

At the party “Let’s Learn Local English!”



People in the West enjoy having parties. This month, we will look at Konglish expressions that may come up in a party setting.

BEAUTY

Everyone wants to look nice for a party. Here are some beauty-related Konglish expressions we should not use when speaking English.



1) rouge (X) → lipstick (O)

Rouge is a French word meaning “red”, which refers to a cosmetic used to add a red color to the lips and cheeks. Nowadays, the two products are usually separate, so you should refer to each item as a “lipstick”.

» Where did you buy that lipstick? It looks gorgeous!

2) perma (X) → permanent hair treatment, perm (O)

While the word “perma” comes from permanent in “permanent hair treatment”, it is not the correct way to shorten it. English-speakers use “perm” instead.

» Where did you get that perm? It is beautiful!

3) manicure (X) → nail polish (O)

The product that you use to color your nails with is called a “nail polish”. A “manicure” refers to a cosmetic beauty treatment for fingernails and hands you receive at a nail salon. A beauty treatment for the toenails and feet is called a pedicure.

» I’m awful at applying nail polish on my fingers.

4) pearl (X) → glitter/ shimmer (O)

The cosmetic products that are used to add sparkles to the face is often called “pearl” in Korea, but in English “glitter” or “shimmer” are more commonly used.

» Adding a little glitter to your eyelids will make them stand out.

5) skin (X) → toner (O)

A toner is a cosmetic product that is used to give extra cleansing to the face after washing it, and it is commonly known as a “skin” in Korea. However, an English speaker will have no idea what you mean if you call it “skin”.

» What kind of toner should I get?

FOOD

You can’t talk about a party without food! The following are words we use to refer to certain food items that a native English speaker may be puzzled by.



1) Castella (X) → sponge cake (O)

The word Castella has its origins in Japan, but native English speakers wouldn’t recognize what it means. In English, they are simply called sponge cake.

» Would you like to try some of these sponge cakes?
I made them myself.

2) choux cream (X) → cream puff (O)

The word choux cream originates from the French word “choux a la creme”. In the English-speaking world, this dessert is referred to as cream puffs or profiteroles.

» This place offers the best cream puffs in town!

3) egg fry (X) → fried egg (O)

What Koreans like to refer to as egg fry is a fried egg in proper English. There are many ways you can make fried eggs. Sunny side up and over easy are two of the most common ways.

» How would you like your fried egg?

4) ice coffee (X) → iced coffee (O)

While native speakers will likely understand what you mean when you say you want some ice coffee, it is incorrect to say so. Instead, you should say, “iced coffee”.

» I love iced coffee in the summer.

FASHION

Although house parties are often casual in general, special occasions may call for more attention to your outfit. Here are some incorrectly used expressions related to fashion.



1) oversize sweater (X) → oversized sweater (O)

An oversized garment such as an oversized sweater can look great, but it would be even better if you could call it by its correct English. Rather than an “oversize sweater”, it is an “oversized sweater”.

» Do you think I can pull off an oversized sweater?

2) off shoulder (X) → off-the-shoulder (O)

An off-the-shoulder top is a fashionable look that can be worn at parties. In Korea, it is called “off shoulder”, but the correct way to say it is “off-the-shoulder”.

» This off-the-shoulder dress really shows off your shoulders.

3) point item (X) → statement piece/ eye-catching piece (O)

A clothing item that people notice first about a person’s outfit is often referred to as a “point item” in Korea, but in English, they’re usually called a “statement piece”. You can also say “eye-catching piece”.

» Why don’t you accessorize with a statement piece, like this necklace?

4) Glamour → voluptuous figure / curvy figure (O)

Glamour is a word that’s all too commonly misused in Korea. Glamour is not a word used to describe a woman’s figure; a word like “voluptuous” or “curvy” should be used.

» She has a voluptuous figure.