UNIVERZITA PALACKÉHO V OLOMOUCI

Filozofická fakulta

Katedra asijských studií

Bakalářská diplomová práce

Morfosyntax korejských honorifik

The Morphosyntax of Korean Honorifics

OLOMOUC 2024 BENDIKT UJHÁZY

vedoucí diplomové práce doc. Joanna Ut-seong Sio, Ph.D.

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracoval samostatně a uvedl veškeré použité prameny a literaturu.

V Olomouci dne 8.5.2024, Bendikt Ujházy.

Author's note: The transcription used in this thesis is the Yale romanization of Korean.

ANOTACE

Jméno a příjmení: Bendikt Ujházy

Název fakulty a katedry: Filozofická fakulta, Katedra asijských studií

Název práce: Morfosyntax korejských honorifik

Vedoucí práce: doc. Joanna Ut-seong Sio, Ph.D.

Počet stran: 33

Počet znaků: 60 526

Klíčová slova: morfosyntax, honorifický systém korejštiny, honorifika, distribuovaná morfologie, korejský jazyk

Popis: Tato práce se věnuje systému korejských honorifických označení. Zabývá se korejskými honorifiky a komplikovaností honorifického systému, který je zároveň kontroverzním tématem v korejské lingvistice. Cílem této práce je formulovat podmínky a omezení, jimiž se řídí distribuce těchto honorifických označení.

ABSTRACT

Name and surname: Bendikt Ujházy

Faculty and department: Faculty of Arts, Department of Asian studies

Title: The Morphosyntax of Korean honorifics

Supervisor: doc. Joanna Ut-seong Sio, Ph.D

Number of pages: 33

Characters count: 60 526

Key words: morphosyntax, Korean honorific system, honorifics, distributed morphology, Korean language

Abstract: This thesis focuses on the Korean honorific system. It deals with Korean honorifics and the complexity of the honorification system which is also a controversial topic in Korean linguistics. The aim of this thesis is to formulate the conditions and constraints governing the distribution of these honorifics.

Acknowledgements:

Abbreviations

ACC accusative

CONJ conjunctive

DECL declarative

GEN genitive

HON honorific

INTER interrogative

LOC locative

NOM nominative

PL plural

PST past

TOP topic

Contents

1 Introduction

Korean honorifics are a very complex system of showing deference to the addressee and a heavily debated topic in Korean linguistics as there are many different ways to show deference in the Korean language. This thesis will be describing and analyzing the complex morphosyntax of the Korean honorific system. Specifically, the different patterns of possesor honorification and constraints which occur on the possessee in order for the verbal suffixal honorification to appear will be explained. Furthermore, the underrepresantion of the suffix *-nim* in literature, and the existing analysis of it not being detailed sufficiently, will be discussed.

Firstly, a theoretical introduction into the topic of the Korean honorific system will be given. In the section concerning Korean speech styles, the concept of 6 different speech styles divided into 3 categories will be introduced based on how deferential they are—Honorific, Authoritative and Non-honorific—adopting the research made by Brown and Yeon (2015).

Secondly, Korean morphology will be described in theoretical terms, adopting research and categories by Pucek (2013) and Song (2005). Afterwards, the many different ways to honor the listener in Korean language will be examined and described, focusing on honoring by using the nominal suffix *–nim* (님) which is not described in much detail in linguistic literature or Korean language textbooks. This suffix will be further focused on in section 2.3.1, giving my observations about the use of this suffix in speech. Afterwards, I will introduce suppletion and its forms occurring in Korean. I will also give examples of the suppletion which occurs and support my argument that it is not mandatory in certain cases.

Further on, I will focus on the nominative case honorific particle *–kkeyse* (께서) and give examples of its use. After that, the honorific agreement that occurs based on the properly marked subject will be discussed and examined. The subject can be marked by the previously mentioned nominal suffix *–nim*, the case marker *–kkeyse* or both. The result is the suffix *-(u)si* ((으)시) occurring on the verb in the form of a syntactical argument. This syntactically governed agreement will be examined and explained further, adopting Harley and Choi (2019) theory of possessor raising and node-sprouting. The suffix *-(u)si* will be described as well in more detail in the section 2.3.5.

In the following section 3, I will present the data I have collected from a native speaker and by researching the Korean corpus, exploring the phenomena which can be observed and were not analyzed in detail in most literature. I will determine constraints for when these structures

can occur and provide examples with glosses. After that, I will be describing patterns that can be found in the Korean language and demonstrating them by using simple means. I have written patterns concerning honorific agreement, the use of the nominative case particle -*kkeyse* and the nominal suffixes –*nim* and –*ssi*. Lastly, I will talk about the other possible explanation for this occurring phenomenon of honorific agreement, that being the concept of metonymic relations, explaining the concept and how it could be helpful for analyzing this particular problem in the Korean language.

2   Descriptive background of Korean honorifics

2.1   Honorific speech styles in Korean

Korean as a language is well known in linguistics for possessing one of the most developed systems of honorifics amongst languages (Brown and Yeon 2015). Korean language is described as having six speech styles in the majority of literature, although that may vary depending on the author of the work. Brown and Yeon (2015) divided them into 3 categories— Honorific, Authoritative and Non-honorific. These categories also contain a formal and an informal style. The main difference between them is encoded in their morphosyntactic features. Formal styles are affected by the sentence type as opposed to informal styles which are immune to changes in the sentence type, meaning only formal styles have separate interrogative, propositive and imperative endings.

Formal style:

(1)   선생님께서 이 댁에 사십니다.

Sensayng-nim-kkeyse i   tayk-ey   sa-si-pnita.
Teacher.HON.NOM   this house.LOC live.HON.DECL

'The teacher lives in this house.'

(2) *선생님께서 이 댁에 사십니다?

    *Sensayng-nim-kkeyse i   tayk-ey   sa-si-pnita?

    Teacher.HON.NOM   this house.LOC live.HON.INTER

    'Does the teacher live in this house?'

  Informal style:

(3) 선생님께서 이 댁에 사시요?

    Sensayng-nim-kkeyse i   tayk-ey   sa-si-yo?

    Teacher.HON.NOM   this house.LOC live.HON.INTER

    'Does the teacher live in this house?'

(4) 선생님께서 이 댁에 사시요.

    Sensayng-nim-kkeyse i   tayk-ey   sa-si-yo.

    Teacher.HON.NOM   this house.LOC live.HON.DECL

    'The teacher lives in this house.'

In (2), not changing the suffix –*supnita* with the sentence type (in this example, into an interrogative) renders the sentence ungrammatical. However, as can be observed in Example (3) with the informal polite style ending in the suffix –*eyo*, the suffix does not undergo any changes to remain grammatical when the sentence type shifts. Formal styles explicitly encode the sentence type in their morphology as opposed to the informal style. According to Brown and Yeon (2015), both styles in spoken interactions can be used as a mixture, suggesting that the informal and formal speech styles are not exclusive and static in their use.

