsequently, Haeyon (2009) analyzed the Korean term 'eolgul' (얼굴, face) to demonstrate how collocational usage extends metonymically and metaphorically to notions of identity and social evaluation. Jang (2011) also makes a significant contribution to Korean collocation research by analyzing neologisms as collocational units rather than isolated lexical items. The study illustrates that new Korean words frequently form stable "neologism collocations," whose meanings emerge through patterned combinations influenced by analogy and metonymy. Jang's findings highlight that these emerging

collocational patterns reveal how contemporary Korean speakers construct and expand meaning through habitual word pairings.

In the field of applied linguistics, Cuajaya and Usmi (2022) examined errors in particle–predicate collocations among Indonesian learners of Korean, while Adnyana et al. (2024) investigated how body-related collocations in Korean news articles reflect gendered and social ideologies. However, there remains a scarcity of research exploring how particular Korean collocations encode culturally embedded meanings related to appearance. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates the collocative meanings of *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* in the Korean Web 2018 (KoTenTen18) corpus. Accordingly, this study addresses the following research question: How do the collocational patterns of *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* construct associative meanings that reflect Korean cultural perceptions of facial appearance and personality?. By identifying their significant collocates and examining their semantic associations, this study aims to uncover how these expressions construct Korean cultural perceptions of facial appearance and personality. The analysis focuses on linguistic data extracted from authentic online contexts with the scope limited to collocational patterns that reveal associative meanings within Korean discourse.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative analyses to obtain a comprehensive understanding of collocational patterns in Korean (Sugiyono, 2018). Mixed-methods design was considered appropriate because this study aimed not only to identify statistically significant collocational patterns but also to interpret the cultural meanings embedded in those patterns. The design followed a sequential explanatory model (Creswell & Creswell, 2017), which commenced with quantitative analysis to identify significant collocates of *gangajisang* (강아지상, ‘puppy-like face’) and *goyangisang* (고양이상, ‘cat-like face’), followed by qualitative interpretation to elucidate their cultural and semantic implications. The quantitative findings provided empirical evidence of recurring lexical associations, while qualitative analysis enabled an in-depth examination of how these associations reflect cultural perceptions of appearance. This approach allowed the researcher to move from statistical co-occurrence patterns to deeper cultural interpretations, consistent with the aims of corpus-assisted discourse studies (Partington, 2010).

Data Source and Research Sample

The data were drawn from the Korean Web 2018 (KoTenTen18) corpus accessible through Sketch Engine. Sketch Engine is a large-scale corpus containing approximately 1.7 billion words collected from diverse online sources such as news articles, blogs, and web forums. These sources provide a representative sample of contemporary Korean language use across multiple registers. Within this corpus, 72 instances of *gangajisang* and 140 instances of *goyangisang* were identified and used as the research sample. These occurrences were sufficient to capture stable collocational tendencies. Grammatical collocates, such as particles and auxiliary verbs, were excluded from the analysis because they do not contribute to semantic interpretation.

Instruments and Procedures

The primary research instrument employed in this study was Sketch Engine, a widely used corpus analysis platform designed to investigate lexical patterns, word associations, and contextual language use in large collections of texts (Kilgariff et al., 2014). The tool was selected because it enables systematic identification of collocational relationships and provides concordance-based evidence for interpreting how particular

lexical items function in authentic contexts. In identifying significant collocates, this study applied the LogDice association measure, which is considered effective for detecting lexical items that demonstrate strong and meaningful co-occurrence patterns while remaining relatively stable across corpora of different sizes (Yuliawati, 2018). The analytical parameters were established as follows: a span of -5 to +5 words surrounding the node word, a minimum corpus frequency of three occurrences, and a minimum frequency of two occurrences within the specified span.

The research procedure consisted of four principal stages. First, during data collection, the node words *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* were entered into Sketch Engine to retrieve their occurrences and surrounding lexical environments. Second, during data processing, statistically significant collocates were extracted using the LogDice measure. Third, during data analysis, the identified collocates were classified according to their grammatical categories, particularly nouns, adjectives, and verbs, and subsequently interpreted in terms of their semantic associations with the node words. Finally, during conclusion drawing, the findings were synthesized to explain the broader cultural meanings represented by the observed collocational patterns. To strengthen the validity of the analysis, concordance lines were further examined through the KWIC (Key Word in Context) display. This contextual verification ensured that interpretations derived from statistical associations corresponded with authentic language use and accurately reflected the semantic functions of each collocate across different corpus contexts.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted in two stages: quantitative identification and qualitative interpretation. In the quantitative stage, the top 30 significant lexical collocates for each node word were selected based on LogDice scores. Although LogDice scores below 1 indicate a weak statistical association, several low-scoring collocates were retained because they appeared in semantically salient contexts and contributed meaningfully to the qualitative interpretation of *gangajisang* and *goyangisang*. This approach is consistent with corpus-assisted discourse studies, where contextual significance may outweigh raw statistical strength. The selected collocates were classified into lexical categories, including nouns, adjectives, and verbs. This categorization enabled the examination of different dimensions of meaning construction, such as descriptive attributes expressed through adjectives, personality traits conveyed through nouns, and behavioral tendencies represented by verbs. The collocates identified in the quantitative stage subsequently guided the qualitative analysis. Concordance lines containing the node words and their significant collocates were examined to identify recurring associative meanings and contextual patterns.

Drawing on theories of associative and collocative meaning (Leech, 1981; Sinclair, 1991) as well as the principles of corpus-assisted discourse analysis (Baker, 2020), collocates that frequently co-occurred with the node words were interpreted as reflecting concepts and attributes commonly associated with *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* in Korean discourse. The interpretation was based on patterns that appeared consistently across multiple concordance lines and contextual examples rather than on isolated occurrences. By comparing different usage contexts, recurring semantic tendencies were identified and subsequently analyzed to explore how collocational patterns contribute to cultural understandings of appearance and personality. Through this dual-stage process, the study sought to explain how linguistic patterns surrounding *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* encode Korean cultural conceptions of facial appearance and personality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the search results for *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* within the KoTenTen18 corpus, the pertinent collocates for each term are provided in the

subsequent tables. Table 1 exhibits the significant collocates for *gangajisang*, whereas Table 2 displays those for *goyangisang*.

Tabel 1. List of Significant Collocates for *gangajisang*

No.	Collocate	Log Dice	No.	Collocate	Log Dice
1.	<i>goyangisang</i> (cat-like face)	11.29	16.	<i>sunhan</i> (gentle)	3.83
2.	<i>goyangisanggwa</i> (cat-like face (and))	10.71	17.	<i>wemoro</i> (by appearance)	3.66
3.	<i>goyangisangeuro</i> (with a cat-like face)	10.25	18.	<i>Jisooneun</i> (Jisoo)	3.53
4.	<i>daramjwisang</i> (squirrel-like face)	9.77	19.	<i>gubyeolhal</i> (to classify)	3.23
5.	<i>meommui</i> (puppy)	9.75	20.	<i>useul</i> (to smile)	2.54
6.	<i>Goyangisangi</i> (cat-like face)	9.62	21.	<i>baneungdo</i> (reaction (also))	2.44
7.	<i>dajeonghamyeon</i> (sweet)	9.61	22.	<i>eolguldo</i> (face (also))	2.36
8.	<i>Yeineun</i> (Yein)	8.73	23.	<i>gongtongjeomi</i> (similarity)	2.09
9.	<i>joahagodeun</i> (to like)	7.80	24.	<i>gatgido</i> (seems like)	1.42
10.	<i>hwanhaejineun</i> (bright)	7.16	25.	<i>boigido</i> (appears)	1.42
11.	<i>hakchangsioreneun</i> (during school days)	6.63	26.	<i>bojamyeon</i> (when looking at)	1.13
12.	Park Boyoung	5.91	27.	<i>gwiyeoun</i> (cute)	1.11
13.	<i>konsebgwa</i> (concept (and))	4.62	28.	<i>joahanda</i> (likes)	0.91
14.	<i>bangsongina</i> (broadcast (or))	4.51	29.	<i>eolguri</i> (face)	0.87
15.	<i>wemoneun</i> (appearance)	4.12	30.	<i>eolgure</i> (on the face)	0.48

Based on Table 1, *gangajisang* frequently co-occurs with words related to positive evaluations, including *dajeonghada* (sweet), *hwanhaejida* (bright), *joahada* (to like), *sunhada* (gentle), *utda* (to smile), and *gwiyeobda* (cute). It also appears alongside words expressing physical appearance, such as *eolgul* (face) and *wemo* (appearance). These patterns indicate that, in general, *gangajisang* is used to convey positive impressions, particularly regarding a person's facial appearance.

Tabel 2. List of Significant Collocates for *Goyangisang*

No.	Collocate	Log Dice	No.	Collocate	Log Dice
1.	<i>gangajisangeuro</i> (with a puppy-like face)	10.38	16.	<i>gataseoyo</i> (similar to)	3.16
2.	<i>gangajisang</i> (puppy-like face)	10.00	17.	<i>sangi</i> (image)	3.08
3.	<i>gangajisanggwa</i> (puppy-like face (and))	9.43	18.	<i>jeonhyeongjeogin</i> (typical)	2.80
4.	<i>daramjwisang</i> (squirrel-like face)	8.84	19.	<i>membeodeul</i> (members)	2.78
5.	<i>gangajisangin</i> (person with a puppy-like face)	8.82	20.	<i>meikeueob</i> (makeup)	2.49
6.	<i>horangisangeun</i> (tiger-like face)	8.80	21.	<i>nalkaroun</i> (sharp)	2.44
7.	<i>gwansangida</i> (physiognomy)	7.70	22.	<i>wemoreul</i> (appearance)	2.40
8.	<i>nunmaeneun</i> (eye shape)	7.02	23.	<i>dalmatda</i> (similar)	2.34
9.	<i>nunmaewa</i> (eye shape (and))	6.66	24.	<i>jongnyureul</i> (type)	2.19
10.	<i>hakchangsioreneun</i> (during school life)	6.49	25.	<i>nuneun</i> (eyes)	1.47
11.	<i>senseuwa</i> (sense)	6.03	26.	<i>gwiyeoun</i> (cute)	1.11
12.	<i>gubyeolhago</i> (to classify)	5.32	27.	<i>paesyen</i> (fashion)	0.94

No.	Collocate	Log Dice	No.	Collocate	Log Dice
13.	<i>miini</i> (beautiful woman)	5.32	28.	<i>dalmeun</i> (resembling)	0.88
14.	<i>neongneokaji</i> (enough)	4.60	29.	<i>gatgido</i> (also similar)	0.83
15.	<i>nunchiga</i> (sensitivity)	3.60	30.	<i>insangeul</i> (impression)	0.14

As shown in Table 2, the term *goyangisang* frequently co-occurs with words associated with physical appearance, including *gwansangida* (physiognomy), *nunmae* (eye shape), *wemoreul* (appearance), *meikeueob* (makeup), *nuneun* (eyes), *sangi* (image), and *insang* (impression). Furthermore, *goyangisang* commonly appears alongside words that convey positive evaluations, such as *miin* (beautiful woman) and *gwiyeobda* (cute). This pattern indicates that *goyangisang* is generally utilized in evaluative contexts, particularly for describing or assessing a person's physical appearance and overall image.

The comparison of the collocational patterns of *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* reveals three notable tendencies. First, both expressions frequently co-occur with words related to physical appearance. This indicates that they function as culturally recognized categories for describing facial characteristics. Second, both terms are associated with positive evaluative expressions which suggest that they are generally used in favorable contexts. Third, although they share some evaluative and appearance-related collocates, differences in their collocational profiles suggest that each expression evokes distinct associative meanings. These findings provide an initial indication that *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* represent different cultural conceptualizations of appearance, which are explored in greater detail through the following collocational analysis.

Based on the findings in Tables 1 and 2, the subsequent analytical step involves categorizing these significant collocates by their grammatical classes to identify the entities, attributes, or actions most frequently associated with *gangajisang* and *goyangisang*.

Collocational Analysis of *Gangajisang* (Puppy-like Face)

Based on Table 1, were classified into nouns, adjectives, and verbs to examine different dimensions of meaning construction associated with *gangajisang*, including entities, attributes, and actions. This classification is presented in the table below.

