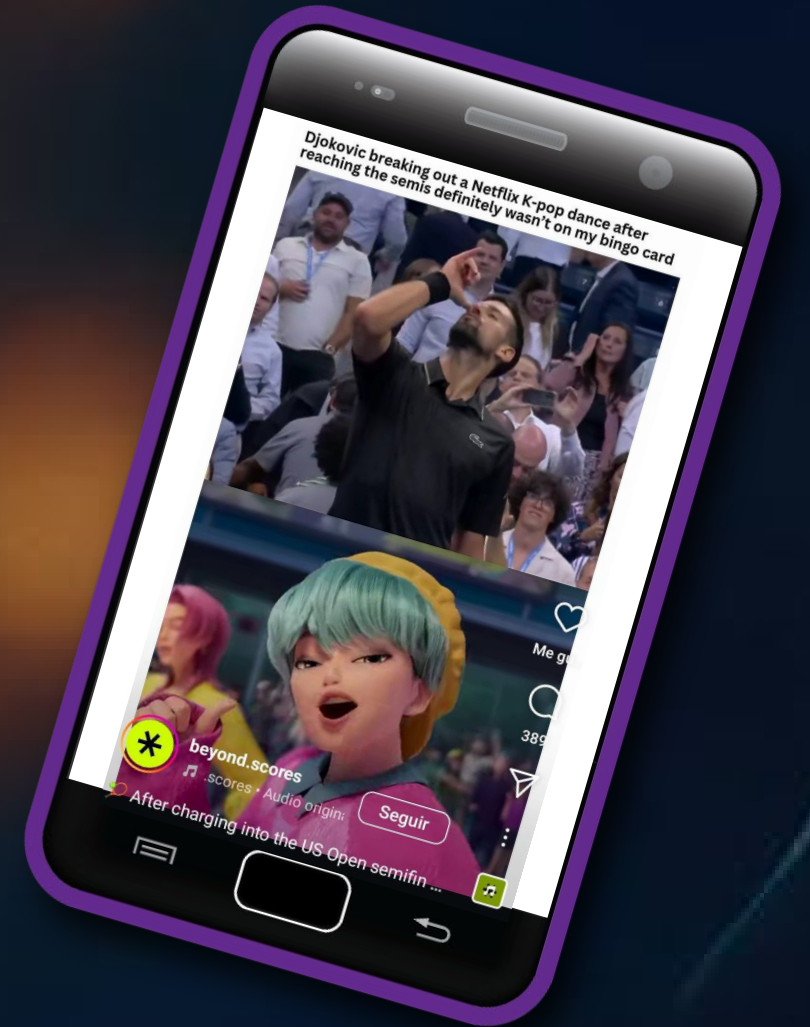
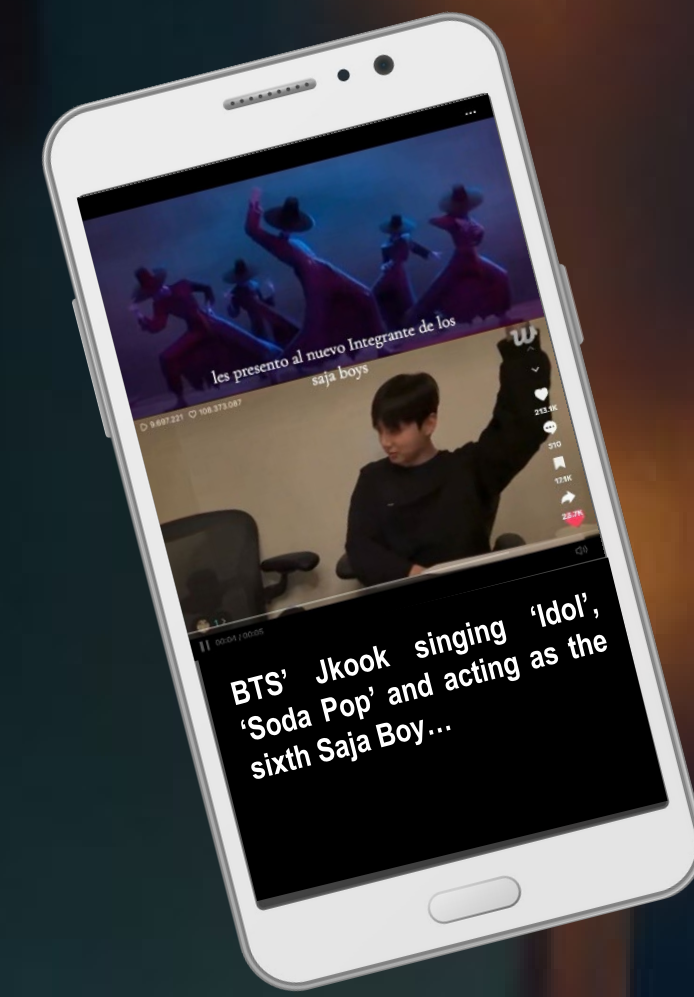
