The Obligatoriness and Optionality in Korean Subject Honorification

Jaehong Shim
(The University of Chicago)

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1 Introduction

In Korean linguistics, the nature of Korean subject honorification has drawn significant attention regarding the nature of its realization. Korean subject honorification provides ample evidence as to the mechanism of agreement in general and its interaction with various predicate constructions thanks to its rich morphology and various predicative constellations, which provide various conditions to test candidates for the right analysis of the properties of agreement. The contribution of the current paper is two-folded: first, it argues that subject honorification in Korean is a syntactic process. Second, it argues that the condition for subject honorific suppletion is based on the adjacency between the conditioned and conditioning node in a complex head.

First, there are, by and large, two approaches to Korean subject honorification in the framework of Distributed Morphology: the syntactic approach (Jo 2004; Chung 2009; Jou 2024) and the post-syntactic approach (Kim and Chung 2015; Choi and Harley 2019). While syntactic approaches assume that subject honorification in Korean is a representation of AgrP (or a similar sort of projection), which is merged syntactically and agrees with an honorific feature of NP/DP, post-syntactic approaches assume that such agreement does not take place in the narrow syntax. Rather, they construe honorific agreement as a result of the post-syntactic insertion of an honorific suffix in response to the presence of an NP/DP's honorific feature, which only affects the phonological representation but does not contribute to the utterance's semantics.

To see the issue with a more concrete picture, let us consider a simple example of subject honorification and how different approaches account for the fact. (1) shows a pair of sentences differing in the realization of subject honorification. Subject honorification is realized when the speaker considers the subject of the utterance as socially higher than themselves, as seen in (1b). Here, the realization of subject honorification is two-folded: on the one hand, subject honorification manifests itself in the suppletive honorific nominative case marker, ***-kkeyse*** NOM.HON. On the other hand, subject honorification is represented through a subject honorific suffix in predicate morphology, ***-(u)si*** HON_S.

(1) a. *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ta.*
child-NOM that book-ACC read-PST-DECL
'The child read the book.'

b. *cwusang-**kkeyse** ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.*
your.majesty-**NOM.HON** that book-ACC read-**HON_S**-PST-DECL
'Your majesty read the book.'

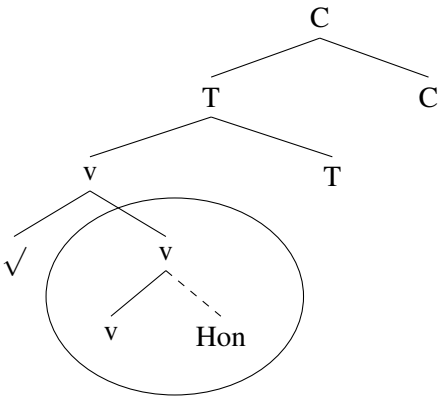
While both syntactic and post-syntactic approaches agree that subject honorification on predicate morphology is an agreement between the subject NP with [+hon] feature and the predicate, they differ regarding

the presence of Hon head in the narrow syntax. Thus, post-syntactic approaches argue that Hon head is inserted to predicate in PF, while syntactic approaches regard that Hon head is inserted to predicate in the narrow syntax.

As an example of the post-syntactic approach, Choi and Harley (2019) argued that subject honorification is realized when the predicate is c-commanded by a subject NP with [+hon] feature. They claimed that when v is c-commanded by a subject NP with [+hon] feature, a dissociated Hon head is adjoined to v by a post-syntactic rule, seen in (2) and (3).

(2) Hon-sprouting rule (Choi and Harley 2019: 1336)
v → [v Hon] / $NP_{[+hon]}$ ... [... __ ...]

(3)



The particular evidence for their claim is this: when subject honorification is marked for long-form negation construction, subject honorification marked on the negation part is fed by another post-syntactic morpheme insertion, *ha*-support in long-form negation. Constructing a long-form negation sentence out of (1b), subject honorification can be marked both on the negated main verb and the negation, as seen in (4). One can see that the negation is supported by the verb ***ha-*** 'do,' just like *do*-support in English negation sentence.

(4) *cwusang-**kkeyse*** *ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ci* *ani-**ha**-**si**-ess-ta.*
your.majesty-**NOM.HON** that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-CI not-**do**-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'Your majesty did not read the book.'

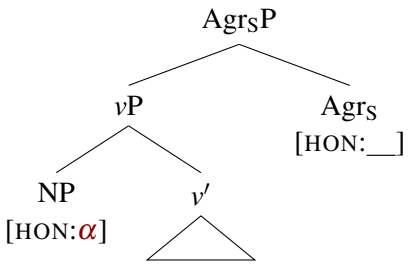
Following many other studies considering ***ha-*** 'do' as a post-syntactically inserted v (Yi 1994; Han and Lee 2007), Choi and Harley (2019) regards *ha*-support as a post-syntactic operation, which eventually feeds subject honorification on the negation part. This is the hallmark of Choi and Harley's (2019) claim and strongly supports their claim even though the majority of researchers in the field do not support the post-syntactic approach of agreement. If *ha*-support is a post-syntactic process and feeds subject honorification, it follows that subject honorification should also be considered a post-syntactic process. Otherwise, *ha*-support would not be able to feed subject honorification.

However, as I argue here if we can find a way to consider *ha*-support as a syntactic process, subject honorification is not necessarily considered a post-syntactic process anymore. This is where Generalized Head Movement (GenHM) (Arregi and Pietraszko 2021a,b) comes in handy. Since GenHM provides a way to consider *ha*-support as a syntactic process, it opens the door to construing subject honorification as a syntactic process. Further, it provides a way to account for the optional pattern of subject honorification observed in the context of long-form negation. What is crucial here is that the current framework not only accounts for the Korean facts but also provides cross-linguistic evidence.

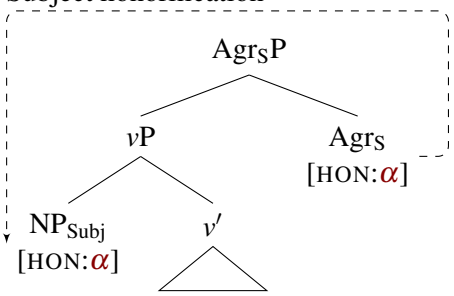
Thus, in this paper, I assume that the Korean subject honorification on predicate morphology is a syntactic agreement realized by Agr_S node with [±Hon] feature. Following Jou (2024), a probe on Agr_S searches down its c-command domain and copies the value of [Hon] feature of its goal, as in (5b) [1].

(5) Agreement as a syntactic operation

a. Syntactic structure

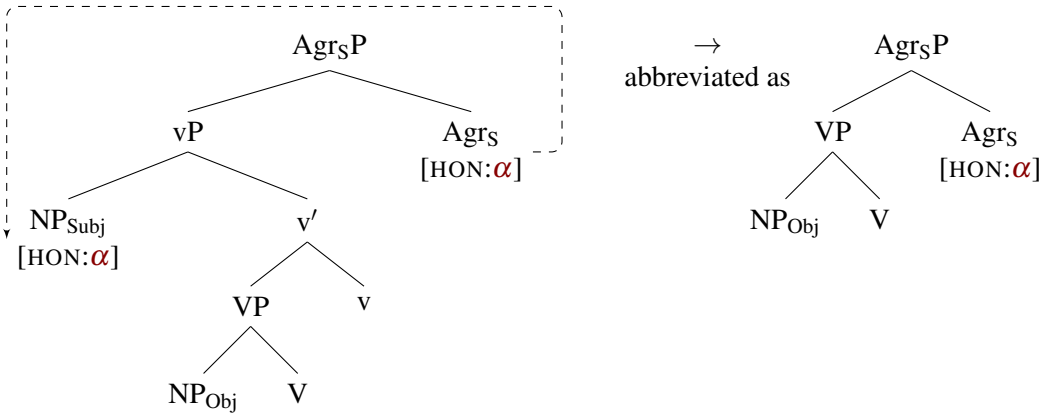


b. Subject honorification



For ease of demonstration, I will not use a full-fledged VP-shell structure throughout the paper unless there is a special issue to address. However, readers must keep in mind that what I represent as VP is actually a vP projection with a relevant argument structure.

(6)



Second, turning to an issue of the condition for root allomorphy, While there is no allomorphy of the subject honorific nominative marker, ***-kkeyse***, subject honorification on predicate morphology for certain roots is realized by honorific suppletion. Thus, while subject honorification for the root 'read' is done by

[1] Jou (2024) assumes bidirectional model of agreement, following Arregi and Hanink (2022). Her motivation for having the bidirectional agreement mechanism comes from the fact that she deals not only with subject honorification but also with addressee honorification. However, as solely for subject honorification, such bidirectional agreement is not needed. Therefore, I will assume a typical downward probing mechanism in this paper. For a more detailed discussion of how the bidirectional agreement mechanism works for Korean, see Jou (2024).

the addition of a subject honorific suffix ***-(u)si*** in (1b), subject honorification for the root 'sleep' should be realized by the suppletive honorific stem ***cwumwusi-*** 'sleep.HON, not by an addition of ***-(u)si*** to a regular stem *ca-* 'sleep,' as seen in (7a) and (7b) respectively. From now on, I will call subject honorification observed in (1) and (7) as regular honorification (RegH) and suppletive honorification (SupH), respectively.

(7) a. *cwusang-**kkeyse** **cwumwusi**-ess-ta.*
king-**NOM.HON** **sleep.HON**-PST-DECL
'Your majesty slept.'

b. * *cwusang-**kkeyse** ca-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-**NOM.HON** sleep-**HON**-PST-DECL

This pattern raises the question of the right analysis for the locality condition of allomorphy in Korean subject honorification. There are, by and large, two approaches to the locality condition of allomorphy: the approaches based on adjacency between the conditioning and conditioned nodes (Arad 2003, 2005; Harley 2008; Embick 2010; Merchant 2015) and the approaches which are not based on such adjacency (Bobaljik 2012; Choi and Harley 2019). The current paper basically argues for the former approach. That is, allomorphy found in Korean subject honorification should be considered based on adjacency. Specifically, the locality condition for SupH is the left-ward adjacency of the conditioning Agr_S[+hon] to the conditioned root in a complex head.

For approaches not based on adjacency conditions, the claimed evidence comes from the fact observed in the so-called *po*-construction. As will be discussed in more detail in section 4, SupH is ostensibly triggered by a non-adjacent Agr_S within the same complex head domain. This led Choi and Harley (2019) to the conclusion that SupH is triggered whenever the conditioning Agr_S (Hon in Choi & Harley 2019) is present in the complex head domain.

However, adopting the framework of Generalized Reduplication (Arregi and Nevins 2012, 2018, 2022), I argue that Agr_S is base-generated in the place adjacent to the conditioned root despite the apparent non-adjacency between the conditioned root and the conditioning Agr_S.

This paper is organized as follows: first, I will present basic ingredients for the rest of the paper, how a complex head is formed under the framework of GenHM and Distributed Morphology. In section 3, I will demonstrate that GenHM analysis of *ha*-support provides an argument against the post-syntactic analysis of subject honorification. In section 4, I will first show that Korean SupH requires an adjacency-based condition, contra (Choi and Harley 2019) who argue that suppletive honorification does not require strict adjacency condition. In section 5, I will address the necessity of studying predicate contrastive constructions and suggest what kind of prediction the current analysis would provide for the constructions. In section 6, I will summarize the findings and conclude.