Table 1 (Brown and Yeon 2015)

English name	Korean name	Declarative ending	Formal/informal	Honorific category
"deferential" style	*Hapsyo-chey*	*-supnita*	Formal	Honorific
"polite" style	*Hayyo-chey*	*-eyo*	Informal	Honorific
"semiformal" style	*Hao-chey*	*-(s)o*	Formal	Authoritative
"familiar" style	*Hakey-chey*	*-ney*	Formal	Authoritative
"intimate" style	*Hay-chey*	*-e*	Informal	Non-honorific
"plain" style	*Hayla-chey*	*-ta*	Formal	Non-honorific

As can be observed in Table 1, which is the comprehensive table of Korean speech styles according to Brown and Yeon (2015), the first category contains the "deferential" style that uses the suffix *–supnita* considered to be the most formal suffix actively used in contemporary Korean. It is mainly used when addressing superiors and rarely used to address socially equal addressees. It is often featured in television programs and official speeches, where the presenter needs to remain deferential to the listener of the program. The second category they described is polite informal style using the *–eyo* suffix. An interesting fact that arose is that the suffix *–supnita* is considered a more "masculine" way of speaking than *–eyo* by native speakers of Korean (King and Yeon 2000).

The *-eyo* is also the suffix which L2 speakers learn as their first one because it is very versatile in its use. The *–eyo* suffix can be used when addressing people who are hierarchically on the same level as the speaker. Nevertheless, it can be used in somewhat informal situations as well and is not offensive to use even with people positioned on an upper hierarchical level. Informal styles are also applied more freely in colloquial conversation. Even though some situations may feature exclusive use of one style, a mixture called *contaymal* in Korean is often used. A large number of studies have noted a frequent use of this particular mixture, especially in situations like TV broadcasts and lectures (King and Yeon 2000).

The second group described by Brown and Yeon (2015) is the authoritative speech style which contains the semiformal style that utilizes the formal declarative ending *-(s)o*. The next one is the familiar style used with the suffix *–ney*. Afterwards, they describe the intimate informal style that uses the *–e* suffix, which belongs in the non-honorific category along with the plain style. The plain formal style uses the suffix *–ta* which may often be found in media, for example books and movies, where it conveys the neutral role of the speaker to the information being delivered by the utterance. It is also taught as the proper way to express themselves to

L2 learners of Korean in writing in general.

2.1.1 Speech style shifting

Speech style shifting is a very common occurrence in Korean that can be observed in collo-
quial speech within all the categories described in the preceding chapter (Brown and Yeon
2015). To provide an example, when delivering a public speech, speakers will often use the
suffix *–supnita* to mark the utterances as more important and will naturally shift towards *–eyo*
when delivering more personal comments or less important facts (according to their judge-
ments). In general, modality markers which correspond with more personal affairs are more
likely to be used with the informal honorific speech style.

Furthermore, the non-honorific speech style is not immune to shifting either. The non-
honorific speech style is widely referred to as *panmal*. The shifting that happens in *panmal*
is often between the intimate suffix *–e* and the plain suffix *–ta*. The intimate informal style is
used more frequently and switching to plain styles most often occurs with specific pragmatic
functions, most often to convey new information retrieved by the speaker. Furthermore, de-
pending on the tone used to utter the sentence, it either portrays with the high tone that the
information is important or noteworthy to the hearer; or when a speaker uses a low pitch to
deliver the information, it is perceived by the hearer as less relevant.

When shifting from non-honorific to honorific style occurs, it usually conveys sarcasm.
This was described by Brown (2013) as "genuine impoliteness" designed to cause conflict and
disharmony, known as "mock impoliteness". In the example Brown and Yeon (2015) uses, we
can see the speaker used the *–eyo* style to convey not only sarcasm, but also a social distance
the speaker is taking from the addressee due to the addressee not acting like themselves. This
concept of social distance is key to understanding how honorification in language functions –
the more metaphorical distance the speaker puts in between them and the receiver, the more
deference he portrays.

2.2 Korean Morphology: a brief discussion

New words in any language in general can be created by either borrowing from other lan-
guages, resulting in loan words, compounding, which Korean relies heavily on (Song 2005),
and derivation. Since Korean is an agglutinative language, affixation is very important to word

formation and the main process of derivation used. In this thesis, I will mainly be working on affixation, which is why I will describe this phenomenon in more detail than the other two. The aforementioned affixes can have either grammatical or lexical meaning. The order of individual morphemes is strictly defined, different for nouns and verbs (Pucek 2013). The following order is also defined by Pucek (2013). For nouns, the order is:

1. root of the word – eg. √cat – *koyangi* – 고양이

2. plural suffix *-tul* – 들[1]

3. nominal postpositions – eg. honorific particle *-nim* – 님

4. case marker – eg. nominative case marker *-i/ka* – 이/가

5. auxiliary particle – eg. the particle *-man* – 만 which could be translated to English as "only".

For verbs the fixed order is:

1. root

2. elongated stem *-u* – 으 – elongated stem is inserted between a verb stem ending in a consonant and a verb ending or a suffix. In today's contemporary Korean there is only one functional morpheme and that is *-u* that has 8 allomorphs which are: *-o, -wu, -a, -e, -yo, -yu, -ya, -ye* – 오, 우, 아, 어, 요, 유, 야, 여. Its selection is guided by vowel harmony.

3. passive or causative (in Pucek (2013) terms – factivum) – eg. suffixes *-i, -hi* – 이, 히.

4. honorific suffix – eg. the later discussed in more detail *-(u)si* – (으)시

5. tense suffixes – eg. past tense suffix *-ass* – 았 and its allomorphs *-ess, -yass, -yess* - 었, 얐, 였 (once again the selection is guided by vowel harmony)

6. final ending or conjunctive ending – eg. the plain final ending *-ta* – 다 or the conjunctive ending *-ko* – 고

Note that not all of these need to be present in order for a new word to be formed. Furthermore, in Korean there are more affixes that attach to the end than the beginning (Song 2005). Affixes can be used to derive nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives alike. For example, the commonly used so-called "causative affix" used in the list above is used to derive verbs from adjectives or other verbs. To demonstrate, the verb *noph(-ta)* – to be high – can be converted into *nophida* – to heighten or make something high. Brown and Yeon (2015) describe rules of Korean word formation firstly as synchronic word formation which combines the root and the root or the root with the affix. Compounding is very common in Korean and highly produc-

---

[1]Note that this suffix can also have other meanings than just plural.

tive. Example (5) shows the patterns that can be used when forming new words in Korean[2]. This type of word formation is also common for neologisms, for example in modern online talk. Brown and Yeon (2015) also talk about varying degrees of productivity, meaning some affixes are more productive than others, rather than just classifying them as productive and unproductive. They also talk about the suffix *–nim* being more productive than ever before, giving an example of a news spokesperson addressing the audience by adding this particular suffix.

(5)   N+N → N – Example – *pom-pi* – spring rain.
      V+V → V – Example – *o-ka* – come and go

Brown and Yeon (2015) also describe three types of Korean word formation – in lexicon, in syntax and in phonology. When it comes to lexical derivation, it is a derivation that results in the creation of a new word by affixation. These affixes are not only native Korean ones. Sino-Korean suffixes are also very common in use, for example, nominal affixation V-N *mek* – eat *-i* – food. There is another type of derivation that does not result in change of category – the already mentioned passivization or causativization. According to Song (2005), a big part of the Korean lexicon is Sino-Korean words. Those are made compiled of two Chinese characters which each have their own original meaning. Since Koreans have been using Chinese characters effectively for centuries as their default orthography, this occurrence is hardly surprising. Example (6) demonstrates this process:

(6)   *Hak* '學' – the character for "studying" can be combined with many other Chinese characters for example:
       Hak + *sayng*(person) – "student"
       Hak + *kyo*(teaching) – "school"
       Hak + *nyen*(year) – "school year"

We can conclude based on these examples that the formation of Sino-Korean words in general is a process of compounding. As opposed to English, in Korean there is no hyphen or space when using this word formation process. Interestingly, Korean also uses compounding of two loan words from, for example, English in a way that is unusual or surprising for English speakers. For instance, in the case of *aisyophing* which combines the English word "eye"

---

[2]This is not a comprehensive list of these patterns, only two are used for demonstration purposes.

and "shopping" to create a word meaning "window shopping" (Song 2005). We can also find abbreviations to be somewhat productive in Korean, but admittedly not to the extent of the other derivations I mentioned before. Longer phrases can be abbreviated, and then the abbreviations can be used in place of the original words. Song (2005) uses the example of *notonga sayongca* – employee and employer that is abbreviated into *nosa* and claims the original phrase has completely fallen out of use in favor of the abbreviation.

2.3   Honorification in Korean

When talking about honorification in Korean, there are different levels of honorification that can be expressed by the speaker towards the addressee. To simplify, the honorification will be divided into three levels – "Extreme deference/honorification", "Intermediate deference/honorification", and "non-deference/honorification". By combining the different ways to honor a subject, each one of these levels can be achieved.

2.3.1   Nominal suffix *-nim*

In Korean, the honorific marking appears either as a nominal suffix, an honorific case particle, an honorific marking on a verb, or a suppletive form. Firstly, we will talk about the nominal suffix *–nim*. This suffix is used with a smaller selection of nouns. Usually, it is used with nouns describing professions. As can be observed in Example (8), it cannot be used with the word describing a person - *salam* but is natural to use in Example (7) with the profession of a doctor and in Example (9) with the profession of a cook. As we can see in Example (8), using the suffix –nim with the word for person renders the word unnatural and ungrammatical.

(7)   의사님

    uysan-im

    Doctor.HON

    'Doctor'

(8) * 사람님

   Salam-nim

   Person.HON

   'Person'

(9) 요리사님

   Olisa-nim

   Cook.HON

   'Cook'

The textbook for Korean learners, Korean Grammar in Use (Lee, Hoo-youn and An 2007), describes how this suffix can coexist with "nouns designating a person". It gives the commonly used examples of teacher - *sensayng*, president - *sacang* (of a company), and pastor - *moksa*. All of those can be used with this suffix naturally. Even when we look into the Korean corpus, the word that occurs most frequently with the suffix *–nim* is the word *teacher*. In fact, the word teacher is rarely used without this suffix. This can become problematic as some works do not distinguish *-nim* as a separate suffix in words like *sensayng*.

However, what this textbook fails to mention is that this suffix could be used with not only professions that have a higher hierarchical position, but also the "less honorary" jobs like the cook in (9). This is why L2 learners are often confused by whether this suffix can be used outside of this small selection of nouns that they see so often. In general, this suffix is not described in detail in almost any literature – usually they give a very short explanation with the common examples of a teacher, president (of a company) and professor.

Interestingly, the word *sensayng* when used without the suffix in Example (10) would be deemed unnatural. It may be used by some speakers, but more often it would be paired with *-nim* even though we are not referring to someone hierarchically higher, in fact we are referring to ourselves which would usually mean lowering ourselves to show deference. However, when it comes to Example (11) of *kyoswu* – professor, this word could be used in this sentence without the suffix, and it would come off naturally. This is most likely caused by the profession of *kyoswu* already being honorifically higher by nature, so there is no need to mark it in this way.

(10)　나는 선생이 되고 싶어요.

　　　Na-nun sensayng-i　toy-ko siph-eyo.

　　　I.TOP　teacher.NOM　be　want.DECL

　　　'I want to be a teacher.'

(11)　나는 교수가 되고 싶어요.

　　　Na-nun kyoswu-ka　toy-ko siph-eyo.

　　　I.TOP　professor.NOM　be　want.DECL

　　　'I want to be a professor.'

2.3.2　Nominal suffix -ssi(씨)

This suffix could be best translated as "sir" or "ma'am" to English, but as opposed to English it would not be used with last names as we are used to. *-Ssi* does not always require agreement on the verb, and it is lower in honorific status than *–nim*. This suffix is often used in situations where one is required to be polite, but not in an extremely honorific way. For example, a teacher would use this suffix when addressing his students. Speakers on the same hierarchical level would also use this suffix in the place of *-nim* or *-kkeyse*. Thus, we can conclude that this suffix conveys Intermediate honorification in my ranking system.

　　　Similarly to *-nim*, this suffix would only be used with first names when referring to people as its use with last names would even be considered pejorative. When used with last names, it would only be okay when uttered by honorifically higher ranked individuals talking to ones lower on the social ranking. If used when talking to someone on the same level, it would be deemed very disrespectful. When used with both first and last name respectively it is no longer pejorative and would be used in conversation. When used with both names, it has a more official meaning and is often used in, for example, office settings as demonstrated in Example (12).

(12)　내 동료 민수김씨 집에 갔다.

　　　Nay tonglyo　minswu-kim-ssi cip-ey　　ka-ss-ta.

　　　My　coworker MinsuKim.HON home.LOC　go.PST.DECL

　　　'My coworker Minsu Kim went home.'

2.3.3　Suppletive forms

The second way of honoring in Korean is by using suppletive forms. This suppletion does not only affect nouns, but also pronouns and verbs. When a suppletive form is used, the *-(u)si* suffix cannot be used as well (Pucek 2005). In Examples (13) and (14) we can see that the plain form *mekta* cannot be used with a properly marked honorific subject (in this case marked by the nominative case marker *-kkeyse*). Instead, the suppletive form *tusita* is used to render the sentence grammatically correct.

(13)　* 성생님께서 먹다.

　　　Sengsayng-nim-kkeyse mek-ta.

　　　Teacher.HON.NOM　　　eat.DECL

　　　'Teacher eats.'

(14)　성생님께서 드시다.

　　　Sengsayng-nim-kkeyse tusi-ta.

　　　Teacher.HON.NOM　　　eat.DECL

　　　'Teacher eats.'

(15)　* 성생님께서 드시시다.

　　　Sengsayng-nim-kkeyse tusi-si-ta.

　　　Teacher.HON.NOM　　　eat.HON.DECL

　　　'Teacher eats.'

Example (15) demonstrates what happens when the suffix and the suppletive form are both used - the sentence is rendered ungrammatical. Even though Pucek (2005) describes suppletion as mandatory to produce a grammatical sentence, there are examples of it not occurring and the sentence still remains grammatical. When it comes to suppletion with nouns, like "house", it can be omitted and still be grammatical according to a native speaker as evident in Example (16) where the suppletive form is *tayk* and the plain form is *cip*. This sentence is still grammatical, deferent, and can be used in contemporary Korean based on a native speaker check[3]. However, not using the suppletive form renders the sentence and "Intermediate" deference in my ranking system. When a speaker wants to portray extreme deference, the suppletive form is to be used in this context as evident in Example (17).

(16)   선생님이 집에 가신다.

   Sengsayng-nim-i   cip-ey   ka-si-nta.
   Teacher.HON.NOM house.LOC go.HON.DECL

   'Teacher goes home.'

(17)   선생님이 댁에 가신다.

   Sengsayng-nim-i   tayk-ey   ka-si-nta.
   Teacher.HON.NOM house.LOC go.HON.DECL

   'Teacher goes home.'

2.3.4   Honorific case particle *-kkeyse*

Another way of honoring the recipient is by using an honorific case particle - *kkeyse* (께서) which is an honorific nominative particle. This nominative case particle replaces the plain nominative particle *-i/ka* (이/가) which is the neutral way of marking a nominative case on the word. This particle also triggers agreement on the corresponding verb which can be seen in Example (18). This case of agreement has been described in many linguistic works with many opposing opinions on the matter. In this thesis I will analyze this agreement behavior as syntactically governed agreement based on the theory by Harley and Choi (2019).

---

[3]The native speaker check was done by doctor Kyou-Dong Ahn, M.A.

(18) 아버지께서 가있습니다.

Apeci-kkeyse ka-si-ss-supnita.

Father.NOM   go.HON.PST.DECL

'Father left.'

The honorific particle *–kkeyse* can also be stacked with the nominal suffix *–nim* as evident in Example (19). This creates a case of Extreme honorification in my ranking system. Both Examples (18) and (19) are commonly used in colloquial speech and in Korean texts. However, if the subject is properly marked with *–kkeyse* and the verb does not contain the *-(u)si* suffix the sentence is rendered unnatural and not deferential even with the existing honorific particle. This proves that honorific particles trigger agreement on the verb in the form of either a suffix or a suppletion.

(19) 아버지님께서 가있습니다.

Apeci-nim-kkeyse ka-si-ss-supnita.

Father.HON.NOM go.HON.PST.DECL

'Father left.'

2.3.5 Honorific marking of verbs

The *-(u)si* suffix can only occur with the 2nd and 3rd person, as referring to one´s self has to be kept humble (Pucek 2013). The *-(u)si* suffix appears on the verb after the subject or object is properly marked by either an honorific case particle, or by having an inherent honorific feature. This is the case where the often discussed agreement occurs. This suffix adjoins directly to the root of the verb.

Depending on whether the final is a vowel or a consonant, the suffix varies. The consonant is adjoined by the *–usi* form and the vowel by the *–si* form[4]. The positioning of the suffix is always before tense suffixes, as can be seen in Example (20) (the only preceding suffix can be passive/factive) (Pucek 2005). In Example (20) we can see that the subject – Grandfather is high is seniority, thus deserves the speaker´s deference which is expressed by not only the

---

[4]This selection is once again based on vowel harmony.

aforementioned verbal suffix but also the nominal case marker –*kkeyse* which we use instead of the plain nominal case marker *i/ka*.

(20)   할아버지께서 가게에 가셨습니다.

   Halapeci-kkeyse   kakey-ey   ka-si-ess-supnita.
   Grandfather.HON.NOM shop.LOC go.HON.PST.DECL

   'Grandfather went to the store.'

According to Song (2005), in this case using *i/ka* would be grammatical, although it would be considered less deferential, in my terms it would resort in Intermediate honorification. It would be used in practice for instance with the speaker's grandfather but would not be considered polite for another person's grandfather. However, the honorific ending *-(u)si* cannot be omitted, except for the case of suppletion. In Example (21) we can see a case where suppletion should be involved, but instead it is only marked with the honorific *-(u)si*. This renders the sentence infelicitous and even ungrammatical according to Song (2005). In this example the suppletive form *tolakata* should be used to remain respectful and deferential to the subject. Using the suffix together with a suppletive form would also make the sentence ungrammatical as discussed in a prior section about suppletives.

(21)   * 할아버지께서 죽으시었다.

   Halapeci-kkeyse   cwuk-usi-ess-ta.
   Grandfather.HON.NOM die.HON.PST.DECL.

   'Grandfather died'

2.3.6   Possesee honorification

The aforementioned *-(u)si* suffix can also be used with possesee honorification which appears often in Korean. According to Song (2005) it appears only when "the relationship between the modifying expression and the remainder of the subject NP must "be intimate" if *-(u)si* is to be used". For example, when talking about body parts, personal relationships between people or belongings as demonstrated in Example (22). The phrase within the subject noun phrase *halapeci-uy* triggers the appearance of the honorific ending on the verb, which makes it seem like the deferent is the hand, being the head of the noun phrase, as opposed to the grandfather.

(22) 할아버지의 손이 불편하시다.

Halapeci-uy   son-i   pulphyenha-si-ta.
Grandfather.GEN hand.NOM uncomfortable.HON.DECL

'Grandfather´s hand was uncomfortable.'

There are exceptions to possesee honorification however, for example when talking about pets or work relationships as can be observed in Example (23). Here the sentence would be ungrammatical when used with the suffix according to Song (2005), but grammatical when used without it.

(23) * 저 분의 비서가 얼굴이 예쁘으시다.

Ce pun-uy   pise-ka   elkwul-i   yeypp-usi-ta.
That person.GEN secretary.NOM face.NOM Pretty.HON.DECL

'That person´s secretary has a pretty face.'

2.3.7 Lowering oneself

Another way to show respect in Korean is by lowering the honorific position of oneself. For example, using the humble personal pronoun *ce* - 저 in place of the casual *na* - 나. This is different from the other ways of honorification that encode raising the addressee on the hierarchical spectrum as this process reflects lowering the speaker. By lowering oneself the speaker honors the addressee by putting himself under him on the honorific spectrum, thus putting more social metaphorical distance inbetween them.

2.4 Briefly on Distributed Morphology

In this thesis, the theory from Harley and Choi (2019) that is the basis of my work uses Distributed Morphology in order to describe the Korean honorific system. Because of that, it will be briefly described it in the following paragraphs.

Distributed Morphology[5] as a term was coined by Halle and Marantz in their work in the 1990s.

---

[5]Distributed Morphology will be further referred to in this thesis for the sake of convenience with the acronym DM.

Halle and Marantz (1993), was the locus classicus of DM. Halle and Marantz (1993) describes the main features of this framework which distinguish it from its predecessors and other frameworks used in linguistics. The first one of these features is that DM does not consider morphology and syntax as separate processes. Additionally, In DM, the lexicon is not treated as a separate module; instead, the generation of morphological forms is distributed across different components of the linguistic system. The basic unit of grammar is the morpheme, and syntax is responsible for assembling them into complex structures. Syntax generates these structures by combining features selected from a formative inventory.

The formative inventory stores the features and roots, the roots are sometimes refered to as formatives. These formatives do not have grammatical categories assigned yet. They are usually marked with the square root symbol. For example, the root of the word "dog" does not have the features to make up the actual word yet. We mark it as $\sqrt{}$DOG, although it could also be marked as $\sqrt{}$365 as it does not carry the phonological or semantic features of the word "dog", yet. This is done for convenience. From the formative inventory, the syntax selects bundles of features (either semantic or syntactic) which are then manipulated through syntactic operations. According to Adger (2003), a morphosyntactic feature can be described as a property of the word that syntax is sensitive to. These features have values that are always binary, marked by +/-. For example, the feature used to describe animacy in nouns in many languages would be marked as [+/- animacy].

The 3 main properties that distinguish Distributed Morphology from other theories are "Late Insertion", "Underspecification of vocabulary items" and "Hierarchical syntactic structure all the way down". "Late Insertion" refers to the insertion of functional elements and features into a syntactic structure that occurs after the basic syntactic structure has been constructed. This perspective contrasts with "Early Insertion," where features are inserted during the initial stages of the syntactic derivation.

After insertion into the syntactic structure, post-syntactic morphological operations take place to derive the final morphological form of words. This can include processes such as affixation, fusion, or other morphological changes. In Late Insertion theories, the syntactic structure is first built with abstract, featureless nodes. Only after the "hollow" syntactic structure is formed, the relevant features are inserted into the structure during a later stage of the derivation. Phonological features are inserted at the very end of the operations.
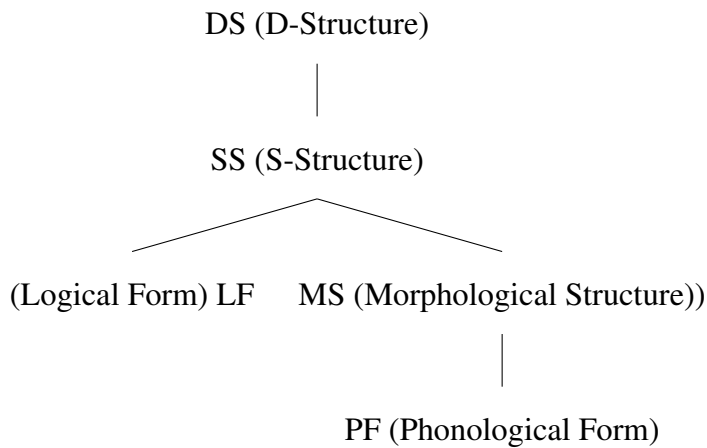
```
                    DS (D-Structure)

                          |

                    SS (S-Structure)
                      /         \
                    /             \
(Logical Form) LF      MS (Morphological Structure))

                              |

                    PF (Phonological Form)
```

Chart 1 (Halle and Marantz)

In Chart 1 titleted with "SS" is a phase called Spell out. This is a formation of the empty node structure mentioned above. LF (logical form) is made out of the semantic features that are inserted at this stage. As the chart demonstrates, the bundles of features that the syntax consists of contain semantic and syntactic features, but do not have phonological features - these are inserted at the very end using vocabulary item insertion, which will be described in more detail in the next paragraph.

Underspecification of vocabulary items in the context of Distributed Morphology refers to the idea that the morphological features associated with a particular lexical item may not be fully specified at the point of insertion into the syntactic structure. In other words, when a word is introduced into the sentence during the syntactic derivation, not all morphological information about that word is immediately provided. This solves a problem that occurs with vocabulary insertion which happens when multiple vocabulary items have the needed features to be inserted in one empty node. Only the most specified VI is inserted, meaning the one which matches more, or all the features that are needed on the terminal node.

"Hierarchical syntactic structure all the way down" describes how terminal nodes are organized according to the principles of syntax and are further modified by morphological operations. The phonological form is separated from these principles. This can be seen in chart 1, which shows the order of operations being performed during word form building.

2.5 Previous studies

Honorific agreement in Korean is most often analyzed as a case of agreement between an argument and a verb, similar to a number or person agreement observed in many languages including Czech and English languages. For Korean honorifics, the agreement is triggered by marked nominal phrases. On the verb, this is reflected by the use of the honorific *-(u)si* suffix or via a suppletive form as discussed previously. We can therefore conclude that this is the agreement projected onto the verb with the correctly marked nominal phrase. Thus, we assume *-kkeyse* has a feature [+hon] which requires agreement for the verb realized through suppletive forms or the aforementioned suffixation.

Where this simple theory becomes problematic is when it comes to possessive structures. As we can see in Example (25), the simple deduction that agreement is triggered with properly marked subjects is not what occurs here. The head of the subject nominal phrase of this sentence is the house which is not marked in any way to appear as an honorific word and thus does not contain the [+hon] feature and is not an inherent lexically honorific word.

The possessor of this sentence is the grandfather marked with the nominal suffix *-nim* and also the genitive suffix *–uy*[6]. Seemingly, this does not make sense with the previous theory I used as the house is neither a word with inherent [+hon] feature, nor it is marked properly by any ways we discussed prior.

Verbal subject honorification is a syntactically governed grammatical agreement with the honorified NP. However, as we can observe in Example (24), the subject is not honorifically marked in any way. Neither the suffix *–nim*, nor the case marker *–kkeyse* are present, but the verbal suffix - still occurs on the verb. It is to be noted that this example is a point of discussion in many linguistic works, and many dismiss it as ungrammatical while as opposed to that many judge it as grammatical. This sentence leads some linguists analyzing this phenomenon to the conclusion that it proves the previously mentioned occurrence not being a case of syntactically governed agreement.

---

[6]It is to be noted that this sentence could also contain the honorific suppletive of a house - *tayk* (댁) which would also be natural and grammatical. This change would make the sentence "extremely honorific", but both of them are viable options.

(24)　할아버지의 집이 크신다.

　　　Halapeci-uy　　　　*cip-i*　　　*khu-si-nta.*

　　　Grandfather.HON.GEN　house.NOM　big.HON.DECL

　　　'Grandfather´s house is big. '

There are two main irregularities - the agreement is triggered by a possesor rather than the head of the nominal phrase - eg. "house" and also the fact that the possessor does not always need to be marked in order to trigger agreeement.

(25)　할아버지님의 집이 크신다.

　　　Halapeci-nim-uy　　　*cip-i*　　　*khu-si-nta.*

　　　Grandfather.HON.GEN　house.NOM　big.HON.DECL

　　　'Grandfather´s house is big. '

(26)　* 아버지의 고양이가 귀여우시다.

　　　Apeci-uy　　*koyangi-ka*　*kwiyewu-si-ta.*

　　　Father.GEN　cat.NOM　　cute.HON.DECL

　　　'Father's cat is cute. '

However, in Example (26) we can see that when talking about possessing an animate object in this particular sentence, the possessee cannot be honored – it would seem unnatural. This is why in the following section I will write out constraints that need to be met in order for the verbal suffixal agreement to occur. There are constraints based on different semantic features that are present on the head of the noun phrase – for example animacy feature of the subject can interfere with overt verbal honorification.

In my thesis, I will argue that this is indeed an example of syntactical agreement in the Korean language. To prove my point, I will be adopting Harley and Choi´s (2019) theory where they explain this behavior through the act of possessor raising. In their theory, the possessor raises to subject position as demonstrated in the following syntactic Chart 2. This is a case of adjunction that involves movement from the possessor position to the adjunct position.
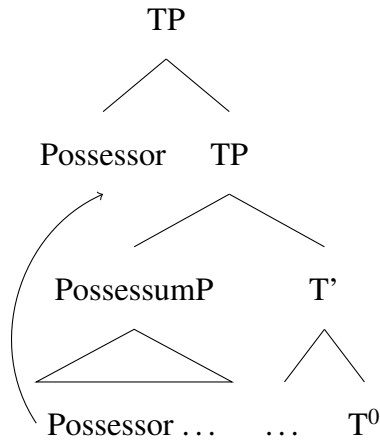
Chart 2 (Harley and Choi)

In this syntactic tree, it can be observed that the possessor rises from its original position and merges in the adjunct position. Due to possessor raising, the entire possessive nominal phrase becomes honorifically marked, although this is often not orthographically represented – meaning it is optional at the Spellout phase. This necessitates the nominal phrase to require an agreement on the verb in the form of the verbal suffix. In Distributed morphology, agreement is usually described as a dissociated morpheme insertion. This syntactic operation occurs when the syntax produces a syntactically well-formed structure. However, this structure is somehow morphologically deficient, and the morphological component repairs the deficiency by inserting an additional morpheme (Harley and Choi 2019). Harley and Choi (2019) argue that Korean subject honorification morphemes are a case of syntactic agreement and should therefore be analyzed as "sprouted" Agr0 – agreement nodes.

They also argue that the previously discussed Vocabulary Insertion is the realization of, in this case, sprouted nodes by material which is specified in a list of Vocabulary Items that provide all the forms available for use in Korean. DM adopts the concept of the Elsewhere Condition (Kiparsky 1973), according to which multiple forms can be eligible to realize a given morpheme, and the winning form is the single compatible form which is most highly specified.

As a proof of this explanation, Harley and Choi (2019) uses examples where –*kkeyse* does not appear and the sentence is semantically identical. Harley and Choi (2019) use Example (27) to demonstrate the syntactical agreement in possessor construction. This example would work according to her theory even without the explicitly orthographically represented *-kkeyse*.

We can observe that this sentence does not even have the genitive marker on the possessor. Once again, this sentence is rendered very controversial in linguistics and its grammaticality is marginal.

(27) 할아버지께서 수염이 길시다.

    Halapeci-kkeyse swuyem-i   kil-si-ta.

    Grandather.HON whiskers.NOM long.HON.DECL

    'Grandfather's whiskers are long.'

This points to the possibility of possessor raising used as a solution to the honorific agreement irregularity in Korean.

3 Data

3.1 Possessor structures

When it comes to possessor structures, I have observed there are some conditions that must be met in order to make the sentence with this particular pattern grammatical, and for the agreement in terms of the suffix *-(u)si* or suppletion to appear on the verb. Based on my theory, certain semantic relation between the honored possessor and the possessee must be present in order to trigger the previously described possessor raising to an adjunct of TP. These conditions are based on my observations, with the help of the Korean online corpus and information and grammaticality judgements from a native speaker. Table 2 shows the examples of possessees I have used in my research, whether they appear with the suffix in possessive constructions, and their semantic feature that is the reason why. Note that these possesive constructions must contain an either properly marked possessor or one with an inherent honorific lexical feature.

Table 2

Possessee	Animacy	-*(u)si* suffix	Reason
Daughter	+	+	Kinship
Worker	+	-	Non-kinship
Cat	+	-	Non-kinship
Hand	-	+	Inalienable possession
House	-	+	Alienable possesion but closer relationship/status symbol
computer	-	-	Alienable possesion, not close relationship or status symbol

Following are the constraints written down in more detail:

1. The head of the possesive nominal phrase must be in possesion of a properly honorifically marked possessor. If the head of the nominal phrase is not in possesion of a properly honorifically marked possesor, it must be in possesion of a nominal phrase with inherent lexical honorific feature.

The possessee must be in possession of an honorified possessor – for example professor's - *sensayngnimuy* or father's - *abonimuy* house - *cip* , hand – *son*. This subject must be properly marked by either the nominal suffix, the case marker or both as discussed prior as demonstrated in example (28).

(28)   할아버지님의 손이 아프셨습니다.

    Halapeci-nim-uy   *son-i*   *aphu-sy-ess-supnita.*

    Grandfather.HON.GEN hand.NOM hurts.HON.PST.DECL

    'Grandfather's hand hurts.'

However, when the possessee is in possession of a possessor that has an inherent honorific feature, the agreement can occur even without overt honorific marking. This would mean nouns describing people in naturally occurring higher social hierarchal positions – *sacang* – president (of a company) or *halmeni* – grandmother. In this case the agreement may occur even without the overt honorific marking on the possessor, with only the genitive marker as demonstrated in Example(29).

(29) 할머니의 손이 아프셨습니다.

Halmeni-uy   son-i   aphu-sy-ess-supnita.

Grandmother.GEN hand.NOM hurts.HON.PST.DECL

'Grandmother's hand hurts.'

2. If the [-animacy] subject is under possesion of a honorifically marked possesor or a possesor with an inherent honorific feature, there must be a close relationship of the possessor and the possessee [-animacy] or it must be a case of inalienable possession

If the subject has the feature [-animacy], it must be describing either a case inalianeble possesion or something that, by my speculation, the possessor has been in possession of for long periods of time and has a close relationship to. Inalianeble possesion is a case of obligatory possesion where the possessed head of the nominal phrase cannot exist independently of the possessor (Matthews 2013). For instance the already used example of " Grandfather's hand". Examples like I have already demonstrated with Grandfather's house - *Halapeciuy cip* are common in contemporary Korean[7], but when it comes to Example(30), it feels more unnatural to honor the computer from the native speaker's judgement.

(30) 교수님의 컴퓨터가 비싸시다.

Kyoswu-nim-uy   khemphyuthe-ka pissa-si-ta.

Professor.HON.GEN computer.NOM   expensive.HON.DECL

'Professor´s computer is expensive.'

That does not mean it does not happen or is ungrammatical, it is just less probable to be uttered by a native speaker. The relationship between the grandfather and his house is deeper and more meaningful than the relationship between the professor and his computer. The computer is something that can be bought (relatively) easily and can be replaced. A house is something that is more meaningful to a person and therefore has a closer relationship with the possessor. It is also less of a status symbol to be an owner of a computer than to be an owner of a house, meaning it has closer ties to the social honorific ranking.

---

[7]these Examples are also used very often in linguistic literature – eg. Song 2005, Harley and Choi 2019.

3. When the subject is animate – contains feature [+animacy] - it must be in kinship with the possessor who is properly marked or has an inherent lexical honorific feature.

In other words, it must be in close relationship with the honorified possessor – for example the CEO's daughter (Example (31), but not the president's worker (32). There must be a psychologically close relationship with the possessee. As can be observed in Example (32), where there is not a close relationship between the possessor and the possesee, it would be more unnatural for the agreement to occur. In a previous section, I have shown an example of this sentence with grandfather's cat - *apeciuy koyangi* which would also be an unnatural sentence for agreement to occur on as can be observed in Example (33).

(31) 사장님의 딸이 이쁘십니다.

     Sacang-nim-uy   *ttal-i*   *ippu-si-pnita.*

     President.HON.GEN daughter.NOM. pretty.HON.DECL

     'The president's daughter is pretty.'

(32) *사장님의 일꾼이 게으르시다.

     Sacang-nim-uy   *ilkkwun-i*   *keyul-si-ta.*

     President.HON.GEN worker.NOM. lazy.HON.DECL

     'The president's worker is lazy.'

(33) *아버지의 고양이가 귀여우시다.

     Apeci-uy   *koyangi-ka* *kwiyewu-si-ta.*

     Father.GEN cat.NOM.   cute.HON.DECL

     'Father's cat is cute.'

Based on all these conditions and constraints I can conclude that according to my observations, the head of the nominal phrase must be in possession of an either honorifically marked possessor or the possessor must have an inherent lexical honorific feature – with the example of possessors *sacang* and *kyoswu*. According to my theory,when it comes to [-animate] possessees, in order to trigger agreement on the verb it must be an item that is in close relation to the possessor. Using the examples of computer and house, I have demonstrated that even if

the possessee is inanimate, there are still lexical conditions to be met in order for the verbal suffix to occcur.

When it comes to the example of computer, the honorification of it would be deemed more unnatural than the house. In fact, the examples using house as a possessee are very common in literature and can be found in many of my resources. However, the fact that honoring the computer was deemed unnatural by the native speaker's judgement shows that there is still some more data to be observed and analyzed. I used the term "closer relationship" to describe this phenomenon but in theory an object that is deemed more important to the possessor is more likely to be honored in his place. There is a parallel to be drawn with animate objects, where closeness - kinship to the possessee also matters to honorification.

When it comes to possessees with the [+animacy] feature they must be in a close kinship with the possessor. I have shown examples of when the psychological closeness of the possessor and the possessee affects whether or not agreement occurs. In examples like the teacher's daughter, the agreement is realized, while when it comes to the not so close relationships like boss's worker, it would not appear in the likeness of a verbal suffix and would be deemed unnatural if it was to be used.

