On the locality condition for Korean subject honorific suppletion

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Introduction

Main research question:

- What is the locality condition for suppletive subject honorification in Korean predicates?

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- Adjacency between $\sqrt{}$ and Agr_{Subj}[+hon] (Agr_{S} from now on) in a single complex head.
- ☞ Key data: failure of honorific suppletion in causative and passive constructions

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- ☞ Key data: failure of honorific suppletion in causative and passive constructions

Main puzzle:

- Apparent non-adjacency between conditioning and conditioned nodes in auxiliary verb constructions.

Subject honorification in Korean

- Conveying [Speaker < Subject]
- Two types of subject honorification in the predicate morphology
  - Regular honorification
  - Suppletive honorification

Regular honorification

V-***(u)si***

a. ai-ka chayk-ul ilk-ess-ta.
child-NOM book-ACC read-PST-DECL
'The child read a book.'

Regular honorification

V-***(u)si***

a. ai-ka chayk-ul ilk-ess-ta.
child-NOM book-ACC read-PST-DECL
'The child read a book.'

b. cwusang-kkeyse chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.
his.majesty-NOM.HON book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty read a book.'

Suppletive honorification

Suppletive honorific stem

a. ai-ka sakwa-lul mek-ess-ta.
child-NOM apple-ACC eat-PST-DECL
'The child ate an apple.'

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his.majesty-NOM.HON apple-ACC **eat.HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty ate an apple.'

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his.majesty-NOM.HON apple-ACC **eat.HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty ate an apple.'

b′. * cwusang-kkeyse sakwa-lul **mek-usi**-ess-ta.
his.majesty-NOM.HON apple-ACC **eat-HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

The locality condition for suppletive honorification

Adjacency-based approaches

- Suppletive honorification is triggered based on the adjacency between the conditioned and conditioning nodes (Koopman, 2005; Chung, 2009; Kim and Chung, 2015).

Non-adjacency-based approach

- Suppletive honorification can be triggered by a non-adjacent node in the same complex head (Choi and Harley, 2019).

Evidence for adjacency-based approach

Causative/passive constructions

- causative/passive suffixes bleed honorific suppletion.

Auxiliary verb construction

The key data for the non-adjacency-based approach

- The asymmetry in subject honorification marking:
- The suppletive honorification on the main verb (V1) is seemingly triggered by a linearly non-adjacent regular honorific suffix on the auxiliary verb (V2).

Honorific suppletion?

capswusi-e po-**si**-ess-ta.
eat.**HON$_S$**-E see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

'tried to eat/had an experience of eating an apple (honorific).'

Proposal

The honorific suppletion on the main verb is triggered based on adjacency.

- Agr_S is base-generated above the root and triggers honorific suppletion.

A morphotactic constraint → The $\sqrt{}$-Agr_S non-adjacency

- A morphotactic constraint gives rise to morpheme metathesis (Arregi and Nevins, 2012, 2018, 2022).
- Agr_S is dislocated after triggering root suppletion.

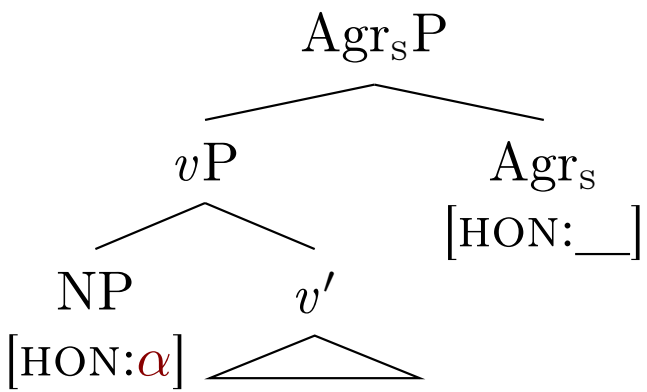
Outline

Mechanism of subject honorification

Subject honorification is a syntactic operation

- Agr_S[HON: __] probing a valued [HON] feature

(adapted from Jou 2024)



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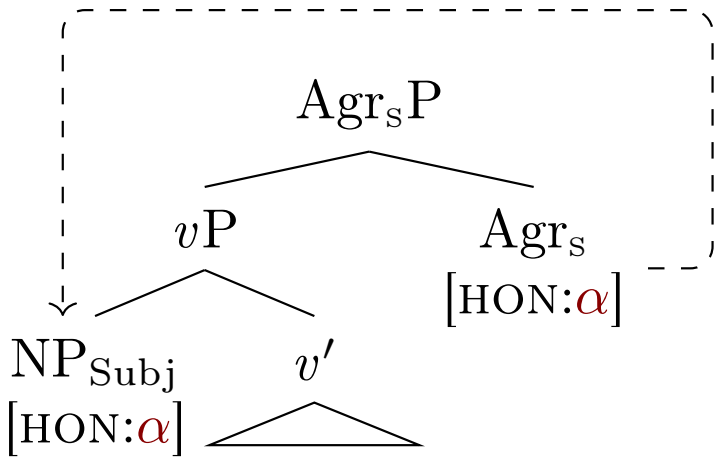
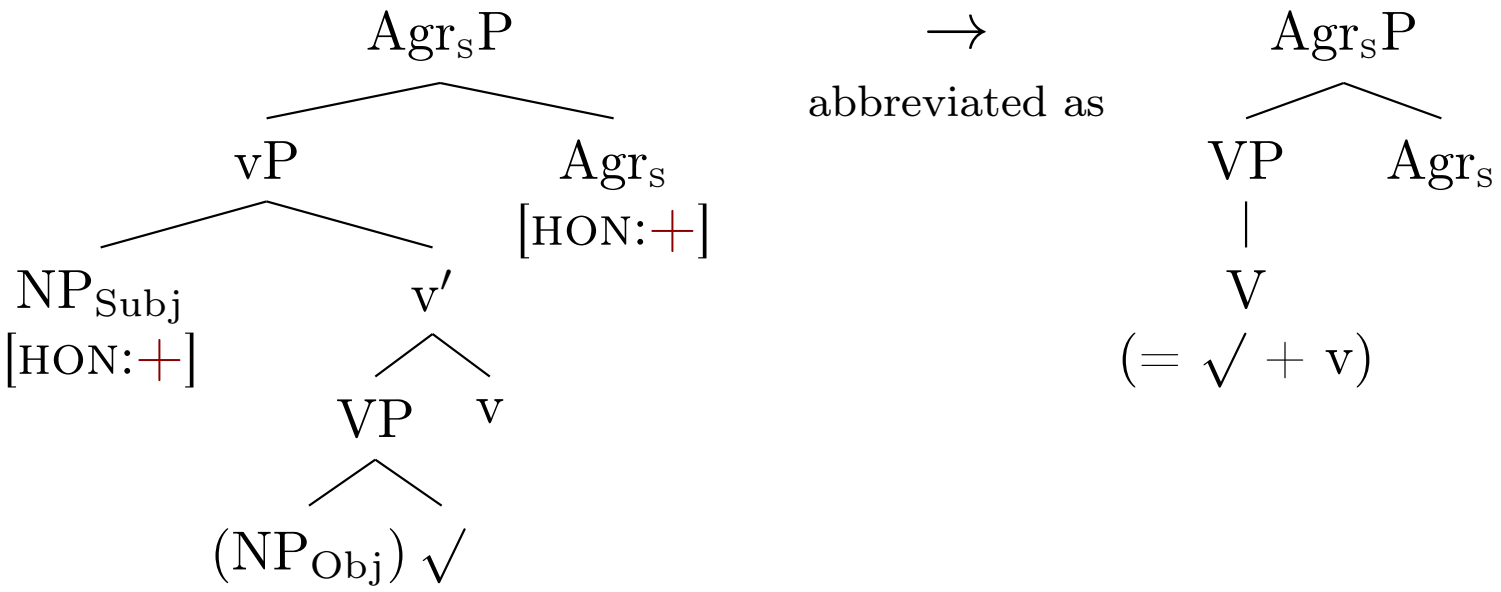


Subject honorification as a syntactic operation



Vocabulary Insertion: regular honorification

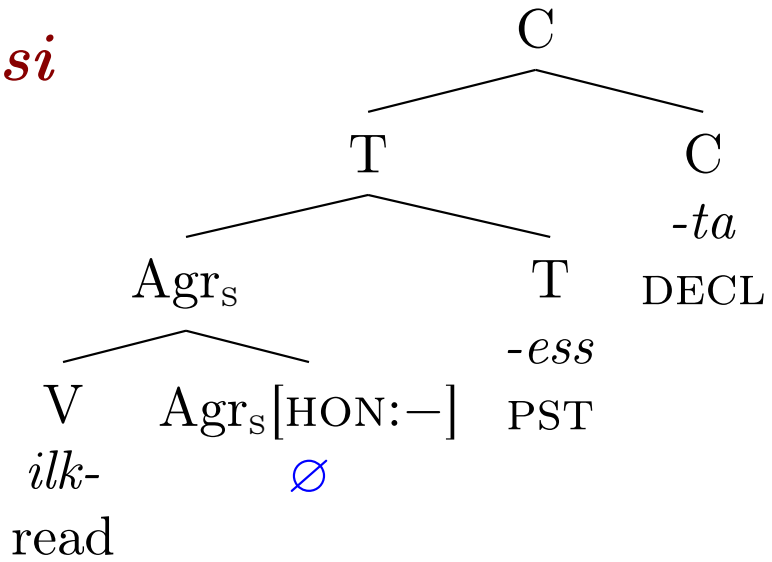
a. $\sqrt{\text{READ}} \leftrightarrow$ *ilk-*

b. $\text{Agr}_\text{S}[\text{HON:}+] \leftrightarrow$ ***-(u)si***

c. $\text{Agr}_\text{S} \leftrightarrow \varnothing$

d. $\text{T}[\text{PST}] \leftrightarrow$ *-ess*

e. $\text{C}[\text{DECL}] \leftrightarrow$ *-ta*



ilk-ess-ta.
read-PST-DECL
'read'

Vocabulary Insertion: regular honorification

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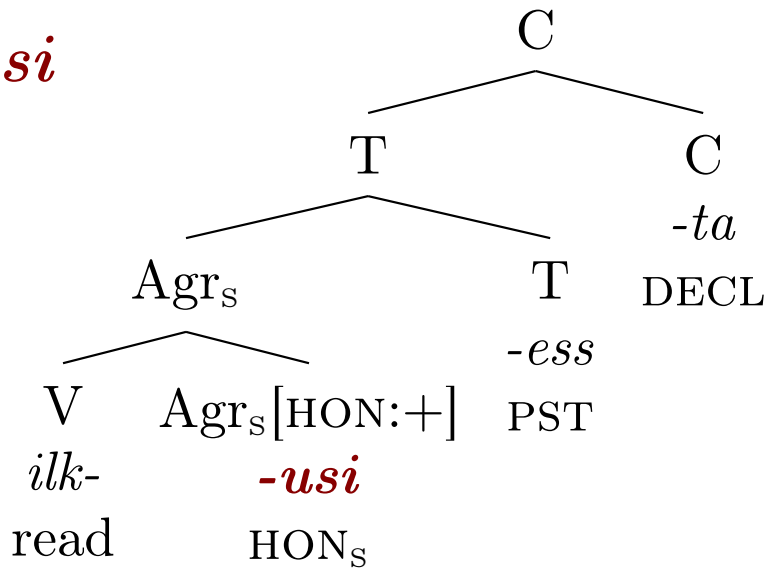


ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.
read-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'read (honorific)'

Outline

Evidence for the adjacency-based approach

Causative construction

a. Cwusang-kkeyse koyangi-eykey pap-ul
his.majesty-NOM.HON cat-DAT meal-ACC
mek-**i**-**si**-ess-ta.
eat-**CAUS**-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty fed a cat with a meal (literally, his majesty made a cat eat a meal).'

b. * Cwusang-kkeyse koyangi-eykey pap-ul
his.majesty-NOM.HON cat-DAT meal-ACC
capswusi-**i**-**si**-ess-ta.
eat.HON$_S$-**CAUS**-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

Evidence for the adjacency-based approach

Passive construction

a. Cwusang-kkeyse koymwul-eykey **mek-hi-si**-ess-ta.
his.majesty-NOM.HON monster-DAT **eat-PASS-HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty was eaten by a monster.'

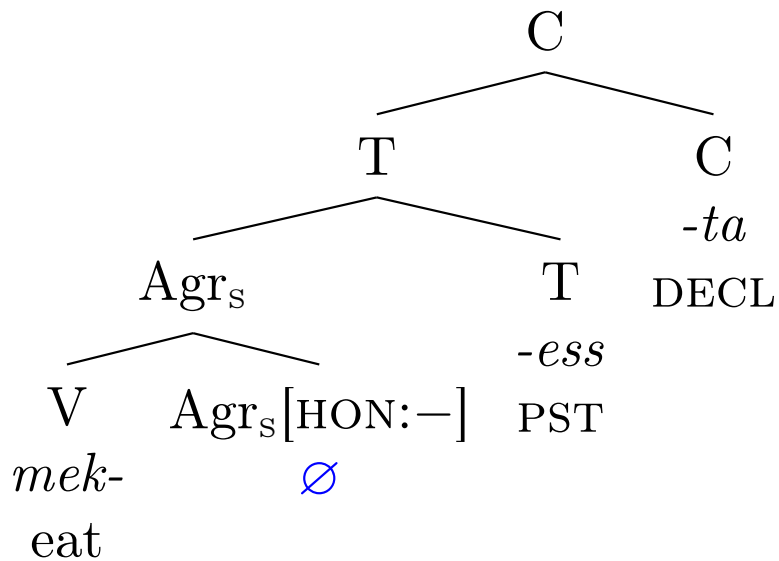
b. * Cwusang-kkeyse koymwul-eykey
his.majesty-NOM.HON monster-DAT
capswusi-hi-si-ess-ta.
eat.HON$_S$-PASS-HON$_S$-PST-DECL

Vocabulary Insertion: suppletive honorification

Suppletive stem is inserted in the context of an adjacent Agr_S[HON:+]

a. $\sqrt{\text{EAT}} \leftrightarrow$ *mek-*

mek-ess-ta.
eat-PST-DECL
'ate'



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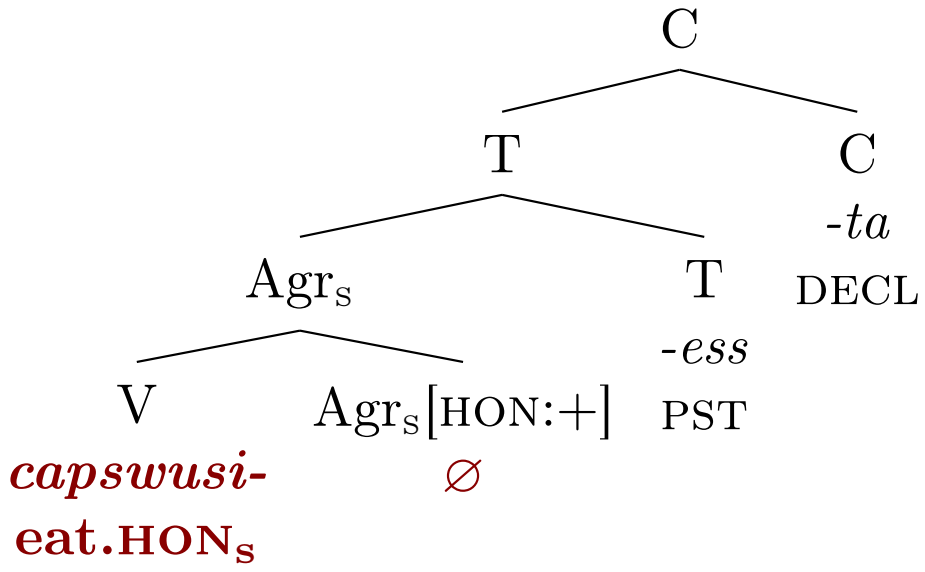
a. $\sqrt{\text{EAT}} \leftrightarrow$ *mek-*

b. $\sqrt{\text{EAT}} \leftrightarrow$ ***capswusi-*** / __ Agr_S[**HON:+**]

capswusi-ess-ta.
eat.HON$_S$-PST-DECL
'ate (honorific)'



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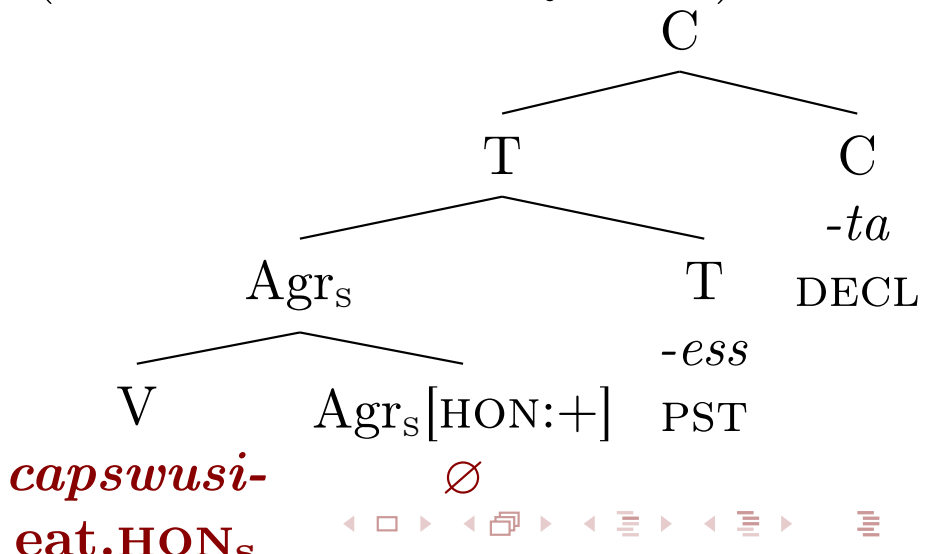
b. $\sqrt{\text{EAT}} \leftrightarrow$ ***capswusi-*** / __ Agr_S[**HON:+**]

c. Agr_S[**HON:+**] $\leftrightarrow \varnothing$ /
{capswusi-, kyeysi-, cwumwusi-, tolakasi-} __
suppletive honorific stems (cf. Choi and Harley 2019)

capswusi-ess-ta.
eat.HON$_S$-PST-DECL
'ate (honorific)'



Vocabulary Insertion: suppletive honorification

Suppletive stem is inserted in the context of an adjacent Agr_S[HON:+]

a. $\sqrt{\text{EAT}} \leftrightarrow$ *mek-*

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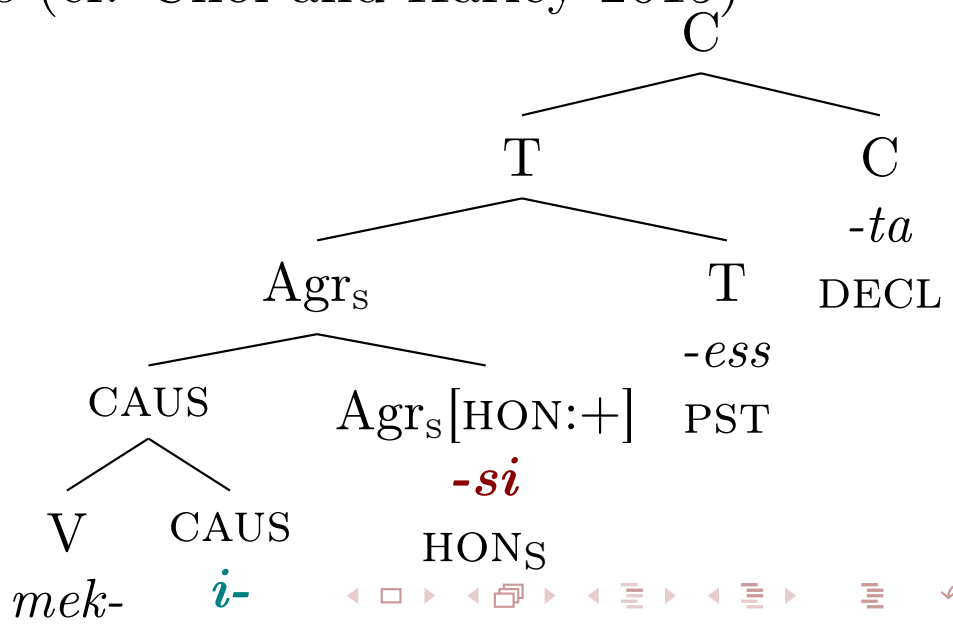
$\underbrace{\{\textbf{\textit{capswusi-, kyeysi-, cwumwusi-, tolakasi-}}\}}_{\text{suppletive honorific stems (cf. Choi and Harley 2019)}}$ __

mek-**i**-**si**-ess-ta.
eat-**CAUS**-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

'make someone eat (honorific)'



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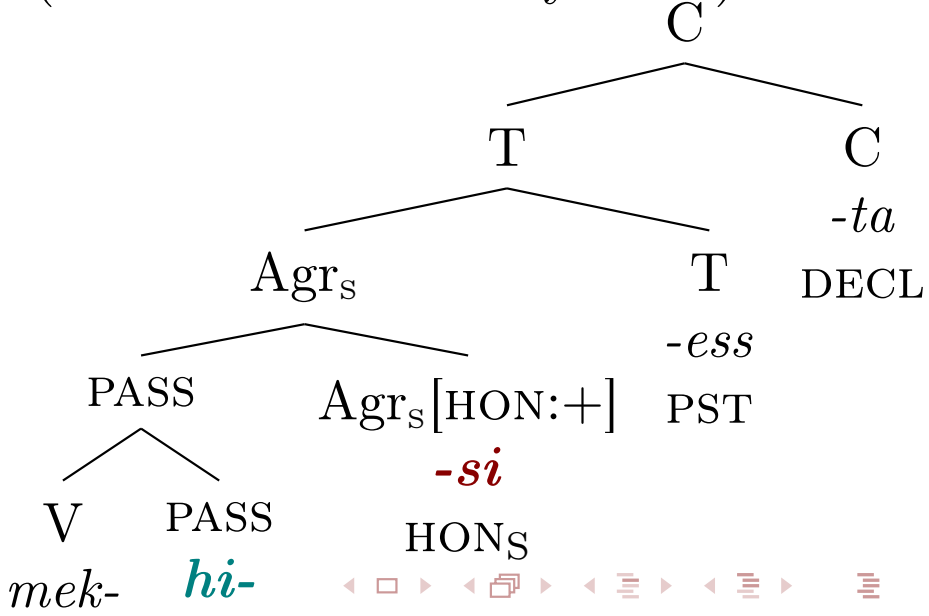
c. Agr_S[**HON:+**] $\leftrightarrow \varnothing$ /
{capswusi-, kyeysi-, cwumwusi-, tolakasi-} __
suppletive honorific stems (cf. Choi and Harley 2019)

mek-**hi**-**si**-ess-ta.
eat-**PASS**-**HON$_S$**-DECL

'was eaten (honorific)'



Outline

Remember...

Choi and Harley's (2019) argument for the non-adjaency-based locality condition

- A conditioning node can trigger suppletive honorification if it c-commands the conditioned root within the same complex head (cf. Bobaljik's (2012) Root Suppletion Condition).
- The key data are from **auxiliary verb constructions**.

Auxiliary verb construction

A multiple-verb construction available in Korean (terminology following Yun 1993)

- A non-finite lexical main verb with a suffix *-e* (V1)
- A fully inflected auxiliary verb (V2)
- Auxiliary verb construction as a single complex head (Lee, 1992; Sells, 1998; Choi and Harley, 2019)

Ai-ka chayk-ul ilk-e-**po**-ass-ta.
child-NOM book-ACC read-E-**see**-PST-DECL

'The child tried to read a book/had an experience of reading a book.'

SH in auxiliary verb construction contexts

RegH is marked only to the right of V2.

a. cwusang-kkeyse chayk-ul ilk-e-po-**si**-ess-ta.
his.majesty-NOM.HON book-ACC read-E-see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty tried to read a book/had an experience of reading a book.'

b. * ilk-**usi**-e-po-**si**-ess-ta
read-**HON$_S$**-E-see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

c. * ilk-**usi**-e-po-ass-ta
read-HON$_S$-E-see-PST-DECL

SupH in auxiliary verb construction contexts

Honorific suppletion is obligatory on V1.

a. ilk-(***usi**)-e-po-**si**-ess-ta.
read-**HON$_S$**-E-see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'tried to read/had an experience of reading (honorific)'

b. **capswusi**-e-po-(**si**)-ess-ta.
eat-HON$_S$-E-see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'tried to eat/had an experience of eating (honorific)'

- The unacceptability of subject honorification to the immediate right of V1 suggests that the regular honorification to the right of V2 conditions for the honorific suppletion.

Choi & Harley's (2019) analysis

Non-adjacency-based locality condition

- Following Bobaljik's (2012) Root Suppletion Condition, Choi and Harley (2019) argue that honorific suppletion is triggered by Agr_S (Hon in their terminology) c-commanding the root within the same complex head.

$$\sqrt{\text{EAT}} \leftrightarrow \text{capswusi-} \;/\; [[\; \_\_ \;] \ldots \text{HON} \;]$$

Back to the causative/passive constructions

C&H's analysis makes a wrong prediction.

- Honorific suppletion is predicted in causative/passive constructions.

a. **mek**-**hi**-**si**-ess-ta.
eat-**PASS**-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'was/were eaten (honorific)'

b. * **capswusi**-**hi**-**si**-ess-ta.
eat.HON$_S$-**PASS**-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

c. **capswusi**-e-po-**si**-ess-ta.
eat.HON$_S$-E-see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'tried to eat/had an experience of eating (honorific)'

Outline

What we want

capswusi-e-po-(si)-ess-ta.
eat.HON$_S$-E-see-HON$_S$-PST-DECL

	Goal	Tools
☞	**The obligatory honorific suppletion on V1**	**Agr$_S$ merged immediately above V1**
☞	A model that correctly rules out the regular honorification on V1 in auxiliary verb constructions	A morphotactic constraint
☞	A model that allows the optionality in regular honorification on V2 in honorific suppletion contexts	Different VI timing relative to metathesis

What we want

ilk-**(*usi)**-e-po-si-ess-ta.
read-**HON$_S$**-E-see-HON$_S$-PST-DECL

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☞	The obligatory honorific suppletion on V1	Agr$_S$ merged immediately above V1
☞	**A model that correctly rules out the regular honorification on V1 in auxiliary verb constructions**	**A morphotactic constraint**
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What we want

capswusi-e-po-**(si)**-ess-ta.
eat.HON$_S$-E-see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

	Goal	Tools
☞	The obligatory honorific suppletion on V1	Agr$_S$ merged immediately above V1
☞	A model that correctly rules out the regular honorification on V1 in auxiliary verb constructions	A morphotactic constraint
☞	**A model that allows the optionality in regular honorification on V2 in honorific suppletion contexts**	**Different VI timing relative to metathesis**

Generalized Reduplication

The apparent paradoxical situation can be reconciled with the Generalized Reduplication (GenR) framework (Arregi and Nevins, 2012, 2018, 2022).

a. Morphotactic constraint
* **A B**

b. Metathesis in the GenR formalism
A B → ⟦ A >< B ⟧ → ~~A~~BA~~B~~ → **B A**

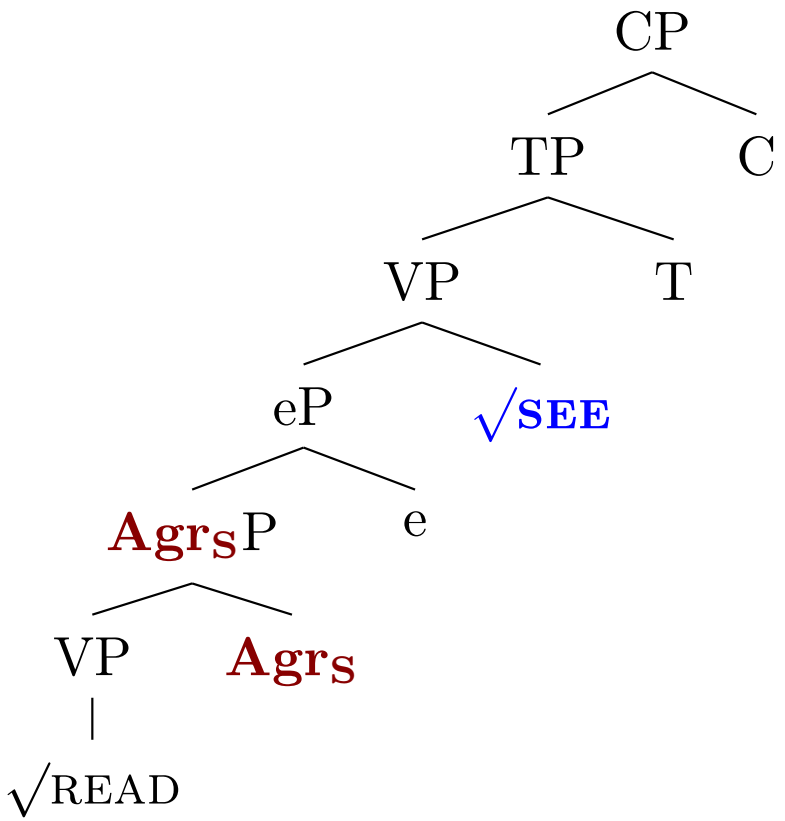
c. Metathesis applied across morphemes
A C **B** → ⟦ A >< C ⟧ B → ~~A~~ C A ~~C~~ B
→ C A B → C ⟦ A >< B ⟧ → C ~~A~~ B A ~~B~~
→ C **B A**

Agr_S's base-generated position

Agr_S is base-generated above V1.

a. ilk-e-**po**-**si**-ess-ta.
read-E-**see**-**HON$_\text{S}$**-PST-DECL
'tried to read/had an experience of reading (honorific)'

b.

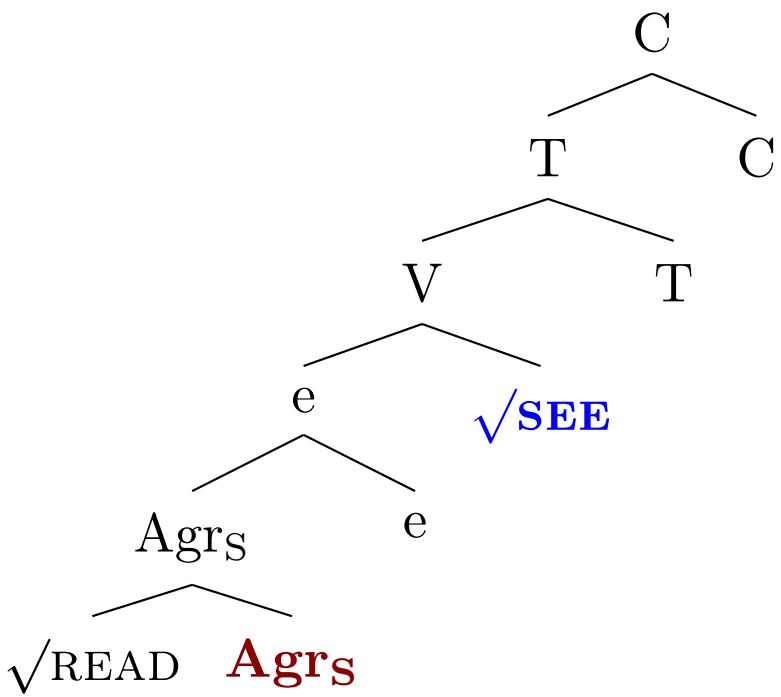


Agr_S's base-generated position

Agr_S is base-generated above V1.

a. ilk-e-**po**-**si**-ess-ta.
read-E-**see**-**HON$_\text{S}$**-PST-DECL
'tried to read/had an experience of reading (honorific)'

c.



The morphotactic constraint

Agr_S cannot precede another root in the same complex head.

a. * [... **Agr_S** ... $\sqrt{}$ ...]$_\text{X}$

b. * [$\sqrt{}$READ **Agr_S** e $\sqrt{}$**SEE** ...]$_\text{C}$
[ilk **-usi** -e **-po** ...]$_\text{C}$

→ A metathesis is triggered!
The timing of metathesis can differ in different languages.

Derivation: Regular Honorification

The sequence of postsyntactic operations:
VI $\prec$ Metathesis

a. Input I: $\sqrt{\text{READ}}$ **Agr$_S$** e $\sqrt{\textbf{SEE}}$ ...

b. Vocabulary Insertion: $\sqrt{\text{READ}}$ **Agr$_S$** **e** $\sqrt{\textbf{SEE}}$ ...
ilk **-usi** -e **-po** ...

c. Input II: ilk ⟦ **-usi** >< -e ⟧ **-po** ...

d. Metathesis: ilk ~~**-usi**~~ -e **-usi** ~~-e~~ **-po** ...

e. Input III: ilk -e ⟦ **-usi** >< **-po** ⟧ ...

f. Metathesis: ilk -e ~~**-si**~~ **-po** **-si** ~~**-po**~~ ...

g. Output: ilk -e **-po** **-si** ...

Derivation: Suppletive Honorification

The sequence of postsyntactic operations:
VI $\prec$ Metathesis

a. Input I: $\sqrt{\text{EAT}}$ **Agr$_S$** e **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ...

b. Vocabulary Insertion: **$\sqrt{\text{EAT}}$** **Agr$_S$** **e** **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ...
capswusi- **-∅** -e **-po** ...

c. Input II: **capswusi-** ⟦ **-∅** >< -e ⟧ **-po** ...

d. Metathesis: **capswusi-** ~~**-∅**~~ -e **-∅** ~~-e~~ **-po** ...

e. Input III: **capswusi-** -e ⟦ **-∅** >< **-po** ⟧ ...

f. Metathesis: **capswusi** -e ~~**-∅**~~ **-po** **-∅** ~~**-po**~~ ...

g. Output: **capswusi** -e **-po** **-∅**

Derivation: Suppletive Honorification

The sequence of postsyntactic operations:
VI $\prec$ Metathesis

a. Input I: $\sqrt{\text{EAT}}$ **Agr$_S$** e $\sqrt{\textbf{SEE}}$ ...

b. Vocabulary Insertion: $\sqrt{\text{EAT}}$ **Agr$_S$** **e** $\sqrt{\textbf{SEE}}$ ...
capswusi- **-∅** -e **-po** ...

c. Input II: **capswusi-** ⟦ **-∅** >< -e ⟧ **-po** ...

d. Metathesis: **capswusi-** ~~**-∅**~~ -e **-∅** ~~-e~~ **-po** ...

e. Input III: **capswusi-** -e ⟦ **-∅** >< **-po** ⟧ ...

f. Metathesis: **capswusi** -e ~~**-∅**~~ **-po** **-∅** ~~**-po**~~ ...

g. Output: **capswusi** -e **-po** **-∅**

What about the double exponence, **capswusi**-e-po-**si**?

Optional pre-VI metathesis of Agr_S

Alternative ordering:
VI in V1 $\prec$ Metathesis $\prec$ VI in the remaining nodes

a. Input I: $\sqrt{\text{EAT}}$ **Agr_S** e **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ...

b. VI in $\sqrt{\text{EAT}}$: **$\sqrt{\text{EAT}}$** Agr_S e $\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$ ...
capswusi- ...

c. Input II: capswusi- ⟦ **Agr_S** >< e ⟧ **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ...

d. Metathesis: capswusi- ~~**Agr_S**~~ e **Agr_S** e **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ...

e. Input III: capswusi- e ⟦ **Agr_S** >< **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ⟧ ...

f. Metathesis: capswusi- e ~~**Agr_S**~~ **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** **Agr_S** ~~**$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$**~~ ...

g. Vocablary Insertion: $\sqrt{\text{EAT}}$ **e** **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** **Agr_S** ...
capswusi- -e **-po** **-si** ...

h. Output: **capswusi** -e **-po** **-si** ...

Alternative ordering and regular honorification

The alternative ordering does not affect the surface form of regular honorification.

a. Input I: $\sqrt{\text{READ}}$ **Agr_S** e **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ...

b. VI in $\sqrt{\text{READ}}$: **$\sqrt{\text{READ}}$** Agr_S e $\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$ ...
ilk- ...

c. Input II: ilk- ⟦ **Agr_S** >< e ⟧ **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ...

d. Metathesis: ilk- ~~**Agr_S**~~ e **Agr_S** e **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ...

e. Input III: ilk- e ⟦ **Agr_S** >< **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** ⟧ ...

f. Metathesis: ilk- e ~~**Agr_S**~~ **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** **Agr_S** ~~**$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$**~~ ...

g. Vocablary Insertion: ilk- **e** **$\sqrt{\text{SEE}}$** **Agr_S** ...
ilk- -e **-po** **-si** ...

h. Output: ilk -e **-po** **-si** ...

Take-away

Adjacency-based approach to suppletive honorification in Korean

- Honorific suppletion is triggered by Agr_S node adjacent to the root in the same complex head.
- Causative/passive constructions

Morphotactic constraint triggering displacement of Agr_S

- An apparent non-adjacency between the suppletive stem and the triggering Agr_S.
- Auxiliary verb constructions

Relative order between metathesis and VI in Agr_S

- VI in Agr_S may happen either before or after metathesis.
- Optional regular honorification on V2 in suppletive honorification contexts

This is only the beginning.

Fine-tuning the theory with other complex predicate constructions in Korean

- Subject honorification pattern found in predicate topic constructions (terminology following Jo 2004).

Cross-linguistic test for the developed analysis

- The theory should be tested with other languages with honorific suppletion, such as Japanese.

Historical analysis

- Subject honorification has been attested from Middle Korean, with a different pattern.
- Middle Korean exhibits the object honorification, which became lost during the historical change.

ACC	accusative
AGR	agreement
CAUS	causative
DAT	dative
DECL	declarative
DEF	definite
DL	Dative/locative
HON	honorific
NEG	negative
NMLZ	nominalizer
NOM	nominative
PASS	passive
PRS	present
PST	past
TOP	topic

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