2 Basic ingredients: a complex head and vocabulary items

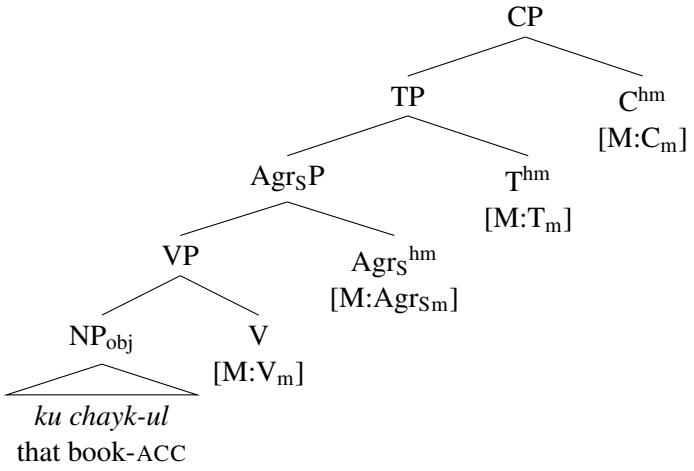
As mentioned in the introduction, I adopted GenHM to account for various patterns regarding subject honorification. The precise reason why we need GenHM is that it provides a way to consider *ha*-support as a syntactic process so that subject honorification does not have to be a post-syntactic process anymore. This point will be revealed in section 3. However, before that, we also need to see how Korean predicate morphology would be construed under the framework as it will be used throughout the paper.

Let us see how GenHM forms a complex head with a sentence (8), repeated from (1b).

(8) *cwusang-**kkeyse** ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.*
your.majesty-**NOM.HON** that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'Your majesty read the book.'

(9) illustrates how a complex head is formed in Korean under the framework of GenHM. In GenHM, a syntactic terminal X bears two kinds of features: syntactic features and morphological features (abbreviated as X_m). Based on the syntactic structure of (8) in (9a), the head movement feature (hm) triggers Head Movement. Thus, the morphological features associated with each node are put together to form a single complex head, and the hm is discharged[2]. Unlike other theories of Head Movement, the complex head is simultaneously linked to all the nodes involved in the head movement. Then, the complex head is pronounced at C, the highest node among the associated syntactic terminals, while the other syntactic nodes are delinked from the complex head, as seen in (9b)[3].

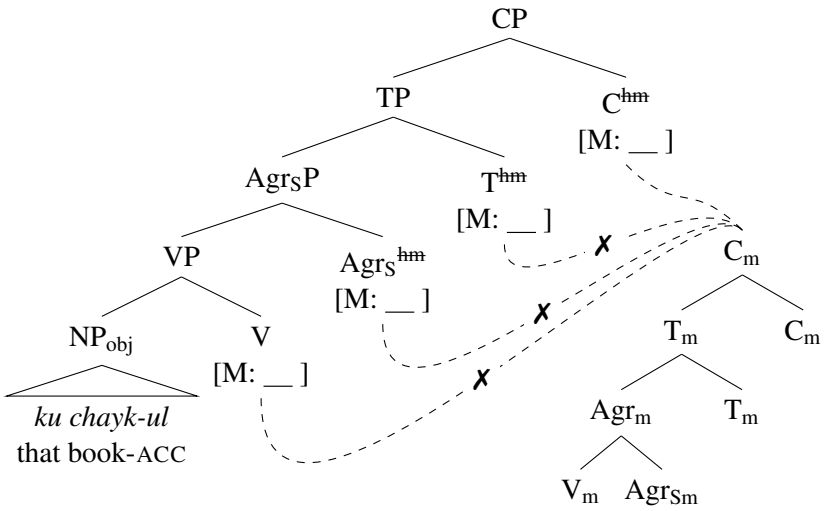
(9) a. Syntactic structure



b. Forming a complex head

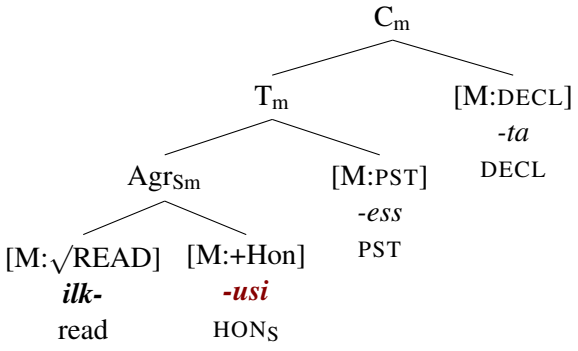
[2]I will omit the notation of hm after (9). However, when there is a complex head formation, it presupposes that there is a hm feature on a node that triggers head movement of the immediate lower node.

[3]Arregi and Pietraszko (2021b) elaborates the mechanism by which the place where the complex head is pronounced is determined. Once a complex head is formed, the 'strength' of syntactic terminals determines the position where the complex head is pronounced. If there is any strong terminal X^* among the terminals associated with the complex head, the complex head is pronounced at the highest strong position. However, if none of the terminals are strong, the complex head is pronounced at the highest position. Thus, in French, the complex head is pronounced at T since both T and V are assumed to be weak, and T is the highest position among the associated terminals. However, in English, the complex head is pronounced at V since V is assumed to be strong.



Then, Vocabulary Insertion takes place to assign phonological forms to each morphological feature. Following Chung (2009); Kim and Chung (2015); Choi and Harley (2019); Jou (2024), and among others, the current paper assumes the Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993) to account for contextual allomorphy regarding Korean subject honorification. In DM, syntax is assumed to operate on bundles of abstract morphological feature bundles rather than lexical items. The actual phonological forms (vocabulary items) are assumed to be inserted in Post-syntax according to the morphological features carried by syntactic terminals by the principle of Late Insertion. Based on the vocabulary items shown in (10), the complex head (9b) is assigned with phonological forms, as seen in (11). Note that [M:$\sqrt{}$READ], [M:+Hon], [M:PST], and [M:DECL] are abbreviated as V_m, Agr_{Sm}, T_m, and C_m in (9b), respectively.

(10) a. [M:$\sqrt{}$READ] ↔ *ilk-*
b. [M:+Hon] ↔ ***-(u)si***
c. [M:PST] ↔ *-ess*
d. [M:DECL] ↔ *-ta*

(11)


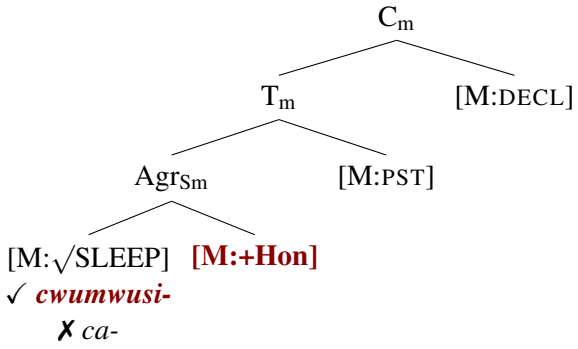
Contextual allomorphy is explained by the Subset Principle (Kiparsky 1973). Therefore, when multiple vocabulary items exist for a single feature bundle, the vocabulary item with the most specific condition blocks the other vocabulary items. There is no such competition for $\sqrt{}$READ since it does not exhibit any contextual allomorphy. However, as mentioned in the introduction, some roots show honorific suppletion.

In this case, DM assumes multiple vocabulary items, and the vocabulary item with a more specific condition blocks the insertion of ones with a less specific condition.

For example, vocabulary items shown in (12) account for the honorific suppletion for √SLEEP. While √READ has only one vocabulary item, two vocabulary items are provided √SLEEP, the suppletive honorific ***cwumwusi-*** and the elsewhere *ca-*. ***cwumwusi-*** is inserted to [M:√SLEEP] by (12a) when [M:+Hon] is right-adjacent to itself, blocking the elsewhere form (12b), as seen in (13). Otherwise, the elsewhere form *ca-* is inserted into the same morphological feature.

(12) a. V[√SLEEP] ↔ ***cwumwusi-*** / __ [M:+Hon]
b. V[√SLEEP] ↔ *ca-*

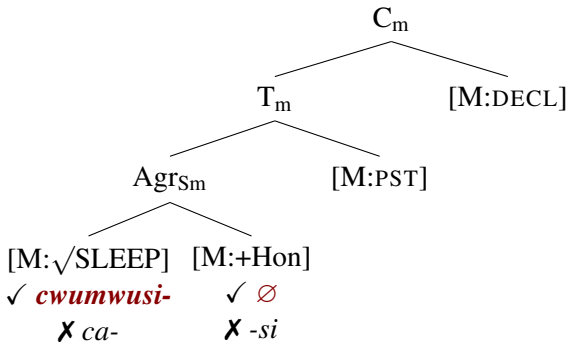
(13) √SLEEP



The inserted suppletive form, in turn, plays a role in determining the vocabulary item for [M:+Hon] (=Agr_m). I assume that [M:+Hon] itself has two vocabulary items, one for regular honorification, as in (10b), and the other for suppletive honorification, as in (14a). As can be seen from (14a), the null form is conditioned by the actual vocabulary items for honorific suppletion. This is because Vocabulary Insertion takes place root-outward. Thus, by the time Vocabulary Insertion takes place for [M:+Hon], [M:√SLEEP] has an actual phonological form, being able to condition the suppletion of [M:+Hon]. Since (14a) is more specific than (10b), the subject honorific suffix *-(u)si* is blocked by the null form, as in (15). Finally, when the Hon feature is −, it has only one vocabulary item, as in (14b).

(14) a. [+Hon] ↔ ∅ / {*cwumwusi-, kyeysi-, tusi-, ...*} __
Suppletive SH stems
b. Agr_Sm ↔ ∅

(15) √SLEEP



Given the explanation in the current section, one might wonder why GenHM is particularly useful for accounting for Korean data. Since the complex head is pronounced at the highest node involved in Head

Movement, GenHM might not seem to make any difference compared to other theories of head movements. If this is the end of the story, this concern would be the right criticism. However, the real value of GenHM in explaining Korean subject honorification can be seen from the obligatory and optional pattern of subject honorification in Long-form negation since it provides a particular way to argue against the post-syntactic analysis of subject honorification. There are two crucial concepts for the theory of subject honorification provided by GenHM: Split-by-Intervention and Orphan Assignment. Now, let us see how GenHM argues against the post-syntactic approach.

3 Long Form Negation: subject honorification as a syntactic process

In this section, I will outline the pattern of subject honorification in long-form negation and argue that GenHM provides a way to reject the post-syntactic analysis of subject honorification by looking at *ha*-support in Long-form negation from a different point of view. As mentioned in the introduction, *ha*-support as a post-syntactic operation is Choi and Harley's (2019) key evidence for post-syntactic analysis since it is claimed to feed another insertion of RegH.

GenHM provides a way to think *ha*-support as a syntactic operation. In a nutshell, in the framework of GenHM, *ha*-support is considered a doubling of the negated verb. Since *ha*-support is not the realization of post-syntactically inserted v, but a doubling of the negated main verb, it supports the syntactic nature of subject honorification in Korean. Further, since doubling occurs with all the syntactic nodes in the negated verb across the board, we can also say that double subject honorific marking found in long-form negated sentences results from doubling Agr_S base-generated in the narrow syntax. Thus, GenHM removes the pressure to have post-syntactic analysis stemming from double subject honorification marking and opens the door to Korean subject honorification as a syntactic operation, which is more harmonious with the by-now standard view of agreements.

To see this, we need to understand two other important concepts of the theory of GenHM: Split-by-Intervention and Orphan Assignment. These two concepts are important in understanding the optional pattern of subject honorification also observed in long-form negation construction. To understand these two concepts, I will first show the subject honorification pattern in long-form negation, explain what Split-by-Intervention and Orphan Assignment are, and finally, how subject honorification in long-form negation is accounted for in the framework of GenHM.

3.1 Subject honorification in long-form negation

Long-form negation is one of the two negative constructions in Korean, along with short-form negation. While short-form negation is constructed by simply placing a negative *ani-* before the verb stem, as in (16b), long-form negation exhibits a more complicated structure consisting of two parts: a negated non-finite main verb followed by a suffix *-ci* [4] and a finite negation supported by a verb *ha-* 'do,' as in (16a) .

(16) a. *ai-ka ka-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
child-NOM go-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL
'The child did not go.'

b. *ai-ka ani ka-ss-ta.*
child-NOM NEG go-PST-DECL
'The child did not go.'

Subject honorification can be marked both on the main verb and the negation, as in (17a). Single marking is also possible. Thus, we see an instance where subject honorification is marked only on the main verb, as

[4] There is a considerable debate on the characteristics of the suffix *-ci*.

in (17b), or the negation, as in (17c). However, having no subject honorification yields ungrammaticality, as in (17d).

(17) a. *wang-kkeyse ka-**si**-ci ani-ha-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON go-hlHON_S-CI NEG-do-**HON_S**-PST-DECL
'The king did not go.'

b. *wang-kkeyse ka-**si**-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON go-**HON_S**-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL

c. *wang-kkeyse ka-ci ani-ha-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON go-CI NEG-do-**HON_S**-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse ka-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON go-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL

Suppletive honorification is similar to regular honorification in that it allows double marking of subject honorification, as in (18a), and the lack of subject honorification leads to ungrammaticality, as in (18d). However, a crucial difference exists between suppletive honorification and regular honorification: the subject honorification on the main verb is obligatory, as in (18c). Moreover, it should be done by a suppletive honorific stem. That is why (18c) is ungrammatical regardless of the presence of a subject honorific *-(u)si* on the main verb.

(18) a. *wang-kkeyse **cwumwusi**-ci ani-ha-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON **sleep.HON_S**-CI NEG-do-**HON_S**-PST-DECL
'The king did not sleep.'

b. *wang-kkeyse **cwumwusi**-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL

c. * *wang-kkeyse **ca**-(**si**)-ci ani-ha-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON **sleep**-(**HON_S**)-CI NEG-do-**HON_S**-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse ca-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON sleep-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL

Tables 1 and 2 summarize the pattern for regular honorification and suppletive honorification in the context of long-form negation, respectively.

	Main verb	Negation	Form & Grammaticality
Double marking	**-(u)si**	**-(u)si**	*ka-**si**-ci ani-ha-**si**-*
Single Marking	**-(u)si**		*ka-**si**-ci ani-ha-*
		-(u)si	*ka-ci ani-ha-**si***
No Marking			**ka-ci ani-ha-*

Table 1: Regular subject honorification in LFN

	Main verb	Negation	Form & Grammaticality
Double marking	**cwumwusi-**	**-(u)si**	***cwumwusi**ci ani-ha-**si**-*
Single Marking	**cwumwusi-**		***cwumwusi**-ci ani-ha-*
		-(u)si	**__ca__-ci ani-ha-**si**-*
No Marking			**__ca__-ci ani-ha-*

Table 2: Suppletive subject honorification in LFN

What can we draw from these patterns? At first glance, the pattern for regular honorification seems to suggest that subject honorification can be arbitrarily marked either on the main verb or the negation. However, the pattern for the suppletive honorification refutes this speculation: it suggests that the AGR^0 be always present in the syntactic structure and conditions the honorific suppletion. Recall that we consider the difference between regular honorification and suppletive honorification as a difference in vocabulary entry, not as a difference in their structures.

Therefore, we want to analyze the structure of (17c) as having Agr_S on the main verb, even though it is not overtly pronounced. How can we account for this discrepancy between regular and suppletive honorification?

As I mentioned at the beginning of this section, Split-by-Intervention and Orphan Assignment are the keys to understanding subject honorification in long-form negation. Now, let us see how Orphan Assignment accounts for the pattern of Korean subject honorification.

3.2 Splitting a complex head: Split-by-Intervention and Orphan Assignment

GenHM provides an important tool kit for a unified explanation of the patterns for regular honorification and suppletive honorification in long-form negation. The idea is that the main verb and the negation of a long-form negation construction are derived from the same complex head. In other words, the two verbal parts are identical in their structure. Therefore, it follows that the main verb and the negation have Agr_S in their structures regardless of whether subject honorification is overtly marked on their morphology.

In GenHM, a specifier intervening between syntactic terminals forming a single complex head triggers two post-syntactic operations, Split-by-Intervention and subsequent Orphan Assignment.

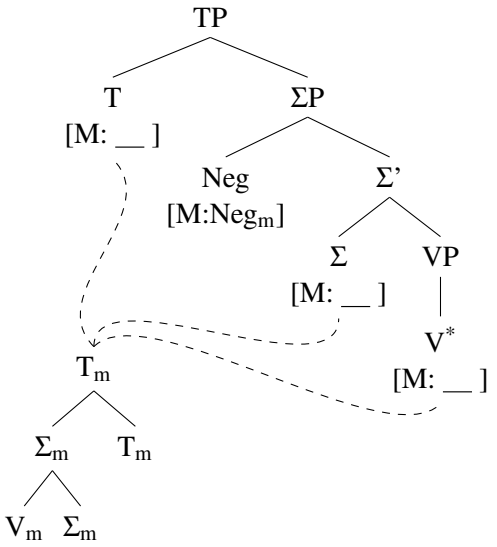
(19) *Split-by-Intervention*
In a head chain terminating in V^* such that a specifier marked [+P] intervenes between the top of the chain and V^*, split the chain at V^*.

(20) *Orphan Assignment*
Assign [O] to morphological terminal X_m in a head chain that does not contain the syntactic terminal X.

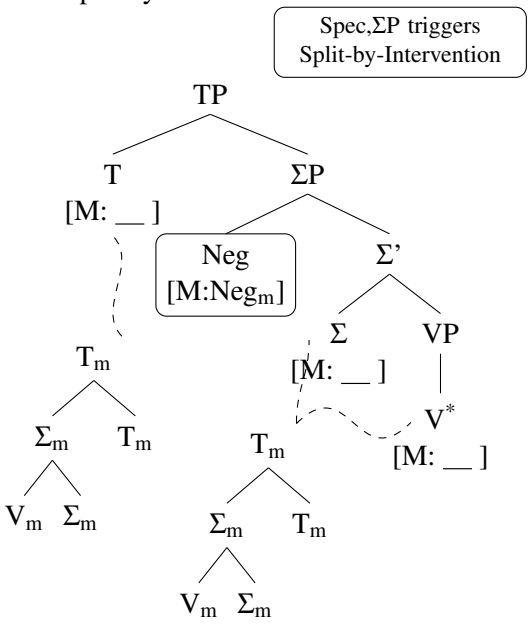
(Arregi and Pietraszko 2021b: 261)

For example, let us see the derivation of an English negative sentence presented in Arregi and Pietraszko (2021b: 259-267). The structure (21a) meets the condition of Split-by-Intervention since (i) V is strong (V^*) and a pronounced specifier Neg intervenes between the top of the chain and V^*. Consequently, Split-by-Intervention splits a single complex head into two complex heads with identical structures, as in (21b).

(21) a. Before Split-by-Intervention

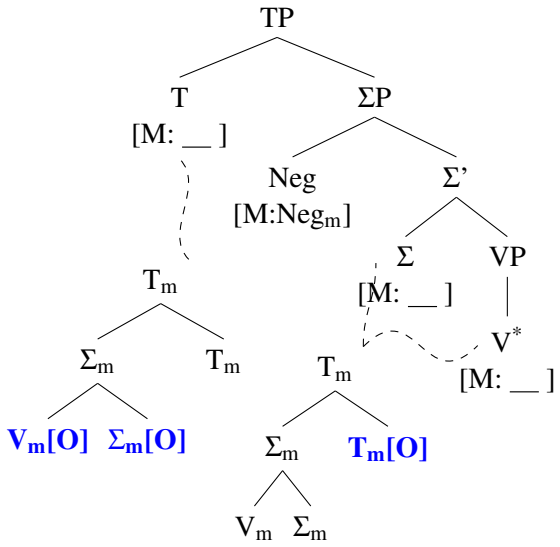


b. After Split-by-Intervention



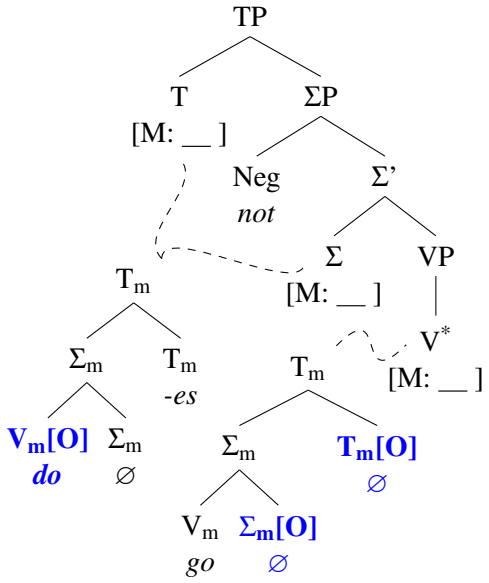
Given the constellation (21b), Orphan Assignment assigns [O] to morphological features that are not linked to the syntactic terminals they originate from anymore. Thus, V_m becomes an orphan in the complex head associated with higher nodes, and T_m and Σ_m become orphans in the other complex head, as in (22)

(22) Orphan Assignment



The crucial consequence that Orphan Assignment results in is that orphan nodes get defective pronunciations during Vocabulary Insertion. Given the structure (22), *do* is inserted into V_m[O] instead of its full pronunciation. On the other hand, zero pronunciation is inserted into T_m[O] and Σ_m[O]. Putting them together, we get a negated non-finite main verb and a finite negation with do-support, as in (23). One thing to note: as orphan nodes of different syntactic terminals show, defective pronunciations vary across the types of orphan nodes.

(23) Vocabulary Insertion *does not go*

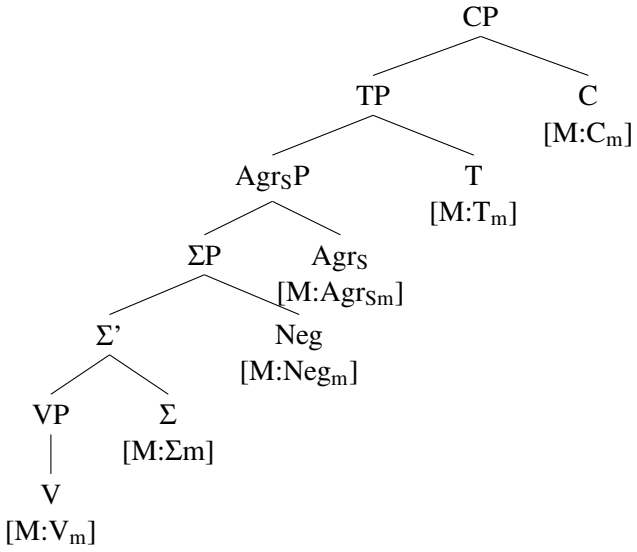


3.3 Optional subject honorification as a defective pronunciation

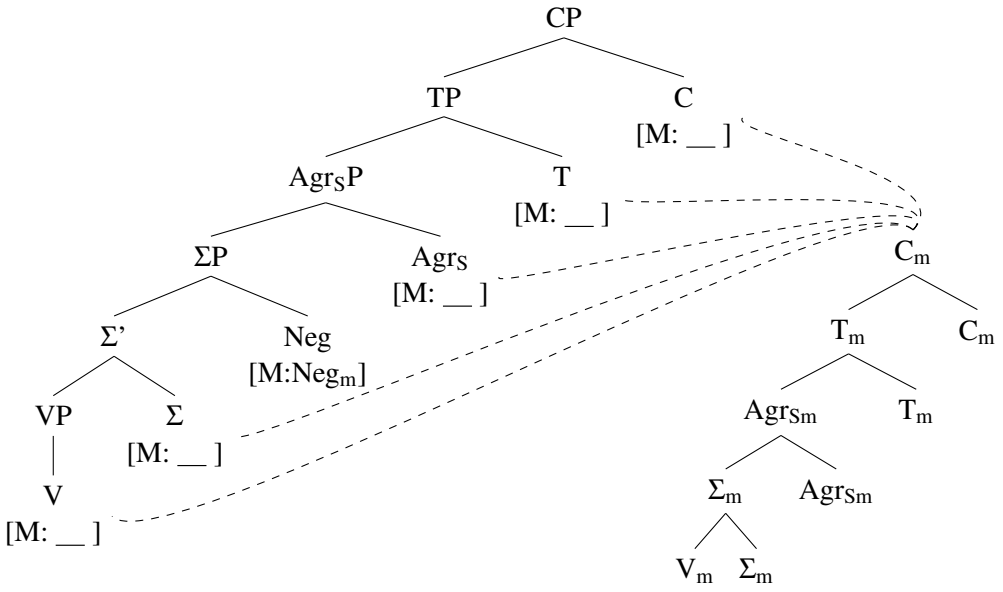
As we have seen in 3.2, the GenHM framework analyzes English *do*-support as a syntactic process. This analysis can be extended to Korean long-form negation and its subject honorification pattern. From now on, I will show how to derive long-form negation construction in Korean under the framework of GenHM.

Given the syntactic structure (24a), GenHM relates each syntactic node's morphological feature, forming a complex head V_m-Σ_m-Agr_{Sm}-T_m-C_m, as in (24b).

(24) a. Syntactic structure

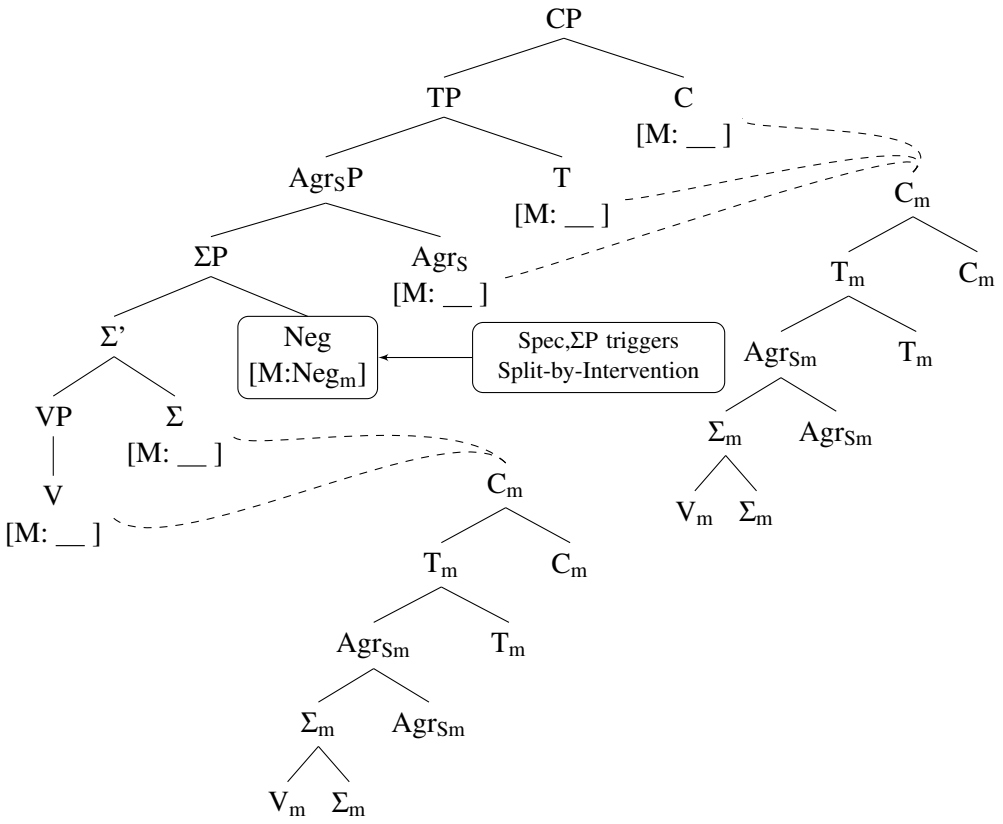


b. Complex head formation

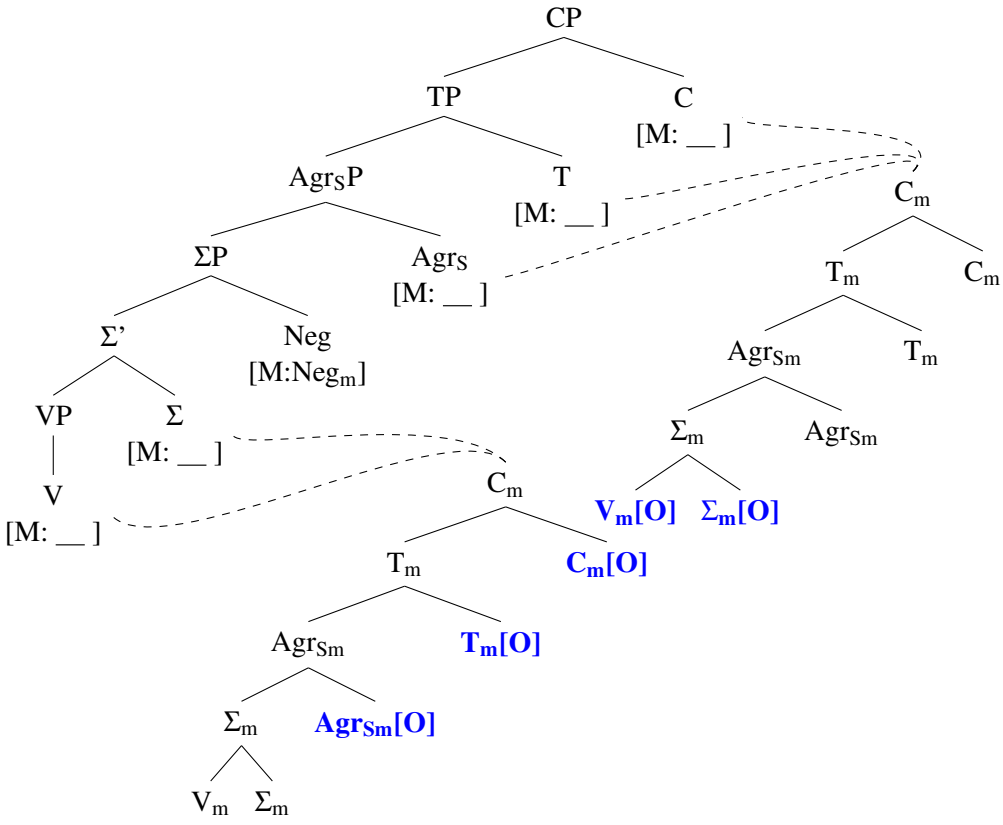


Then, Split-by-Intervention is triggered by Neg at Spec,ΣP, giving rise to two complex heads with an identical syntactic structure, as in (25a). As a result, certain morphological features in each complex head are now detached from the syntactic heads from which they originate. As we have seen in the case of English negative construction, the morphological features not linked to their syntactic heads are assigned Orphan status by Orphan Assignment, as seen in (25b).

(25) a. Split-by-Intervention



b. Orphan Assignment



In section 3.2, I showed that orphan nodes get defective pronunciation instead of full pronunciation. The same holds up in Korean: the defective V_m[O] is ***ha-*** 'do.' Thus, Korean long-form negation draws a parallel to English negative construction. The ***ha***-support pattern is not a result of post-syntactic insertion as argued in Choi and Harley's (2019) post-syntactic insertion agreement. Rather, what is realized as ***ha-*** 'do' exists from the narrow syntax.

A crucial implication of this argument is that, now, subject honorification does not necessarily have to be construed as post-syntactic insertion. The post-syntactic nature of ***ha***-support is an important piece of evidence for post-syntactic subject honorification in Choi and Harley's (2019) analysis. From their standpoint, post-syntactic ***ha***-support feeds the insertion of the subject honorific suffix. Thus, subject honorification should also be a result of post-syntactic morpheme insertion. However, in the current analysis, the locus of subject honorification can exist from narrow syntax.

Further, Like ***ha***-support, the optional SH pattern is explained by a defective pronunciation of Agr_S**[O]**. Simply speaking, its defective pronunciation is ∅. However, while the defective pronunciation ***ha-*** is the only available vocabulary item for V**[O]**, Agr_S**[O]** can optionally have the full pronunciation, ***-(u)si***, as seen in (**??**). That is to say, (27) derives (26a) and (26c) (repeated from (17)).

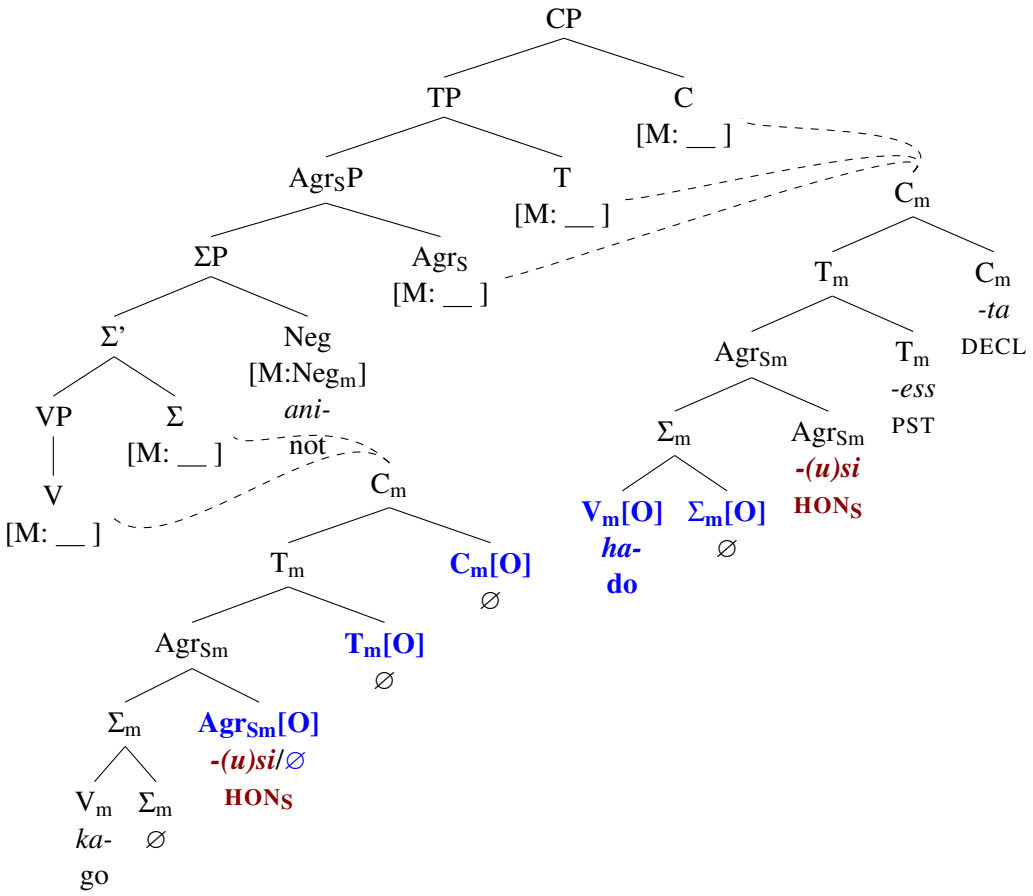
(26) a. *wang-kkeyse ka-**si**-ci ani-ha-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON go-hlHON_S-CI NEG-do-**HON_S**-PST-DECL
'The king did not go.'

b. *wang-kkeyse ka-**si**-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON go-**HON_S**-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL

c. *wang-kkeyse ka-ci ani-ha-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON go-CI NEG-do-**HON_S**-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse ka-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON go-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL

(27) Vocabulary Insertion to Agr_S[O]



This kind of optionality is supported by optionality between the finite and the non-finite form of the verb found in Danish and Norwegian predicate clefts, as seen in (28b) (Platzack 2012; Arregi and Pietraszko 2021b). Though it is cross-linguistically rare, this kind of optionality does exist.