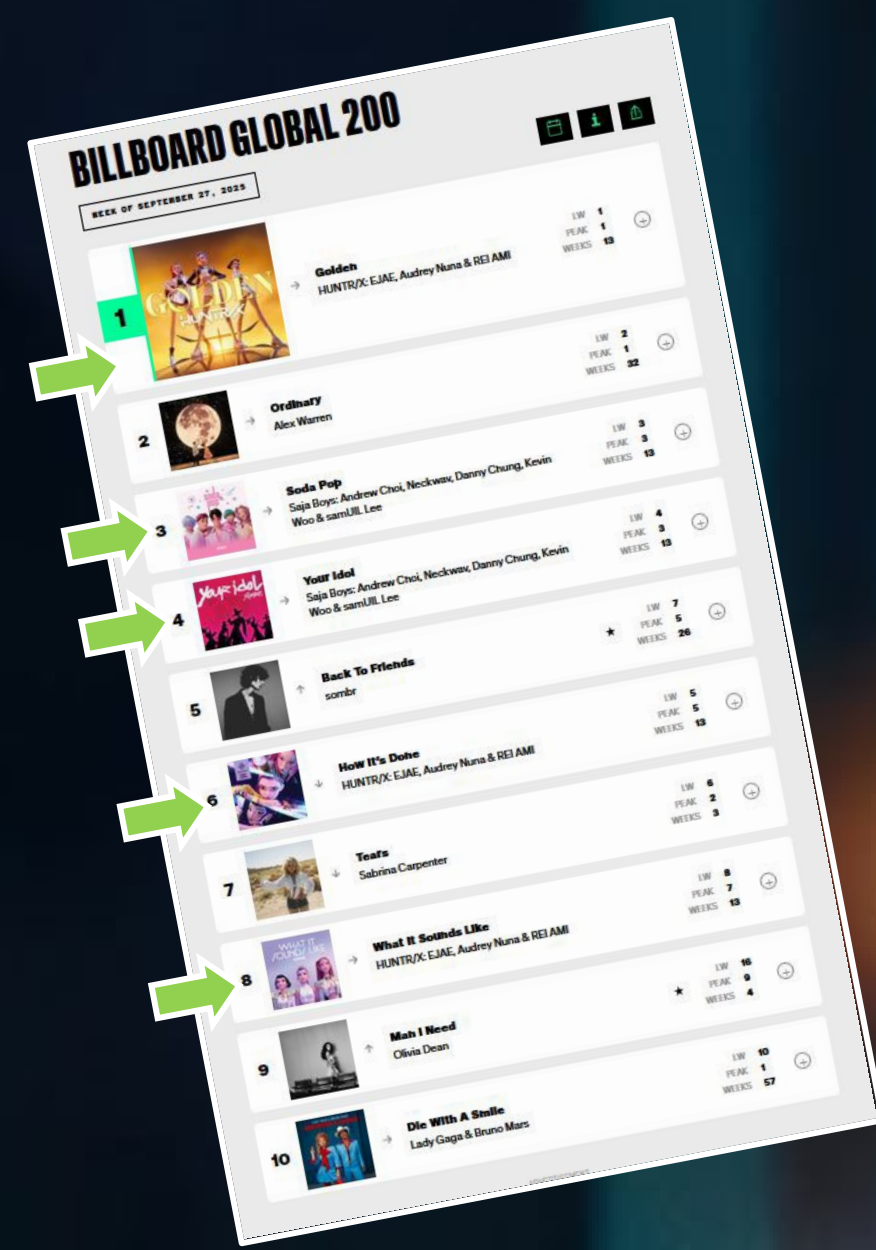