Table 3. Significant Collocates of *Gangajisang* by Word Class

Word Class	Significant Collocates
Noun	<i>goyangisang</i> (cat-like face), <i>daramjwisang</i> (squirrel-like face), <i>meommmui</i> (puppy), <i>Yein</i> , <i>hagchangsiyeol</i> (school life), <i>Park Boyoung</i> , <i>keonseb</i> (concept), <i>bangsong</i> (broadcast), <i>wemo</i> (appearance), <i>Jisoo</i> , <i>baneung</i> (reaction), <i>eolgul</i> (face), <i>gongtongjeom</i> (similarity)
Adjective	<i>dajeonghada</i> (sweet), <i>hwanhaejida</i> (becoming bright), <i>sunhada</i> (gentle), <i>gatda</i> (similar), <i>gwiyeobda</i> (cute)
Verb	<i>joahada</i> (to like), <i>gubyeolhada</i> (to classify), <i>utda</i> (to smile), <i>boida</i> (to appear), <i>boda</i> (to see)

According to Table 3, the nominal collocates of *gangajisang* show that the term is primarily associated with evaluations of physical appearance. This pattern is further reinforced by an expanded set of collocates that highlight how *gangajisang* is interpreted within both visual and social contexts. Several animal-based face types, such as *goyangisang* (cat-like face), *daramjwisang* (squirrel-like face), and *meommmui* (puppy), are included among the nominal collocates. This suggests that *gangajisang* operates within a broader metaphorical system that categorizes individuals based on perceived facial

characteristics. Notably, the inclusion of *meommui*, a dialectal form of ‘puppy,’ broadens the semantic scope of *gangajisang* beyond its standard lexical meaning. Its appearance in the collocate list indicates that the association between facial types and puppy-like imagery extends beyond standard Korean, permeating dialectal and everyday social practices. This demonstrates that the concept holds cultural and social resonance, reflecting shared aesthetic norms across linguistic varieties (Yong-jin, 2004).

Meanwhile, proper nouns such as Yein, Park Boyoung, and Jisoo are identified as collocates, suggesting that public figures are frequently referenced as recognizable examples of the *gangajisang* type. The term *gangajisang* is employed across various contexts, as evidenced by items such as *hagchangsijeol* (school life), *bangsong* (broadcast), and *keonseb* (concept), which demonstrate its presence in educational settings, media discourse, and broader social descriptions. Furthermore, collocates such as *wemo* (appearance), *eolgul* (face), *baneung* (reaction), and *gongtongjeom* (similarity) highlight that *gangajisang* is conceptualized through processes involving visual assessment, comparison, and interpersonal perception. These nouns indicate that the term is utilized not only to describe facial features but also to interpret how these features are socially perceived. Therefore, the nominal collocates illustrate that *gangajisang* is not merely a descriptor of facial type but also constructs a social image associated with gentleness and affective warmth, functioning as an evaluative category within Korea’s aesthetic value system.

Table 3 also identifies several adjectival collocates frequently associated with *gangajisang*, namely *dajeonghada* (sweet), *hwanhaejida* (bright), *sunhada* (gentle), *gwiyeobda* (cute), and *gatda* (similar), as illustrated below.

dajeonghamyeon okeiji anheulkka? wanjeonhan gangajisangeun anigo yakganman
goyangi keonsebgwa dalli wemoneun sunhan gangajisang dareun membeodeulwaneun
gwiyeoun gangajisang wemowa ireul dotboige haejun
wemoreul bojamyeon gangajisangeul joahanda. useulttae hwanhaejineun

Translation:

isn’t it fine to be *sweet*? not exactly *puppy faces* but just a little bit,
 different from the cat-like concept, a *gentle* appearance with *puppy faces*, other members...,
 a *cute* appearance with *puppy faces* makes her stand out,
 in terms of appearance, she likes *puppy faces* that look *bright* when smiling.

The concordance data demonstrate that these adjectives collectively construct a positive evaluative profile that aligns with the prototypical qualities of *gangajisang*, such as warmth, softness, gentleness, and charm. This pattern concurs with Youn and Kim’s (2024) observation that individuals described as *gangajisang* typically convey a mild, innocent, and approachable impression. Their study further indicates that the *gangajisang* type is characterized by *nunkkori* (the outer corners of the eyes) that slope slightly downward, enhancing this gentle and innocent appearance.

Meanwhile, the collocate *gatda* (similar) is particularly significant as it functions as a linguistic device linking human facial features to puppy-like imagery. It frequently appears in expressions describing someone as “resembling a puppy.” These patterns underscore that assessments of facial types are inherently subjective, influenced by both personal perception and shared cultural norms regarding appearance. Consequently, it can be concluded that the adjectival collocates suggest that *gangajisang* is not solely confined to physical features. Rather, it also conveys affective and interpersonal qualities and projects an overall image of cuteness, gentleness, and friendliness.

Several notable verbal collocates have also been identified for *gangajisang*. These verbs denote various actions linked to the term, and their contextual application can be observed through the subsequent concordance lines.

nunmaega goyangisangeuro boigido hago gangajisangeuro boigido handa

wemoreul *bojamyeon* *gangajisangeul* *joahanda*
 eolgulhyeongeul *gubyeolhalttae* *goyangisang* *gwa* *gangajisangeuro* *gubyeolhago*
 gyetonggeui jeonhyeongjeogin *gangajisang* *wemoida*. *useul* *ttae* *bandal* *nuni*

Translation:

the eye shape resembles that of a typical cat, *puppy face* also *appears*
do like puppy face when *see by* appearance
 when facial types are *classified puppy face* and cat face
 this is the typical appearance *puppy face* crescent-shaped eyes when *smiling*

Based on the concordance lines provided above, verb collocates contribute substantially to shaping the collocative meaning of *gangajisang* by exemplifying the types of actions and evaluations commonly linked to this facial expression. The collocate *joahada* (to like) signifies a positive evaluative response, implying that *gangajisang* is generally regarded favorably by observers. The verb *gubyeolhada* (to classify) emphasizes how speakers categorize or label facial types according to visual characteristics, suggesting that *gangajisang* is understood through mechanisms of categorization. The collocate *utda* (to smile) further associates *gangajisang* with warm or friendly expressions, reinforcing the idea that this facial type is associated with an approachable and pleasant demeanor. Meanwhile, perceptual verbs such as *boida* (to appear) and *boda* (to see) highlight that evaluations of *gangajisang* rely on visual observation, as the category is constructed through perceptions of how the face appears to others.

Moreover, these verbal patterns also reflect the role of imagery in collocative meaning. Michaud (2013) notes that the imagery behind a collocation can persist even when speakers do not explicitly know its origin. This imagery contributes to meaning by shaping why certain word pairings feel natural or cohesive. In the case of *gangajisang*, verbs of liking, seeing, smiling, and classifying collectively evoke a mental picture of a pleasant and visually recognizable facial type. Overall, the verb collocates in Table 3 show that *gangajisang* is shaped through evaluative actions, classification processes, emotional expressions, and visual perception. When considered together with the nominal and adjectival collocates, these patterns construct an associative meaning in which *gangajisang* is understood not merely as a physical facial category but as a socially desirable image associated with warmth, friendliness, and approachability. The collocational patterns indicate that *gangajisang* is valued not only for its perceived physical characteristics but also for the positive interpersonal qualities commonly associated with this facial type.

Collocational Analysis of *Goyangisang* (Cat-like Face)

Based on Table 2, the significant collocates of the word *goyangisang* can be classified into several parts of speech, namely nouns, adjectives, and verbs. This classification is presented in the following table.

Table 4. Significant Collocates of *Goyangisang* by Word Class

Word Class	Significant Collocates
Noun	<i>gangajisang</i> (puppy-like face), <i>daramjwisang</i> (squirrel-like face), <i>horangisang</i> (tiger-like face), <i>gwansang</i> (physiognomy), <i>nunmae</i> (eye shape), <i>hagchangsijeol</i> (school life), <i>senseu</i> (taste), <i>miin</i> (beautiful woman), <i>nunchi</i> (sensitivity), <i>sang</i> (image), <i>membeodeul</i> (members), <i>meikeueob</i> (makeup), <i>wemo</i> (appearance), <i>jongnyu</i> (category), <i>nun</i> (eyes), <i>paesyeon</i> (fashion), <i>insang</i> (impression)
Adjective	<i>neogneoghada</i> (enough), <i>gatda</i> (similar), <i>jeonhyeongjeok</i> (typical), <i>nalkarobda</i> (sharp), <i>gwiyeobda</i> (cute)
Verb	<i>gubyeolhada</i> (to classify), <i>damda</i> (look alike)

Table 4 represents 17 significant noun collocates for *goyangisang*. These collocates demonstrate that *goyangisang* frequently co-occurs with nouns denoting personal characteristics, specifically taste, sensitivity, image, appearance, and impression. This is evidenced by collocates such as *senseu* (taste), *nunchi* (sensitivity), *sang* (image), *wemo* (appearance), and *insang* (impression). The concordance lines further indicate that *goyangisang* is strongly associated with *nun* (eyes), signifying that eye shape constitutes a central component in categorizing this facial type. Youn and Kim (2024) describe *goyangisang* eyes as having upwardly slanted outer corners, which create a sharp, cool impression.

Meanwhile, the presence of *nunchi* (sensitivity) further indicates that *goyangisang* is comprehended not solely as a visual category but also as one connected to perceived personality attributes such as alertness and adaptability. The emergence of *gwansang* (physiognomy) reinforces this interpretation, as physiognomy involves evaluating character through facial features. Collocates such as *miin* (beautiful woman) and *meikeueob* (makeup) indicate that *goyangisang* is predominantly associated with women; however, it may also refer to men. The significance of *makeup* lies in its common use to alter or enhance facial features. According to Yuliati (2014), makeup serves to modify the face by emphasizing aesthetically pleasing areas. Therefore, the collocate *makeup* implies that *goyangisang* can be intentionally crafted, particularly through eye-focused makeup techniques aimed at producing the distinctive sharp impression associated with this facial type. Overall, the nominal collocates suggest that *goyangisang* is intrinsically linked to a distinctive, sharp, and attractive visual appearance, encompassing both facial features and the personality impressions they convey.

The adjectival collocates for *goyangisang* primarily pertain to the visual image and personality traits associated with this facial type. The collocates *nalkaropda* (sharp) and *gwiyeobda* (cute) underscore this contrast. The collocate *nalkaropda* refers to its striking and sharp appearance, while *gwiyeobda* signifies the playful or endearing manner often attributed to individuals exhibiting this facial characteristic. This contrast indicates that *goyangisang* is perceived as appealing due to the interplay between its sharp visual impression and its unexpectedly endearing demeanor. The presence of the collocate *jeonhyeongjeok* (typical) further suggests that *goyangisang* is acknowledged as a distinct facial category possessing identifiable features. The example concordances provided below demonstrate the usage of *jeonhyeongjeok* in context.

Hibikineun *jonhyeongjogin goyangisangeui* nunmaewa kkeutbubuni kkobulkkobulhan mori
sallijak chikyeollagan nunmaewa ang damun ibsureui *jonhyeongjogin goyangisangeul* han yowangnim
nunuseum ttaemune manheun jibjungeul badanneunde *jonhyeongjogin goyangisang* eolgurin deokbune
mupyoeongeuro isseumyeon sanaweo boigeona nalkaroweo boinda
jungyohan nunmaeman bwado nugunji al su inneun *jonhyeongjogin goyangisang* minyeogasu Park
Jiyoonnimnida

Translation:

Hibiki has the *typical cat-like face* characterized by feline-looking eyes and slightly curled hair eyes tilt upward and tightly closed lips, this *typical cat-like face* is often portrayed as queen-like. Because of her smiling eyes, she receives a lot of attention, however, without an expression, this *typical cat-like face* type can appear fierce or sharp.

A type recognizable simply from the eyes, the *typical cat-like face* is exemplified by the beautiful singer Park Jiyeon.

The concordance shows that *goyangisang* is predominantly characterized by slightly upturned eyes. This attribute alone frequently determines whether an individual is classified as *goyangisang*, as exemplified by singer Park Jiyeon. The data further reveals that, in the absence of expression, individuals with *goyangisang* tend to exhibit a sharp or fierce appearance; however, their smile renders them attractive due to its unique quality.

Overall, *goyangisang* embodies a blend of sharp or striking visual features and an appealing, charming demeanor, a pattern consistent with the adjectival collocates that associate the term with both endearing behavior and distinctive visual traits.

Similar to *gangajisang*, the verb collocates of *goyangisang* mainly describe actions associated with identifying or classifying this facial type. The collocate *gubyeolhada* ('to classify') indicates that *goyangisang* is perceived as a subtype within *dongmulsang*, distinguished by specific visual features. The frequent use of *damda* ('to resemble') demonstrates that *goyangisang* is often employed to describe individuals whose appearance, overall impression, or personality is perceived as "cat-like." These observations suggest that the verb collocates listed in Table 4 predominantly pertain to evaluative judgments of a person's overall appearance.

In conclusion, the noun, adjective, and verb collocates collectively indicate that *goyangisang* refers to more than a facial category characterized by slightly upturned eyes. When considered together, these collocates construct an associative meaning in which *goyangisang* is perceived as a distinctive and attractive image associated with sharp visual features, sensitivity, and individuality. The collocational patterns suggest that the appeal of *goyangisang* stems from the combination of a striking appearance and the unique personality impressions attributed to this facial type. While *goyangisang* is often associated with a cute and attractive demeanor, it also conveys a somewhat aloof or less approachable impression. This finding complements Haeyon's (2009) observation that appearance-related expressions in Korean extend beyond physical description to convey broader semantic and conceptual meanings.

CONCLUSION

The study indicates that the collocational meanings of *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* relate to terms frequently used by Korean speakers to evaluate an individual's appearance and facial impression. These expressions carry positive connotations, functioning as compliments directed towards individuals whose facial features resemble those of a puppy or a cat. Based on the prominent collocates identified, both phrases are primarily employed to describe women; however, they are equally applicable to men in practice.

This study identifies a crucial facial trait that markedly influences the classification of individuals as *gangajisang* or *goyangisang*, specifically the shape of the eyes. Moreover, these two terms denote not only physical appearance but also encompass an individual's perceived image and personality associated with the face type. The term *gangajisang* refers to individuals who project qualities such as cuteness, warmth, sweetness, and friendliness, whereas *goyangisang* pertains to those who may display cute behavior but possess a less approachable visual impression. Nonetheless, such assessments are highly subjective, as the same individual may be classified differently by various evaluators. This indicates that evaluations vary depending on the impressions and perceived appearance of the evaluator.

More broadly, the findings demonstrate that collocational patterns can reveal culturally shared associations that extend beyond the literal meanings of words. In this regard, the study contributes to corpus linguistics by showing how collocation analysis can uncover cultural meanings that may not be explicitly reflected in dictionary definitions. The findings also support the view that appearance-related expressions in Korean encode not only physical descriptions but also socially shared perceptions of personality and interpersonal qualities. From a practical perspective, the findings may contribute to intercultural communication and Korean language education. Expressions such as *gangajisang* and *goyangisang* are generally interpreted positively in Korean culture but may be understood differently in other cultural contexts. Therefore, understanding the culturally specific meanings embedded in these expressions may help reduce

misunderstandings among Korean language learners and intercultural interlocutors when interpreting appearance-related evaluations in Korean discourse.

RECOMMENDATION

The limitation of this study lies in its dependence on a solitary corpus source, specifically the Korean Web 2018 corpus (KoTenTen18) accessible via Sketch Engine. Consequently, this research constitutes an inaugural step for future investigations that might utilize larger corpora with more recent linguistic data or, ideally, a self-compiled corpus comprising a broader spectrum of texts. Such developments would facilitate comparative analysis of the linguistic constructions identified in the examination of semantic patterns.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was supported by a Research Grant from Universitas Indonesia. The author also acknowledges the Research Cluster “Text, Talk, and Society”, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia, for its academic support and scholarly discussions.

GENERATIVE AI STATEMENT

Generative AI was used for language editing and proofreading purposes only. The author reviewed and approved all revisions and remains responsible for the content of this manuscript.

REFERENCES

- Adnyana, P. P., Muta'ali, A., & Suganda, S. P. (2024). Pandangan tentang praktik bedah plastik dalam artikel opini di surat kabar Korea tahun 2010–2019. *Paradigma: Jurnal Kajian Budaya*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.17510/paradigma.v14i2.1286>
- Baker, P. (2020). Corpus-assisted discourse analysis. In C. Hart (Ed.), *Researching discourse: A student guide* (pp. 124–142). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367815042-8>
- Cho, Y.-J. (2004). The physical and cultural faces of the Korean people. *Korea Journal*, 44(2), 83–101.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Cuajaya, D. R., & Usmi. (2022). Analisis kesalahan kolokasi partikel-predikat bahasa Korea pada penutur bahasa Indonesia. *Jurnal Kata: Penelitian tentang Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra*, 6(2), 321–341. <https://doi.org/10.22216/kata.v6i2.1552>
- Greaves, C., & Warren, M. (2010). What can a corpus tell us about multi-word units? In A. O'Keeffe & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of corpus linguistics* (pp. 212–226). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203856949.ch16>
- Hoey, M. (2012). *Lexical priming: A new theory of words and language*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203327630>
- Jang, G.-H. (2011). The principles in the formation of neologism-collocations. *Journal of Humanities, Seoul National University*, 66, 269–297. <https://doi.org/10.17326/jhsnu.66..201112.269>
- Kilgarrieff, A., Baisa, V., Bušta, J., Jakubíček, M., Kovář, V., Michelfeit, J., Rychlý, P., & Suchomel, V. (2014). The Sketch Engine: Ten years on. *Lexicography*, 1(1), 7–36. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40607-014-0009-9>
- Kim, H. (2009). A corpus-based analysis of *elkwul* ‘face’ and other face-related words in Korean. *Discourse and Cognition*, 16(3), 89–110. <https://doi.org/10.15718/discog.2009.16.3.89>

- Kim, J.-H. (1999). A study on the semantic relations of the collocations. *Korean Semantics*, 4, 239–279. The database record provides UCI I410-ECN-0102-2009-710-005131614 rather than a DOI. ([학술논문검색사이트 KISS](http://kiss.kci.go.kr))
- Leech, G. N. (1981). *Semantics: The study of meaning* (2nd ed.). Penguin Books.
- Lin, K. L., & Raval, V. V. (2020). Understanding body image and appearance management behaviors among adult women in South Korea within a sociocultural context: A review. *International Perspectives in Psychology: Research, Practice, Consultation*, 9(2), 96–122. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ipp0000124>
- McEnery, T., & Hardie, A. (2012). *Corpus linguistics: Method, theory and practice*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511981395>
- Michaud, M. (2013). On collocative meaning: Semantics and EFL. *Journal of Kyoto Seika University*, 43, 86–98.
- Okeke, C. O., & Egbuta, U. M. (2017). Collocative meaning in the Igbo language. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 35(4), 331–343. <https://doi.org/10.2989/16073614.2017.1394201>
- Partington, A. (2010). Modern diachronic corpus-assisted discourse studies (MD-CADS) on UK newspapers: An overview of the project. *Corpora*, 5(2), 83–108. <https://doi.org/10.3366/cor.2010.0101>
- Scarino, A. (2010). Assessing intercultural capability in learning languages: A renewed understanding of language, culture, learning, and the nature of assessment. *The Modern Language Journal*, 94(2), 324–329. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2010.01026.x>
- Shin, D. (2006). *A collocation inventory for beginners* [Doctoral dissertation, Victoria University of Wellington]. Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington. <https://doi.org/10.26686/wgtn.16945729>
- Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, concordance, collocation*. Oxford University Press.
- Sinclair, J. (2004). *Trust the text: Language, corpus and discourse* (R. Carter, Ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203594070>
- Stefanowitsch, A. (2020). *Corpus linguistics: A guide to the methodology*. Language Science Press. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3735822>
- Sugiyono. (2018). *Metode penelitian kombinasi (mixed methods)*. Alfabeta. ([L2p Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo](http://l2p.muhammadiyahponorogo.ac.id))
- Youn, W., & Kim, G. (2024). The influence of female models' eye angle on impression formation and consumer attitudes: Focused on the responses of 20s consumers to dog-like and cat-like eye shape. *Journal of Consumer Studies*, 35(4), 111–140. <https://doi.org/10.35736/JCS.35.4.6>
- Yuliati, R. (2014). Kompetensi aplikasi *shading* dan *tinting* pada *make up* koreksi untuk bentuk wajah bulat, persegi dan segitiga terbalik. *Jurnal Tata Rias*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.26740/jtr.v3n01.6871>
- Yuliawati, S. (2018). Perempuan atau wanita? Perbandingan berbasis korpus tentang leksikon berbias gender. *Paradigma: Jurnal Kajian Budaya*, 8(1), 53–70. <https://doi.org/10.17510/paradigma.v8i1.227>