3.2 The suffix *-nim*

What Harley and Choi (2019) fail to recognize in their work is *–nim* as an honorific suffix. As can be observed in Example (34) (Harley and Choi 2019) they use in their work, they consider the word *sensayngnim* as not honorifically marked. I would argue that, because the word *sensayng* contains the suffix *–nim*, it is in fact honorifically marked. A lot of linguistic works do not consider the word *sensayng* natural to occur without *–nim* and fail to realize that this word is indeed marked with this particular nominal suffix. This fact means it is not surprising that it would trigger agreement on the verb. Harley and Choi (2019) also argue that the word *sensayngnim* has an inherent honorific feature, ignoring the nominal suffix present. I would dispute their use of Example (34), because in this case there is overt honorific marking on the nominal phrase present and it is not marked in their gloss as one.

(34) 선생님은 학생들을 보시었다.

Sensayngnim-un haksayng-tul-ul po-si-ess-ta.

Teacher.TOP   students.PL.NOM   long.HON.PST.DECL

'Teacher saw the students.'

I do not agree with their conclusion because, as I have demonstrated in the section 2.3.1 about the suffix itself, the word *sensayng* by itself does not have an inherent honorific feature. It does not by itself trigger agreement on the verb, only in the presence of one of the aforementioned suffixes. In the glosses used in this article, the word *sensayngnim* is not marked as honorific, even though it contains an honorific suffix. As I have demonstrated with examples in the previous section 2.3.1 where the *–nim* suffix appears with words other than sensayng, like *yolisa* and also facilitates agreement on the verb, meaning even on this particular noun it should be considered as honorific marking.

The nominal suffix *–nim* is very interesting in its use. When we compare it to its counterpart in, for example, Japanese *–san*, its use is very different although there are many similarities found between these two languages[8]. When we look back on the examples I have provided earlier of its use, we can see a somewhat simple pattern – we cannot use the suffix with less specific nouns like "person" - *salam*, but we can attach them to words describing a profession. However, this pattern is regrettably not so straightforward. When it comes to Korean nominal suffix *–nim*, I have observed its use to be limited by several constraints. The following are the constraints I have observed on how *–nim* can appear on nominal phrases in general:

1. *-nim* cannot occur with personal pronouns.

Pronouns are, in general, very rarely used in Korean and their use can result in the sentence being deemed non-honorific. For example, the pronoun often translated into English as "you" - *tangsin* (당신) is to be only used with people that you deem psychologically close. For example, the speaker could refer to their significant other using *tangsin*, but when referring to the speaker's boss, it would be deemed highly inappropriate for the hierarchically lower speaker to refer to the higher positioned listener in this way.

Similarly, the pronoun *ne* (너) which also translates to "you" would only be used only

---

[8]There are many different honorific suffixes in Japanese with different uses, I chose *–san* for this comparison because of its lexical and grammatical similarity.

among close friends or people on the same hierarchical level. As personal pronouns are usually not used in honorific contexts, it makes sense that the suffix would not be used in combination with them. This is demonstrated in Examples (35) and (36) respectively. Similarly, any honorific markers cannot be used with a personal pronoun referring to the speaker of the utterance. The speaker must be kept humble in speech, otherwise the sentence would be rendered non-honorific as I demonstrated in section about lowering oneself in speech.

(35)   *당신님 집에 가신다.

   Tangsin-nim cip-ey   ka-si-nta.
   You.HON   house.LOC go.HON.DECL

   'You went home.'

(36)   *너는 이쁘신다.

   Ne-nun   ippu-si-nta..
   You.TOP pretty.HON.DECL

   'You are pretty.'

2. The noun must be referring to a profession or a family member

As I have demonstrated in examples in the previous section about the nominal suffix, it is often used with nouns describing profession. When you look into a Korean corpus and search for nim and its use, the most common example is its use with the word professor - *kyoswunim* (교수님) or teacher - *sensayngnim* (선생님) or boss - *sacangnim* (사장님). This is also the first fact that L2 speakers are taught when it comes to this suffix – its use with these nouns. Admittedly, the textbooks do not explain the use of this suffix in enough detail, as we can see in for example Korean Grammar in Use. This textbook only talks about the use of *–nim* for only half a page, describing its use with words refering to only professions.

Most of the time, these types of words are even taught together and the use of the word without the suffix is not encouraged. In a lot of linguistic works like Harley and Choi (2019), the suffix is used in combination with the word *sensayng*, but never explained or taken into consideration as a suffix, only as a part of the word *sensayngnim*. The existence of this suffix with other words is often forgotten and not emphasized enough. However, it can also be used with other professions, for example a cook - *yolisa* (요리사).

(37) 요리사님이 음식을 만드신다

Yolisa-nim-i   umsik-ul   mantu-si-nta.

Cook.HON.NOM food.ACC. cook.HON.DECL

'Cook cooks food.'

When we honor cook like in Example (37), agreement on the verb occurs in the form of the suffix *-(u)si*. Even though *–nim* could also be combined with *–kkeyse*, it can trigger honorific agreement on the verb on its own as seen in the example cook. Another very common concordance we can find in the Korean corpus with this suffix is nouns for family members, for example mother – *emenim* (어머님) or father – *apenim* (아버님). This is demonstrated in Example (38). It is possible to use the word *emeni* – mother with the plain topic marker, or case marker but mainly in context where the speaker is in a close relationship with the family member – as in the speaker's own mother, father, or even grandfather. In this situation the honoring is not required, because of the smaller psychological distance between them. As opposed to that when talking about a family member related to someone else, where the speaker would be encouraged to "honor them properly" with the suffix *-nim* or case marker *-kkeyse*.

(38) 아버님의 댁이 크신다.

Apenim-uy   tayk-i   khu-si-nta..

Father.HON.GEN house.NOM. big.HON.DECL

'Father's house is big.'

4. It can occur with the first name but never the last name.

According to a native speaker's judgement, the use of this suffix with the first name is natural, but its use with the last name is unnatural. This contrasts with many other languages (like Japanese as I discussed previously) where the honorific suffixes occur usually on the last name. For example, a common first name like *Minho* can be used with the suffix, but when it comes to the common last name *Pak*, according to a native speaker it would be deemed strange and unnatural. This functions similarly as the suffix *–ssi* (씨) which is also to be attached only with the first name of the recipient, or both last and first name, otherwise it is deemed pejorative. However, as opposed to the *–ssi* suffix, *-nim* could not also be used with both first and last name. This is demonstrated in Examples (39) and (40) respectivelly.

(39)   민호님

Minho-nim

Minho.HON

'Minho'

(40)   * 박님

Pak-nim

Pak.HON

'Pak'

Based on the conditions I described and examples I provided, we can conclude that the *–nim* suffix cannot appear with personal pronouns in any circumstance. This is not surprising as using personal pronouns to refer to the receiver of the sentence would be deemed impolite in the Korean language in general. Next, I described what types of nouns *–nim* can occur with. Specifically, it can be affixated on nouns describing professional positions – like *sacang* – president of a company which is often documented in various linguistic literature for example my resources and also textbooks like Korean Grammar in Use. However, it can also occur even with nouns describing lower societally ranking positions, like *yolisa* - cook.

The second type of noun it can appear on is one that is describing a family member. Very regularly used examples when we observe the Korean corpus include *emenim* or *apenim*. Specifically, it is to be used when talking about family members who are not the speaker's own family. When it comes to personal names, it can only appear on first names, never last names as demonstrated in examples I provided. There is a parallel to be drawn with the *–ssi* suffix which functions very similarly, however can be used with both first and last name as well, as opposed to *-nim*.

3.3 Patterns of use

In this section define the patterns that occur with honorifics in Korean will be defined. Firstly, how the honorific agreeement appears with the *-nim* and *-kkeyse* suffixes, afterwards the patterns that can be observed with possesor structures. Afterwards the patterns use of *-nim* and *-kkeyse* are demonstrated and lastly how verbal suppletion is realized.

1. Honorific agreement with the nominal suffixes

Noun- *kkeyse* predicate-hon

*Noun- *kkeyse* predicate

Noun [+hon] - predicate-hon

*Noun predicate-hon

*Noun-*kkeyse* predicate

Noun-*nim* predicate-hon

*Noun-*nim* predicate

Noun-*nim-kkeyse* predicate-hon

*Noun-*nim-kkeyse* predicate

2.Possessor structure sentences

Possessor-*kkeyse-uy* subject predicate-hon

Possessor-*nim-kkeyse-uy* subject predicate-hon

Possessor-*nim-uy* subject predicate-hon

Possesor-*kkeyse* subject predicate-hon

Possesor-*nim* subject predicate-hon

Possesor-*uy* [+hon] subject predicate-hon

*Possesor-*nim-uy* subject predicate

*Possesor-*kkeyse-uy* subject predicate

The use of *-nim*

First name – *nim*

*Last name – *nim*

Profession-*nim*

*Pronoun-*nim*

Family member-*nim*

The use of *ssi*

30

First name-*ssi*

* Last name-*ssi*

* Pronoun-*ssi*

First name, Last name –*ssi*

Suppletive forms

*Predicate - suppletive form- (u)si

Predicate – suppletive form

3.4 Metonymy as a possible explanation of possessee honorification

The concept of honoring the possessor could also be explained and analyzed by the concept of metonymic relations. In simple terms, metonymy is a process where one entity is used to refer to another in place of the term itself (Littlemore 2017). It could be described as a shortcut for communication, allowing speakers to communicate with fewer words than they would otherwise need. An example to demonstrate this phenomenon that is commonly used is the White house. The White house is not only a building but can be used to refer to the head of the United States – the president. In sentences like "The white house shared a press release." the phrase "White house" is a metonymy for the American government or the president.

There is another commonly known example of this in contemporary Korean. That is the word for food – *pap* (밥). *Pap* directly translates to English as "rice", but it stands for "meal" in general as demonstrated in Example (41). This relies on a metonymic relation between the actual food – rice that is served with most meals and the actual word for meal. We can find this link between "rice" and "meal" in Japanese as well, with the word *gohan* (Littlemore 2017).

(41)   집에 오고 밥을 먹습니다.

    Cip-ey   *o-ko*   *pap-ul*   *mek-supnita.*
    House.LOC come.CONJ food.ACC eat.DECL

    'I will come home, and eat a meal.'

When it comes to metonymy, Littlemore (2017) also defines the key types that can be found in languages. The relation I am analyzing in this case would be a part of "Whole and part metonymy" under the category of "Thing and part". In this case, the metonymic relation would be between the grandfather and his hand – extending the meaning of grandfather to

also a smaller part of him – the hand. This explains why this unusual case of honorification would occur in the examples provided in previous sections. In the same way the rice stands for the meal, the hand would be a stand-in for grandfather, meaning we honor it the same way as grandfather himself – by using the *-(u)si* suffix on the verb.

4 Conclusion

The Korean honorific system is something that has been debated and analyzed in a plethora of linguistic work. It has been named "one of the most developed systems of honorifics amongst languages" by authors like Brown and Yeon (2015). There are many different ways to analyze and categorize the system itself, I chose to use Brown and Yeon (2015) system of differentiating Korean speech styles into Formal and Informal and demonstrated their way of analyzing this complicated system. When it comes to Korean morphology, I have chosen to follow Pucek's (2013) and Song's (2005) descriptive work to analyze the word formation present in Korean language.

Afterwards I have described the many different ways to honor the receiver of speech that are available in Korean. I also introduced my system of using the terms Extreme honorification, Intermediate honorification and Non-honorification to make my work in classifying the system easier and more coherent. I explained the ways to honor in Korean in detail while providing examples for each one of them. I describe the nominative case particle *-kkeyse*, the nominal suffixes *-nim* and *-ssi* and the verbal suffix *-(u)si* and the suppletive forms which verbs can take on. I argue against Pucek's (2013) theory that suppletion is always mandatory and show examples of suppletion not occurring and the sentence still remaining grammatical.

Afterwards I have described a phenomenon that is heavily debated in linguistics and that being the honorific possessor structures. Based on the analysis that the verbal suffix *-(u)si* is governed by syntactical agreement that is triggered by the overtly honorific marked noun phrase. I used Harley and Choi's (2019) theory that involves possessor raising to demonstrate why this irregularity occurs. Afterwards I described the constraints and conditions that I have observed from the Korean corpus and native speaker's judgements on the appearance of *–nim* and *-(u)si* suffixes.

Lastly, I pointed to metonymy as another possible explanation of this phenomena. However, there are still many unresolved issues when it comes to this topic. The Korean honorific system

is a very complex topic with a lot of phenomena to explore and analyze. I have done my part in analyzing this complex system and provided data I have collected on this topic, while giving possible explanations for these occurrences and making patterns of possible sentences that could be uttered.

5 References

Adger, David. 2003. "Core Syntax: a Minimalist Approach". Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brown, Lucien. 2013. "Mind your own esteemed business: Sarcastic Honorific Use and Impoliteness in Korean TV Dramas". Journal of Politeness Research 9(2).

Brown, Lucien and Jaehoon Yeon. 2015. "The Handbook of Korean Linguistics". Wiley-Blackwell.

Embick, David. 2015. "The Morpheme: A Theoretical Introduction". Berlin, München, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.

Halle, M. and Marantz A. 1993. "Chapter 3: Distributed Morphology and the pieces of Inflection". In K. Hale, and J. Keyser, (Eds.), The View from Building 20 (pp. 111-176). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Harley, Heidi, Jaehoon, Choi. 2019. "Locality domains and morphological rules: Phases, heads, node-sprouting and suppletion in Korean honorification". Natural Language and Linguistic Theory 37(4).

Kádár Z. Dániel, Mills, Sara. 2011. "Politeness in East Asia". Cambridge University Press.

King, Ross and Yeon, Jaehoon. 2000. "Elementary Korean". Boston, Mass: Tuttle.

Kyung-ah, Lee, Han, Hoo-youn, Chin-myŏng, An. 2007. "Korean Grammar in Use: Beginner." Darakwon.

Lee, Iksop and Ramsay, Robert. 2000. "The Korean Language". SUNY Press.

Littlemore, Jeannette. 2017. "Metonymy." Chapter. In The Cambridge Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics, edited by Barbara Dancygier, 407–22. Cambridge Handbooks in Language and Linguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Matthews, P. H. 2014. "The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics". Oxford University Press.

Pucek, Vladimír. 2005. "Gramatika Korejského Jazyka". Praha: Karolinum.

Pucek, Vladimír. 2013. "Klasická Korejština". Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Filozofická fakulta.

Song, Jae Jung. 2005. "The Korean Language". Routledge.