TYPES OF KOREAN CULTUREMES IN 'K-POP DEMON HUNTERS'

IN this poster, the feature film *K-Pop Demon Hunters* (2025) is examined to identify cultural references that may function as culturemes. The context of its release, selected examples of its global impact, and the reasons why the film includes numerous K-cultural references are outlined first, in order to highlight its relevance as an audiovisual product that has become a global cultural milestone. Next, a catalogue of identified culturemes is presented according to traditional classifications. Finally, a more specific subcategorisation is proposed to complement the existing framework and adapt it to a contemporary film rich in K-culture elements.

Netflix released in 2025 the feature film *K-Pop Demon Hunters*, immediately rocketing to success among its viewers, hitting also international music billboards, social media (Weverse, Youtube, Instagram, TikTok, etc.) and hyperreality platforms (Lammers, 2025; Ogburn, 2025).



HOW MANY TYPES OF CULTUREMES APPEAR?

Co-directors in several interviews: **KOREAN KEY CULTURAL REFERENCES** were included intentionally (a) to add value to the plot, (b) to gain more realism in visual animation and (c) to disseminate Korean culture. They count on worldwide viewers to be somehow familiar with *Hallyu* (international K-cultural wave, Lim *et al.*, 2022), in order to understand their meanings (Asian Feed, 2025; Hollywood First Look, 2025; Korea Now, 2025). Not all those cultural references represent a cultureme, however many of them do.



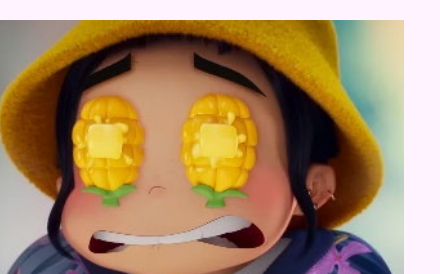
ACCORDING TO TRADITIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS OF CULTUREMES:

Nida (1945), Newmark (1988/2003), Nord (1994) and Katan (1999):

- **Environment.** Location, moment and participants.
- **Material culture.** Objects, products and artifacts.
- **Organizations, customs and traditions, ideas.**
- **Social culture.** Social Values. Work & leisure.
- **History, cultural heritage.**
- **Religious culture.** Beliefs & identity.
- **Lingüistic culture**
- **Conducts.** Gestures, habits. Way of life.

CULTUREME SUBCATEGORIZATION PROPOSAL FOR THIS FILM:

- **Korean History:** *Goryeo* and *Joseon* periods.
- **Traditions:** *hanboks*, the tiger and the magpie, *Huntrix'* weapons → *Saingeom*, *Gok-do* & *Shin-kal*, etc.
- **Korean Food:** *kimpap*, *ramyeon*, fish cakes, *sundae* sausages, ox-bone soup, shrimp crackers, sweet pancakes, corndogs, *kimchi*...
- **References to daily life in Korea:** heavy coffee drinkers, mixed-season clothes, parking in banned areas.
- **Word puns and second meanings:** e.g. → '*saja*' means 'lion' but also 'Grim the Reaper'. Demons disguised as a male K-Pop idol group, the '*Saja Boys*' use a lion logo. However, they're actually soul rippers.
- **References to K-Dramas:** Cha Eun-woo, Nam Joo-Hyuk, *Ajummas*, abs, umbrella & falling scenes.
- **References to K-Pop:** H.O.T., BTS, Blackpink, ITZY, TWICE, TXT, Stray Kids and others.
- **Visual culturemes from animation codes:** Korean & Japanese comics, webtoons & anime staging →



NOT FAMILIAR WITH K-LANGUAGE AND CULTURE?

CHECK HERE FOR DETAILED INFO REGARDING THESE CULTUREMES:

