



Soohwan Kim

APPLIED AI ENGINEER

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“Shipping AI that people actually use.”

Professional Experience



Karrot

ML ENGINEER (OPERATIONS TEAM)

Seocho, Seoul

Apr. 2026 - Present

- Korea's largest hyperlocal community platform with 20M+ MAU and 40M+ registered users
- **AI Agents**
 - Developing **KAMP**, an internal platform for building and operating multi-agent AI systems
 - Developed optimization algorithms for multi-agent AI systems, automating prompt and model optimization for production agents including a multi-agent CS chatbot
- **Machine Learning**
 - Built and operated a wide range of text ML pipelines across the platform, including classification, information extraction, and LLM-based labeling of marketplace posts and user content
 - Built **Karrot NER**, a company-wide Korean NER model specialized for Karrot's domain, end-to-end from tag schema design to training and serving; adopted by multiple teams
 - Developed Trust & Safety models for the Karrot marketplace, detecting fraud, professional sellers, counterfeit goods, and abusive users
 - Pretrained a domain-adapted language model for downstream tasks
 - Reduced ML serving cost by 48% by migrating to optimized CPU/GPU inference



TUNiB

Co-FOUNDER & CTO

Seocho, Seoul

Mar. 2021 - Mar. 2026

- Conversational AI character startup; raised 3 billion KRW seed from Pearl Abyss Capital, DSC Investment, and Naver D2SF
- Joined as AI Lead and was promoted to CTO in Aug. 2024
- **AI & Services**
 - Led development of **DearMate**, an AI social network service
 - * Personalized character chat and multi-character group chats
 - * Character builder and AI-generated posts and comments
 - Developed **Cheetah**, a proprietary language model serving dozens of characters with a single model
 - Developed NLP API service **TUNiBridge** and open-sourced Korean-English language model **TUNiB-Electra**
- **B2B: AI Safety Guardrail**
 - Led development of a safety guardrail solution with hate speech, jailbreak, and compliance detection models
 - Generated B2B revenue from clients including KakaoBank (integrated into its search service) and Wrtn
 - Published the underlying research at EMNLP
- **Government R&D**
 - Led multiple national AI projects as principal investigator
 - Secured 2.5 billion KRW in commercialization grants through national AI competitions
 - Received the Minister of Science and ICT Award for outstanding results in the ICT Fund Program (2023) for Korean dialogue and commonsense dataset construction
- **Leadership**
 - Built and led an AI team of up to 10 engineers and researchers, owning hiring, onboarding, and performance management
 - Established engineering practices including code review, experiment tracking, and model deployment pipelines
 - Managed GPU infrastructure and compute budget across research and production workloads
 - Mentored junior engineers, several of whom grew into project leads



Kakao Brain

AI ENGINEER (NLP TEAM)

Pangyo, Gyeonggi

Aug. 2020 - Mar. 2021

- AI research subsidiary of Kakao, operator of KakaoTalk
- **Pororo**: open-source integrated NLP framework
 - Developed the OCR and speech modules
 - * Multilingual text-to-speech (TTS)
 - * Wav2Vec 2.0-based speech recognition for Korean, English, and Chinese, including Korean pretraining

Open Source Projects

4k+ total GitHub stars and 500+ followers – github.com/sooftware

Pororo

KAKAO BRAIN

1.3k+ Stars

Aug. 2020 - Feb. 2021

- NLP library that solves 30+ tasks in a few lines of code with pretrained models
- Developed the speech (ASR, TTS) and OCR modules
- github.com/kakaobrain/pororo

OpenSpeech / KoSpeech

PERSONAL

1.3k+ Stars

Jan. 2020 - Jun. 2021

- Framework for building speech recognition models across architectures and languages
- Implemented dozens of models, including Transformer, Conformer, and Listen, Attend and Spell
- github.com/openspeech-team/openspeech

Conformer

PERSONAL

1.1k+ Stars

Jan. 2021

- PyTorch implementation of “Conformer: Convolution-augmented Transformer for Speech Recognition”
- github.com/sooftware/conformer

Attentions

PERSONAL

500+ Stars

- PyTorch implementations of attention mechanisms for deep learning researchers
- github.com/sooftware/attentions

Education

Kwangwoon University

BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING IN ELECTRONICS AND COMMUNICATION ENGINEERING

Seoul, South Korea

Mar. 2014 - Feb. 2021

- **Minor:** Data Science
- **GPA:** 3.89 / 4.5 (Major), 3.67 / 4.5 (Overall)
- **President's Award:** 1st place, Graduation Project Exhibition (Real-time Speech Translator)
- **Academic Excellence Scholarship:** 2018, 2019

Military Service

ROKMC (Republic of Korea Marine Corps)

SERGEANT

2nd Marine Division

Sep. 2015 - Jun. 2017

- Served as a signaller; honorably discharged

Publications

[1] Chaewon Park*, [Soohwan Kim*](#), Kyubyong Park, and Kunwoo Park, “K-HATERS: A Hate Speech Detection Corpus in Korean with Target-Specific Ratings”, *Findings of EMNLP*, 2023. (*equal contribution)
Dataset: huggingface.co/datasets/humane-lab/K-HATERS

[2] [Soohwan Kim](#), Seyoung Bae, and Cheolhwang Won, “Open-Source Toolkit for End-to-End Korean Speech Recognition”, *Software Impacts* (Elsevier), Vol. 7, 100054, 2021.

Competitions & Awards

2022	3rd Place, Minister's Award , National AI Grand Challenge - Policy-assisted AI	MSIT
2022	1st Place, Minister's Award , National AI Online Competition - Machine Reading Comprehension	MSIT
2021	3rd Place, President's Award , National AI Grand Challenge - Speech Understanding	IITP
2021	1st Place, President's Award , National AI Online Competition - Conversation Sentiment Classification	NIPA
2020	3rd Place , National AI Grand Challenge - Speech Understanding	IITP