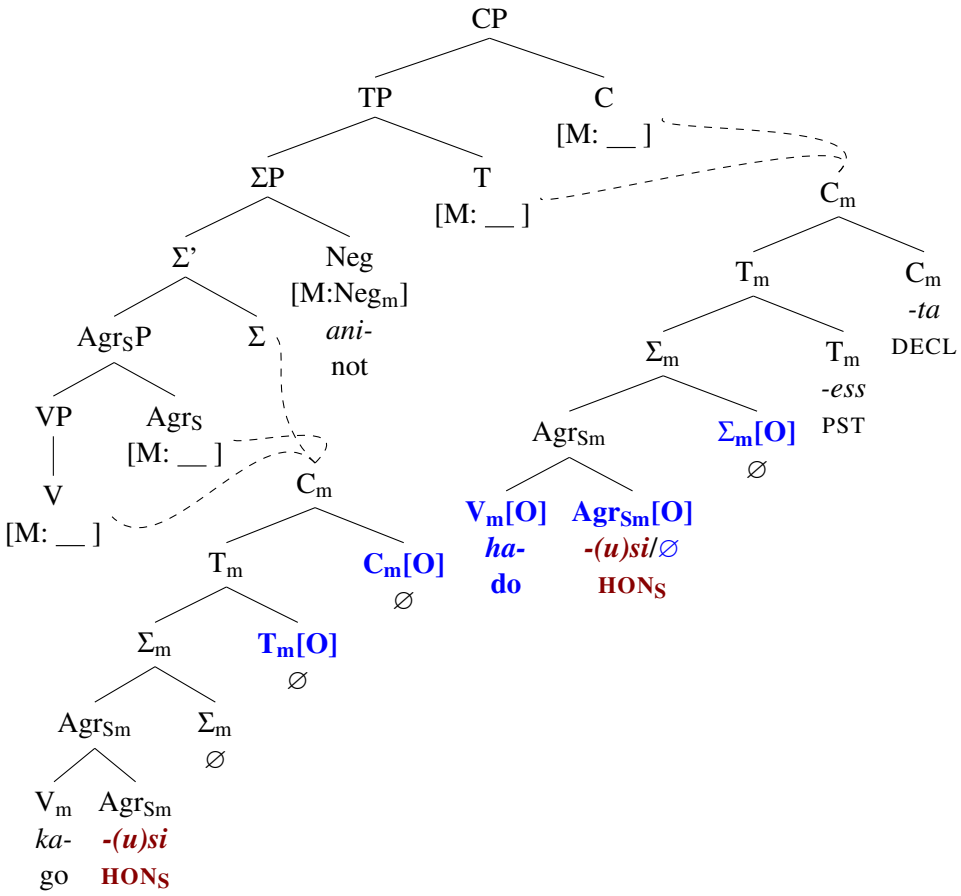
(28) a. and *drove/drive the car he did (English)

b. *og kørde/køre bilen gjorde han.*
and drove/drive car.DEF did he
(Danish)

c. *och körde/*köra bilen gjorde han.*
and drove/drive car.DEF did he
(Swedish)

The other optional pattern (26b) involves a different place of ΣP in syntactic structure, resulting in a flipped orphan status of Agr_S between the main verb and the negation. I stipulate that ΣP is merged in a place either higher or lower than Agr_SP. The consequence of this stipulation is that the subject honorification on the negation becomes optional when ΣP is higher than Agr_SP, as seen in (29).

(29) Vocabulary Insertion to Agr_S[O]



The two posited structures further explain why (26d) where none of the complex heads are marked for subject honorification is ungrammatical. In either case, at least one of Agr_S must be pronounced with the full pronunciation since the current framework does not provide a way to assign orphan status to both of the split heads.

3.4 Agr_{Sm}[O] triggers suppletive honorification

In section 3.1, we saw that suppletive honorification exhibits different subject honorification patterns: suppletive honorification must be marked on the main verb. Unlike regular honorification, where the main verb may not be marked for subject honorification, suppletive honorification is obligatory on the main verb, as seen in (30c).

(30) a. *wang-kkeyse* ***cwumwusi****-ci ani-ha-****si****-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON **sleep.HONS**-CI NEG-do-**HONS**-PST-DECL
'The king did not sleep.'

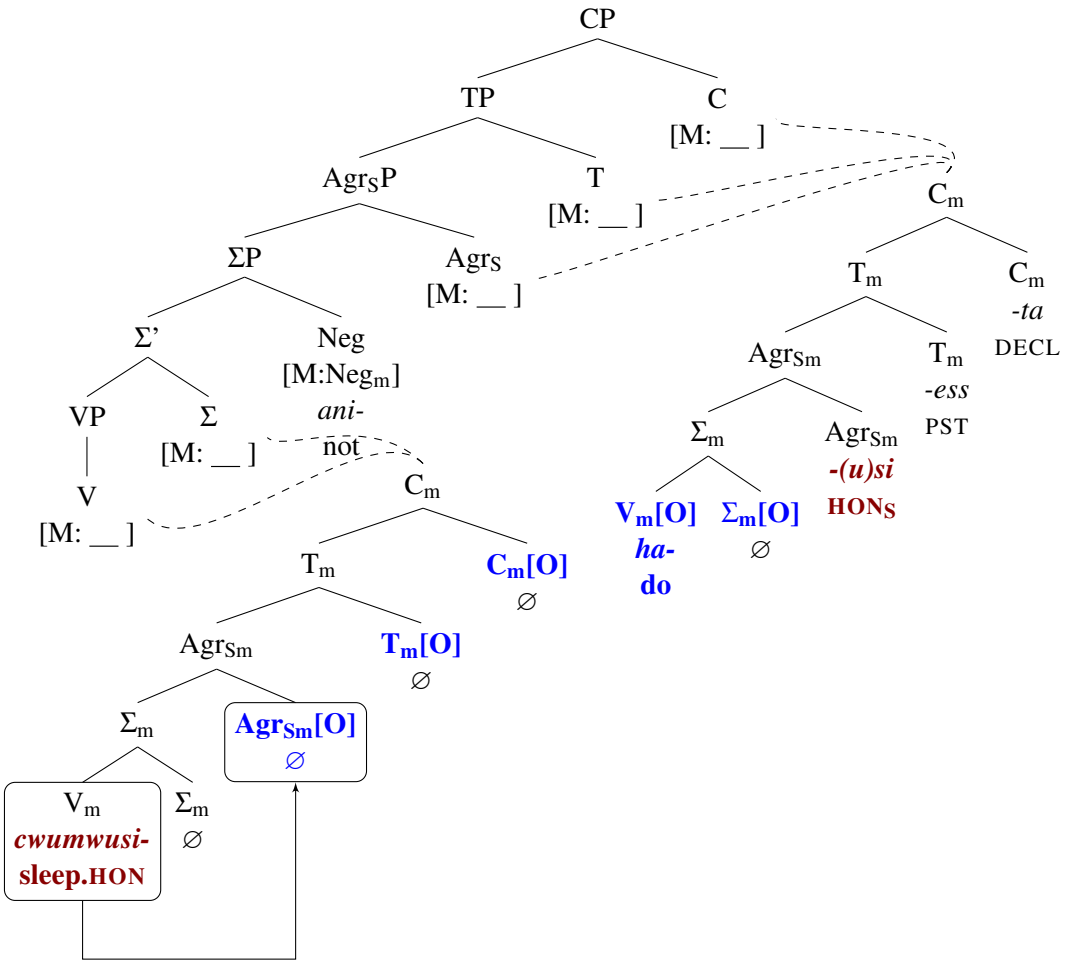
b. *wang-kkeyse* ***cwumwusi****-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL

c. * *wang-kkeyse* ***ca****-(****si****)-ci ani-ha-****si****-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON **sleep**-(**HONS**)-CI NEG-do-**HONS**-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse ca-ci ani-hay-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON sleep-CI NEG-do-PST-DECL

I propose that the presence of Agr_S with [+Hon] feature triggers suppletive honorification regardless of its orphan status. Thus, a suppletive honorific stem is inserted whenever the root is c-commanded by Agr_S[M:+Hon] in Agr_{Sm} span. Thus, when ΣP is merged above Agr_SP, we see the pattern where subject honorification is marked on both complex heads. Since Agr_{Sm}[O] on the lower copy conditions suppletive honorification, the full pronunciation, which is optional for Agr_{Sm}[O] in the context of regular honorification, is blocked by ∅, as seen in (31).

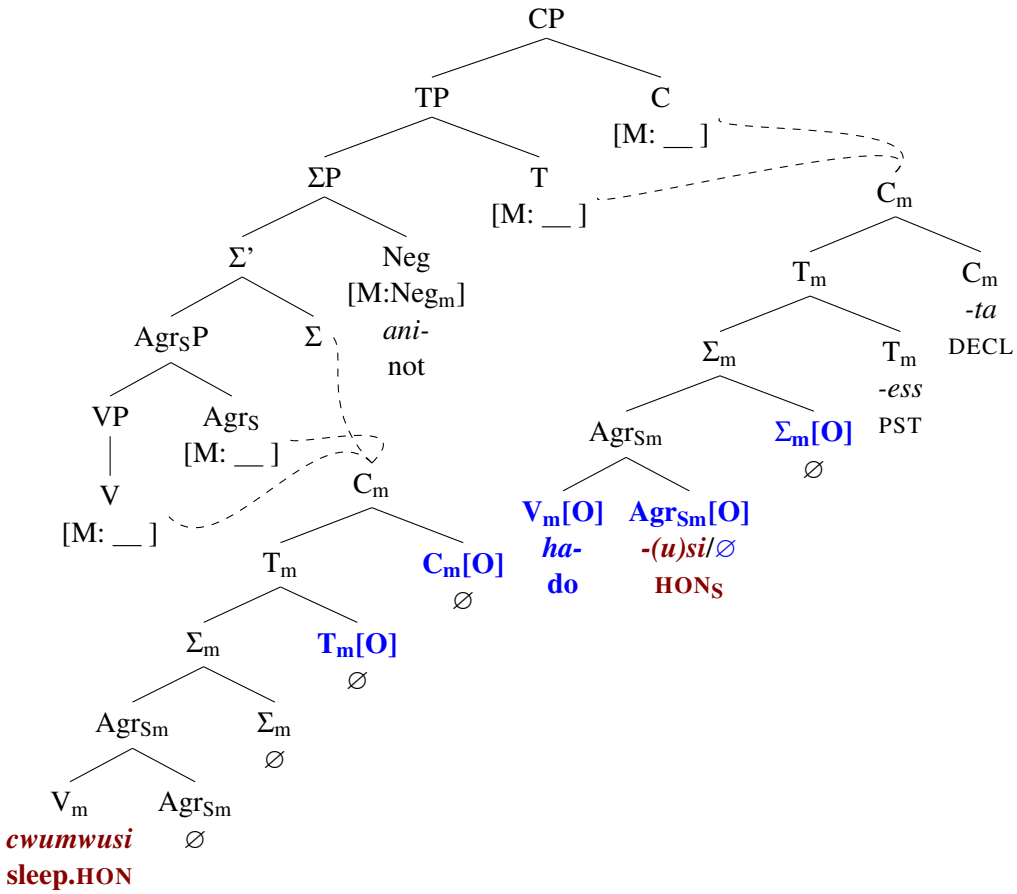
(31) Vocabulary Insertion to Agr_S[O]



the full pronunciation is blocked by suppletive honorific stem

The optionality of subject honorification on the higher complex head arises just as regular honorification. In this case, ΣP is merged higher than Agr_SP. Agr_{Sm} on the higher complex head, thus, is assigned the orphan status accordingly. Consequently, Agr_{Sm}[O] can get either of the full pronunciation or null pronunciation, as seen in (32).

(32) Vocabulary Insertion to Agr_S[O]



4 *po*-construction: the locality condition for honorific suppletion

In this section, I will argue that the locality condition for Korean SupH should be based on adjacency condition, contra Choi and Harley (2019). Following Bobaljik (2012), Choi and Harley (2019) argued that the locality condition for SupH is the c-command relationship within the same complex head domain between the conditioned root and the conditioning Agr_S (Hon, in their terminology). The key evidence for their claim was *po*-construction[5], the topic of the current section. In *po*-construction, RegH is not allowed for the former predicate consisting of the construction, as seen in (33a). Interestingly, SupH is mandatory for the same predicate, as seen in (33b) and (33c). Given Agr_S, the locus of RegH, also conditions SupH, and considering two predicates forming a single complex head, Choi and Harley (2019) conclude that the non-adjacent Agr_S is sufficient to trigger the root suppletion as long as it is situated in the same complex head domain and c-commands the conditioned root.

(33) a. *cwusang-kkeyse ku chakyk-ul ilk-**(*usi)**-e po-**si**-ess-ta.*
his.majesty-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-E see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty tried to read the book/His majesty has an experience reading the book.'

[5]I use *po*-construction to refer to the relevant constructions, following Choi and Harley (2019) to refer to the construction. I personally find that the terminology is not the most ideal since *po-* 'see' is not the only verb used in this way and there is no reason to choose this verb as representative. One might say I could use complex predicate construction based on the morphosyntactic property or auxiliary verb construction based on the semantics of the matrix verb. However, I follow Choi and Harley's (2019) terminology because this is neither the only complex predicate construction nor the only auxiliary verb construction available in Korean, and I could not find a better term to refer to the construction in question.

b. *cwusang-kkeyse phica-lul **tusi**-e po-**si**-ess-ta.*
his.majesty-NOM.HON pizza-ACC **eat.HON**-E see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty tried to eat pizza/His majesty has an experience eating pizza.'

c. * *cwusang-kkeyse phica-lul **mek**-e po-**si**-ess-ta.*
his.majesty-NOM.HON pizza-ACC **eat**-E see-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

However, there are important counter-examples against their claim of the complex head as the locality condition: causative and passive constructions. Choi and Harley's (2019) claim predicts that SupH should be triggered in these constructions since the root and Agr$_S$ are still in the same complex head domain. However, as seen in (34), SupH is not inserted into the root. Instead, the elsewhere form is still inserted, as seen in (34a) and (34c). These counterexamples suggest that the locality condition for SupH still needs an adjacency condition, at least in certain conditions. Then, what we have is now a paradoxical situation: SupH is triggered in *po*-construction despite the non-adjacency of the root and Agr$_S$, but causative and passive constructions show that SupH is not triggered because of the non-adjacency of the root and Agr$_S$.

(34) a. *cwusang-kkeyse yenguyceng-eykey phica-lul **mek**-**i**-**si**-ess-ta.*
his.majesty-NOM.HON prime.minister-DAT pizza-ACC **eat**-**CAUS**-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'His majesty made the prime minister to eat pizza.'

b. * *cwusang-kkeyse yenguyceng-eykey phica-lul **tusi**-**i**-ess-ta.*
his.majesty-NOM.HON prime.minister-DAT pizza-ACC **eat.HON**-**CAUS**-PST-DECL

c. *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.'

d. * *cwusang-kkeyse koymwul-eykey **tusi**-**hi**-ess-ta*
his.majesty-NOM.HON monster-DAT **eat.HON**-**PASS**-PST-DECL

I will argue that the locality condition for SupH is adjacency-based, taking the observation from causative and passive constructions. The ostensible discrepancy between *po*-construction and causative/passive construction can be resolved once we construe *po*-construction as undergoing Generalized Reduplication (GenR) (Arregi and Nevins 2012, 2018, 2022). GenR makes it possible to regard Agr$_S$ as being base-generated in a position adjacent to the conditioned root. After triggering SupH, Agr$_S$ is dislocated for morphotactic constraint, which in turn derives the superficial non-adjacency between the root and the RegH suffix ***-(u)si***, the phonological representation of Agr$_S$. Before seeing how GenR yields the right analysis, let us see the properties of *po*-construction in more detail and see what kind of optional and obligatory patterns of subject honorification are observed in *po*-construction.

4.1 What is po-construction

po-construction, being one of the complex predicate constructions, is characterized by the following properties: first, it is a multiple-predicate construction where a non-finite main predicate (henceforth, lower predicate) suffixed with -E (realized as either of *-a* and *-e* depending on vowel harmony) is followed by an inflected matrix predicate (henceforth, higher predicate). Second, the higher predicate behaves like an auxiliary verb, bleaching its semantics and modifying the action denoted by the lower predicate, as seen in (35) (Lee 1992; Yun 1993).

(35) a. *po-* 'see' → experiential/attemptive
ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-e po-ass-ta.
child-NOM, that book-ACC read-E try-PST-DECL
'The child tried to to read the book/The child has experience reading the book.'

b. *twu/noh-* 'put/put' → sustentive (Sohn 2001)

ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-e twu/noh-ess-ta.
child-NOM that book-ACC read-E put/put-PST-DECL

'The child has read the book (as preparation for something).'

c. *cwu-* 'give' → benefactive

ai-ka ku chayk-ul chinkwu-eykey ilk-e cwu-ess-ta.
child-NOM that book-ACC friend-DAT read-E give-PST-DECL

'The child read the book to their friend'

d. *peli-* 'throw away' → terminative

ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-e peli-ess-ta.
child-NOM that book-ACC read-E throw.away-PST-DECL

'The child finished reading the book'

e. *chiwu-* 'remove' → terminative

ai-ka sakwa-lul mek-e chiwu-ess-ta.
child-NOM apple-ACC eat-E clean-PST-DECL

'The child ate up an apple.'

f. *ka-* 'go' → persistentive

ai-ka ku chayk-ul ta ilk-e ka-n-ta.
child-NOM that book-ACC all read-E go-PRS-DECL

'The child is about '

The lower predicate does not allow morphemes that linearly come after causative/passive suffixes. Thus, only the root and causative/passive suffix can appear on the lower predicate, as seen in (36a), (36b), and (36c). As we have seen earlier in this section, having a regular subject honorific suffix ***-(u)si*** on the lower predicate is ungrammatical, as seen in (36d). Finally, having a tense morpheme on the lower predicate is also ungrammatical, as seen in (36e).

(36) a. *ai-ka sakwa-lul mek-e po-ass-ta.*
child-NOM apple-ACC eat-E see-PST-DECL

'The child tried to eat an apple/The child has experience eating an apple.'

b. *emma-ka ai-eykey sakwa-lul mek-**i**-e po-ass-ta.*
mom-NOM child-DAT apple-ACC eat-**CAUS**-E see-PST-DECL

'Mom tried to feed the child an apple/Mom has an experience feeding the child an apple.'

c. *ai-ka emma-eykey an-**ki**-e iss-ess-ta.*
child-NOM mom-DAT embrace-**PASS**-E exist-PST-DECL

'The child was being held by mom.'

d. * *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-e po-si-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-E see-HON$_S$-PST-DECL

'The king tried to read the book/the king has an experience reading the book.'

e. * *ai-ka sakwa-lul mek-**ess**-e po-ass-ta.*
child-NOM apple-ACC eat-**PST**-E see-PST-DECL

'The child tried to eat an apple/The child has experience eating an apple.'

Since no overt tense and RegH suffixes are present in morphology, one might think that the syntactic structure responsible for the lower predicate would not have Agr$_S$P or TP. I believe that this is true for TP.

But I argue that the lower copy should be construed as having a base-generated Agr_SP in it. This argument is due to SupH, which is obligatory for the lower predicate. I will clarify the structure of *po*-construction and see whether it is the right analysis with subject honorification data. Though we have seen some subject honorification patterns at the beginning of this section, let us revisit them in greater detail.

4.2 Subject honorification in *po*-construction

Regarding subject honorification, *po*-construction exhibits a different pattern than long-form negation. While long-form negation allows regular honorification on the lower complex head, the same yields ungrammaticality for *po*-construction, as seen in (37). Only the higher predicate can and must bear the regular honorific suffix ***-(u)si***.

(37) a. *wang-kkeyse kwungkwel-ey ka-a po-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON palace-DL go-E try-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'The king tried to go to the palace/The king has experience going to the palace'

b. * *wang-kkeyse kwungkwel-ey ka-**si**-e po-ass-ta.*
king-NOM.HON palace-DL go-**HON$_S$**-E try-PST-DECL

c. * *wang-kkeyse kwungkwel-ey ka-**si**-e po-si-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON palace-DL go-**HON$_S$**-E try-HON$_S$-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse kwungkwel-ey ka-a po-ass-ta.*
king-NOM.HON palace-DL go-E try-PST-DECL

However, despite the unavailability of regular honorification on the lower predicate, suppletive honorification must be done when a suppletive honorific stem is available for the root, as seen in (38). What is more puzzling is that when suppletive honorofication is marked on the lower predicate, the higher predicate does not necessarily mark subject honorification, as seen in (38b).

(38) a. *wang-kkeyse **cwumwusi**-e twu-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON **sleep.HON**-E put-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'The king slept (as part of preparation for something).'

b. *wang-kkeyse **cwumwusi**-e twu-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON **sleep.HON**-E put-PST-DECL

c. * *wang-kkeyse **ca**-a twu-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON **sleep**-E put-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse **ca**-a twu-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON **sleep**-E put-PST-DECL

Thus, we have a paradoxical situation. Unlike the two constructions we have seen so far, where the lower predicate can mark both RegH and SupH, now we encounter a situation where RegH is banned, but SupH is still obligatory. Thus, this is different from long-form negation where we can surely say that Agr_S is in the structure and conditions SupH accordingly. However, in this case, we do not have such evidence for the presence of Agr_S because we do not see regular honorification adjacent to the root.

However, I still contend that Agr_S is base-generated and conditions suppletive honorification as it does for long-form negation. The reason why we do not see regular honorification is that the honorific morpheme ***-si*** is post-syntactically dislocated from its original position because of morphotactic restriction of regular honorific suffix on the lower predicate.

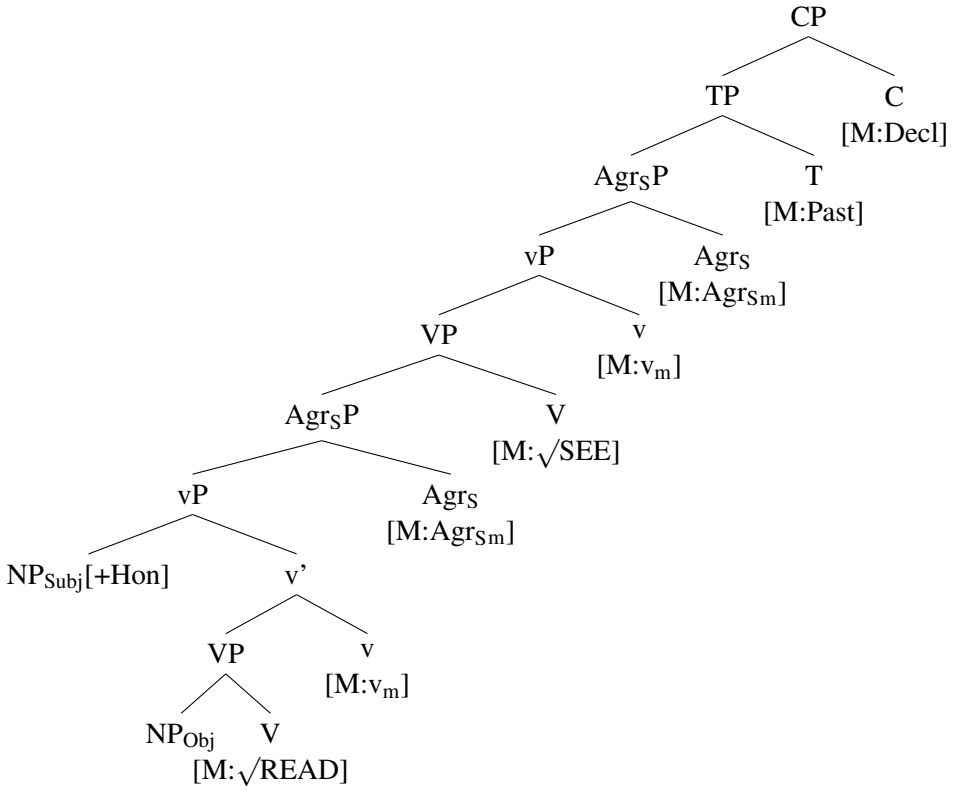
4.3 Syntactic structure of *po*-construction

Here, I assume that *po*-construction forms a single complex head formed through GenHM. This is in line with Lee (1992); Choi and Harley (2019), who regarded *po*-construction as a single complex head formed by means of head-movement. Lee's (1992) argument for *po*-construction (SVC 1 in his terminology) is that *po*-construction does not allow *-se* 'by means of/and then' or an adverb between the lower predicate and the higher predicate, and only a wide scope interpretation is available for a short-form negated *po*-construction Choi and Harley (2019).

Following their claims that *po*-construction forms a single complex head, I propose the following structure[6]. In order to show the mechanism of subject honorific agreement precisely, I temporarily use a full-fledged VP-shell structure.

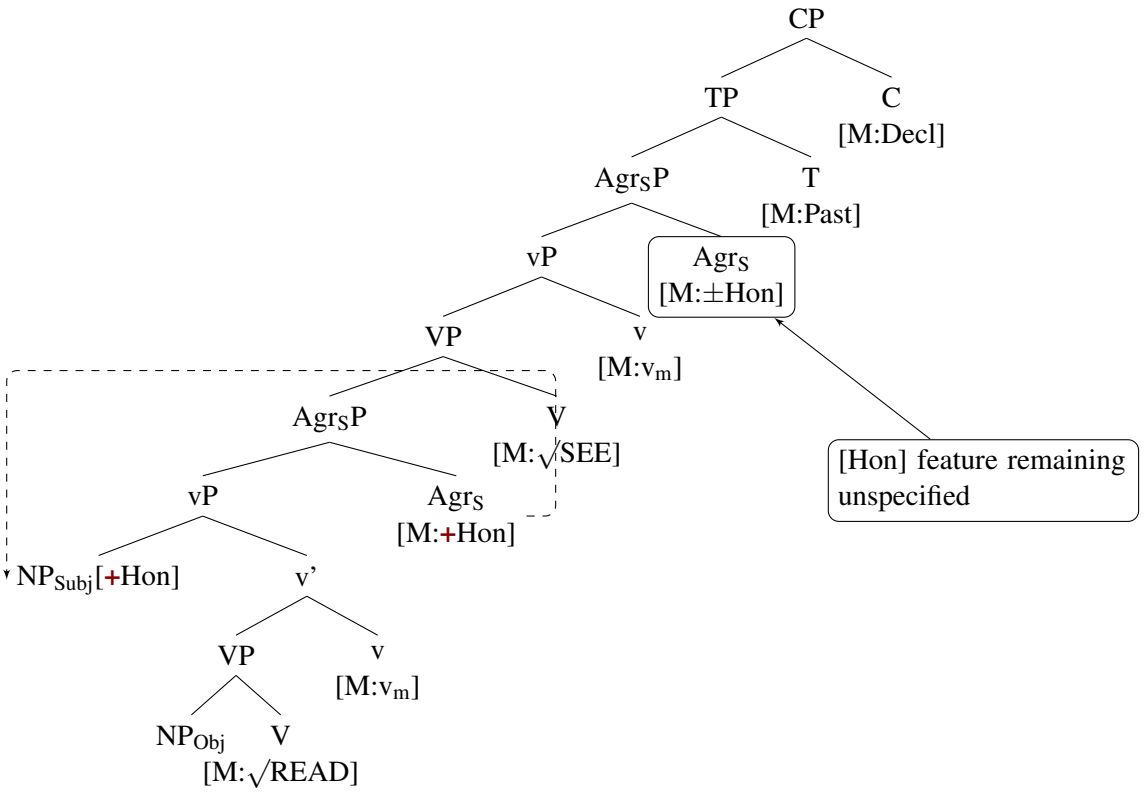
(39) *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilke-po-si-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-see-HON$_S$-PST-DECL
'The king tried to read the book/the king has an experience reading the book.'

(40)



Following Jou (2024), I assume that the lower Agr_S agrees with NP_{Subj} while searching down its c-command domain. The higher Agr_S, on the other hand, does not agree with any NP, and its [Hon] feature remains unspecified.

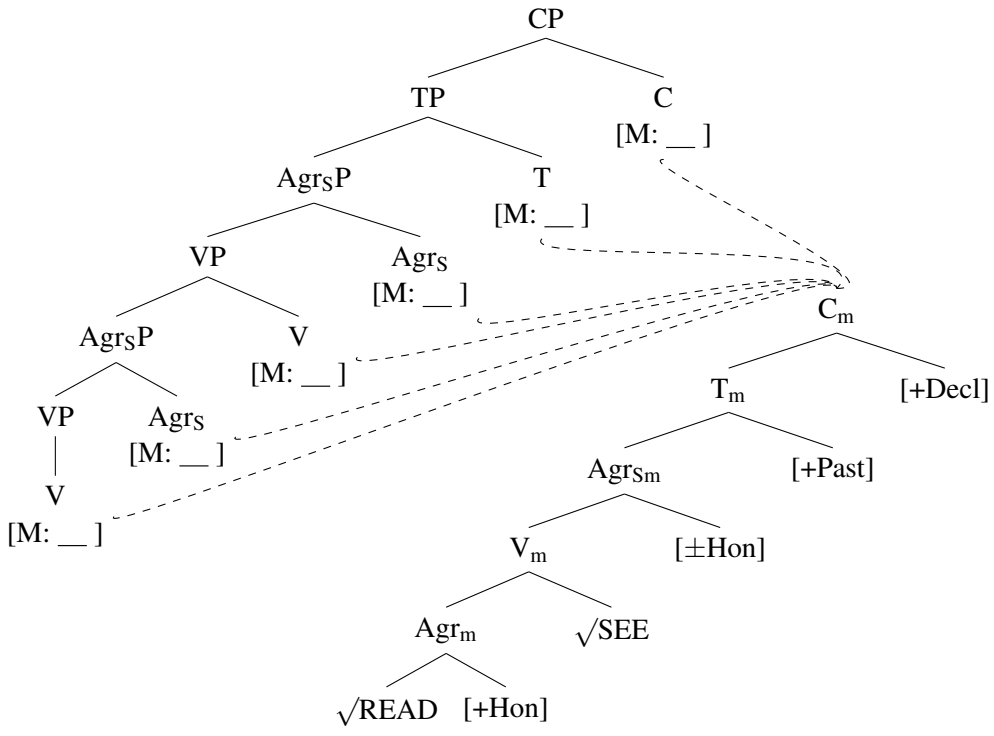
[6]Attentive readers might notice that I changed the representation of *po*-construction as being a single complex head represented by the presence of a dash between *ilke* 'read' and *po* 'see.' Further, I assume that -E is a morphological repair that gives a hiatus between two contiguous roots. Thus, I will parse -E as a part of the preceding predicate.



(41)

From now on, I will use a simplified VP structure instead of the articulated VP-shell structure for ease of demonstration. However, readers should keep in mind that the lower Agr_S agrees with the [Hon] feature of NP_{Subj}.

Based on structure (42), GenHM relates the syntactic heads.



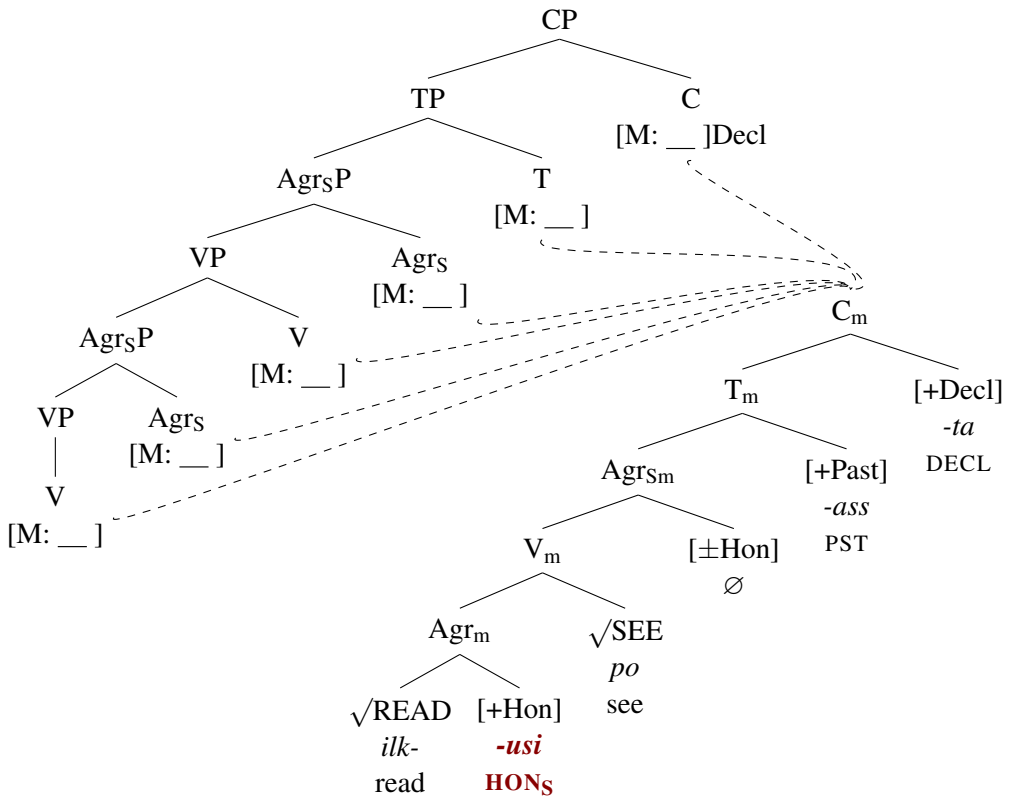
(42)

In this constellation, we do Vocabulary Insertion. The following vocabulary items ((44) is repeated from (14)) are inserted into each node, as seen in (45). An overt subject honorific suffix ***-(u)si*** is inserted into [+Hon] by (44b). [±Hon], on the other hand, does not have any feature particularly specified for any vocabulary item. Still, null pronunciation is inserted since it is a morphological feature of Agr_m. In other words, the elsewhere ∅ is inserted by (44c).

(43) a. √READ ↔ *ilk-*
b. √SEE ↔ *po-*

(44) a. [+Hon] ↔ ∅ / {*cwumwusi-, kyeysi-, tusi-, ...*} __
b. [+Hon] ↔ ***-(u)si*** **Suppletive SH stems**
c. Agr_{Sm} ↔ ∅

(45)



This form is actually ill-formed since overt regular honorification on the lower verb is banned, as we observed in section 4.2.

(46) a. *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilke-po-**si**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-see-**HON$_\text{S}$**-PST-DECL
'The king tried to read the book/the king has an experience reading the book.'
b. * *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**e-po-ass-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-**HON$_\text{S}$**-see-PST-DECL

How can we derive the correct form under the suggested constellation? This is the point where we need metathesis as a post-syntactic doubling proposed in the framework of GenR Arregi and Nevins (2012, 2018, 2022).

4.4 Metathesis following Generalized Reduplication (Arregi and Nevins 2012, 2018, 2022)

The framework of GenR makes it possible to derive the correct observed surface form from the structure proposed in the previous section. Thus, the RegH suffix on the left side of the higher root is dislocated to the right side. This process is characterized as a morphological repair due to a morphotactic constraint present in Korean that requires a RegH suffix to be on the right side of V_m present in a single complex head. Precisely, the RegH suffix undergoes metathesis following verb doubling, which results in the regular subject honorific suffix being placed on the right side of the higher root.

Based on evidence from Spanish dialects, Arregi and Nevins (2012, 2018, 2022) characterizes metathesis as a morpheme doubling and a following morpheme deletion. When there are two morphemes, A and B, of which relative linear order violates a morphotactic constraint available in the given language, A and B are doubled as the first step to resolve the morphotactic error. Then, A in the first copy and B in the second copy are removed in the second step. Consequently, we have B in the first copy and A in the second copy of which the relative order is opposite to the initial morpheme order.

(47) Metathesis in the GR formalism
$[\![A >< B]\!] \rightarrow$ ~~ABAB~~ $\rightarrow$ BA

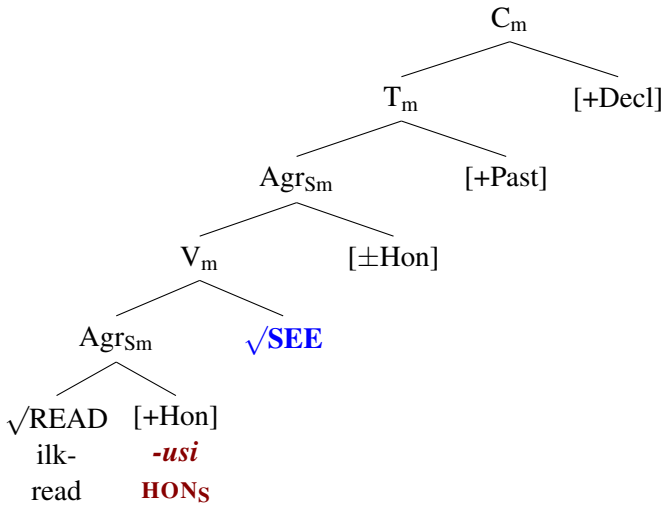
I propose that Korean morphotactics requires a regular honorific ***-(u)si*** to be placed on the right side of V_m in a single complex head, as seen in (48a). In this regard, (46b) is ill-formed because the RegH suffix ***-(u)si*** is on the left side of the higher V_m, realized as *po-* 'see,' as seen in (48b)

(48) a. Morphotactic constraint on a regular honorific ***-(u)si***
* [... ***-(u)si*** ... **V_m** ...]$_{X_m}$

b. * *ilk-**usi**-**po**-*
V_m-**Agr_{Sm}**-**V_m**

In order to fix this morphotactic deficiency, the subject honorific ***-(u)si*** undergoes metathesis following GenH illustrated above. As an example, consider (49). Here, we see that the structure does not observe constraint (48a) since there is another V_m, $\sqrt{}$SEE, on its right side.

(49)



In order to repair the morphosyntactic deficiency, two nodes are marked for GenR as follows:

(50) *ilk-* [\![***-usi*** >< **[$\sqrt{}$SEE]**]\!] -[±Hon]-[+Past]-[+Decl]

Then, the whole construction is reduplicated, and ***-usi*** in the first copy and $\sqrt{}$SEE in the second copy are deleted to achieve the metathesis effect:

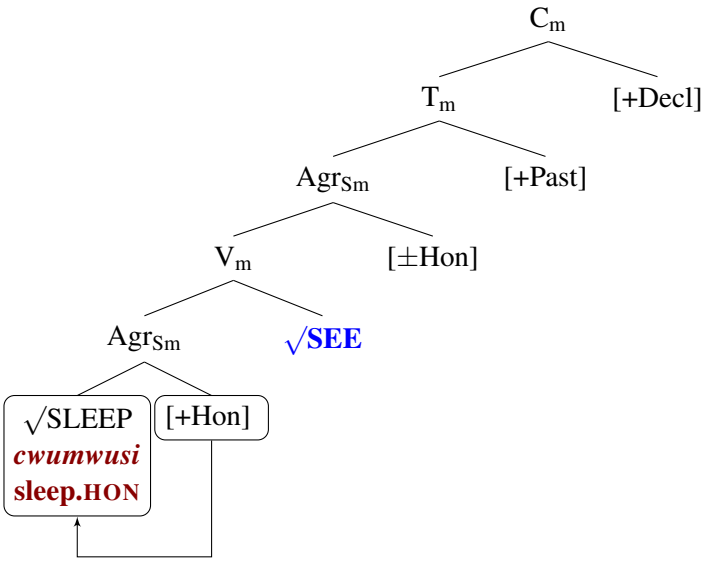
(51) *ilk-* ~~***-usi***~~ **[$\sqrt{}$SEE]** ***-(u)si*** ~~**[$\sqrt{}$SEE]**~~ -[±Hon]-[+Past]-[+Decl]

Consequently, the rest of Vocabulary Insertion takes place root-outward to derive the correct derivation:

(52) *ilke-**po**-**si**-∅-ess-ta*
read-see-HON$_S$-∅-PST-DECL

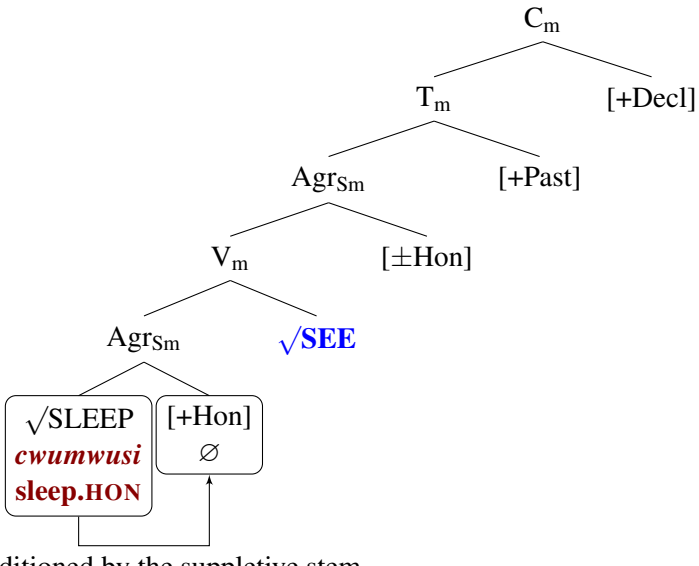
However, this is not all of the patterns of subject honorification we see in *po*-construction. We still have to account for suppletive honorification facts. The obligatory SupH for the lower verb is straightforward: the structure has Agr$_S$[M:+Hon]. Thus, Agr$_S$[M:+Hon] conditions the suppletion for the root, as seen in (53a), and the inserted suppletive stem, in turn, triggers the insertion of ∅ into Agr$_{Sm}$, as seen in (53b).

(53) a.



Suppletion conditioned by Agr$_{Sm}$

b.



∅ conditioned by the suppletive stem

Then, the metathesis will derive the following pattern:

(54) Metathesis

a. *cwumwusi-* ⟦ ∅ >< **[√SEE]** ⟧ -[±Hon]-[+Past]-[+Decl]

b. *cwumwusi-* ~~∅~~-**[√SEE]**-∅-~~**[√SEE]**~~-[±Hon]-[+Past]-[+Decl]

c. *cwumwusie* ***-po*** *-∅ -ass -ta.*
sleep.HON$_S$ **-see** -∅ -PST -DECL

One can see that what is derived from the same metathesis process is the pattern where the higher verb does not mark RegH. However, we do observe optionality in SupH. Specifically, while the SupH marking is obligatory for the lower verb, the higher verb exhibits optionality regarding subject honorification. Thus, we need to derive the other pattern where RegH manifests itself from the higher verb.

To account for this fact, I further propose that metathesis occurs either after or before Vocabulary Insertion for the lower Agr$_{Sm}$ in the chain of post-syntactic operations.

(55) Order of metathesis

a. VI to Agr$_{Sm}$ ≺ Metathesis

b. Metathesis ≺ VI to Agr$_{Sm}$

The order of metathesis applied to (49) and (53) is thus (55a). When metathesis precedes Vocabulary Insertion to Agr$_{Sm}$[M:+Hon], it will undergo metathesis without being assigned a vocabulary item, as seen in (56a) and (56b). Then, Vocabulary Insertion occurs to the remaining morphological features, yielding the pattern where the higher verb is marked for regular honorification, as seen in (56c).

(56) Metathesis ≺ VI to Agr$_{Sm}$

a. *cwumwusi-* ⟦ **[+Hon]** >< **[√SEE]** ⟧ -[±Hon]-[+Past]-[+Decl]

b. *cwumwusi-* ~~**[+Hon]**~~-**[√SEE]**-**[+Hon]**-~~**[√SEE]**~~-[±Hon]-[+Past]-[+Decl]

c. *cwumwusie* ***-po*** ***-si*** *-∅ -ess -ta.*
sleep.HON$_S$ **-see** **-HON$_S$** -∅ -PST -DECL

5 Predicate contrastive constructions: remaining issues

So far, we have developed a theory of subject honorification by investigating two complex predicate constructions: long-form negation and *po*-construction. However, still, there are more issues to be addressed for a successful theory of subject honorification in Korean. Specifically, predicate contrastive topic constructions cannot be overlooked if one wants to develop a complete theory of subject honorification since they also exhibit optionality and obligation in subject honorification patterns.

However, despite acknowledging that these constructions need a suitable account, the current paper does not attempt to completely analyze them. The reason is this: there is a significantly greater speaker variation regarding the acceptability of optional subject honorification patterns compared to the previous two constructions. This fact suggests that the variation in acceptability might be due to the variation in the syntactic structure of the constructions itself. Thus, one cannot test the validity of the theory of subject honorification unless suitable explanations for the speaker variation in syntactic structures of the constructions themselves are developed in advance. Even if the theory is borne out by one speaker, the theory will encounter another speaker who does not square with the theory. Likewise, even if the theory turns out to provide a wrong prediction for one speaker, that does not necessarily mean that the prediction is entirely wrong.

Since accounting for the variation in the syntactic structure of predicate contrastive constructions is beyond the topic of the current paper, I will only show what predicate contrastive constructions are, and why speaker variation hinges the successful account for subject honorification pattern in the construction.

Predicate contrastive topic constructions, as the terminology indicates, are instances of a morpho-syntactic strategy to encode contrastive topic information (Lee 2003; Jo 2004, 2013). There are two predicate contrastive topic constructions available in Korean: predicate-copy construction and *ha*-topic construction (R-construction and *ha*-construction à la Jo (2004, 2013)). Both types of predicate contrastive copy constructions consist of two verb parts, as seen in (57b) and (57c). Based on the given sentence (57a), predicate-copy construction (57b) is formed by copying the predicate and putting it before the predicate that is copied. The predicate copy contains a subset of inflectional suffixes of the main predicate followed by a combination of nominalizer *-ki* and a topic marker *-nun*. *ha*-construction, on the other hand, consists of a main verb and a dummy verb *ha-* 'do,' as seen in (57c). Semantically, both constructions convey that the speaker concessively admits the expressed proposition while still implying that they have another unexpressed proposition that is contrary to the expressed one (Lee 2003; Jo 2004). This observation is represented by 'but ...' in the free translation for both constructions.

(57) a. *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ta.*
child-NOM the book-ACC read-PST-DECL
'The child read the book.'

b. *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ki-nun ilk-ess-ta.*
child-NOM the book-ACC read-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL
'The child DID read the book (but...)'

c. *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ki-nun hay-ss-ta.*
child-NOM the book-ACC read-NMLZ-TOP do-PST-DECL
'The child DID read the book (but ...)'

As for the availability of inflectional suffixes on the first predicate, the first predicate of predicate contrastive topic constructions can bear tense morpheme to the maximum extent. Thus, predicate-copy construction and *ha*-topic construction are grammatical as long as the first predicate does not have a morpheme past the tense morpheme in the second predicate, as seen in (58a, 58b, 58d), and (58e). However, having the tense marker in the first predicate is ungrammatical, as seen in (58c) and (58f).

(58) a. *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ki-nun ilk-ess-ta.*
child-NOM that book-ACC read-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL
'The child DID read the book (but...)'

b. *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ki-nun ilk-ess-ta.*
child-NOM that book-ACC read-PST-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL

c. * *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ta-ki-nun ilk-ess-ta.*
child-NOM that book-ACC read-PST-DECL-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL

d. *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ki-nun hay-ess-ta.*
child-NOM that book-ACC read-NMLZ-TOP do-PST-DECL
'The child DID read the book (but...)'

e. *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ki-nun hay-ess-ta.*
child-NOM that book-ACC read-PST-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL

f. * *ai-ka ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ta-ki-nun hay-ess-ta.*
child-NOM that book-ACC read-PST-DECL-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL

As for subject honorification, predicate contrastive topic constructions exhibit a complicated pattern. Our base sentences are (59a) and (59b), a sentence with regular honorification and suppletive honorification, respectively.

(59) a. *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'The king read the book.'

b. *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **tusi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat.HON**-PST-DECL
'The king ate the meal.'

Let us examine the subject honorification patterns in predicate-copy construction. (60) shows the regular honorification pattern found in predicate-copy construction where the first predicate is marked with tense. Among four logically possible constructions shown in (60), the only pattern that is considered grammatical by all of the consultants is (60a). If subject honorification is absent on either of the predicates, the acceptability varies, symbolized by ?, as seen in (60b) and (60c). Lack of subject honorification on both predicates is considered ungrammatical, as seen in (60d).

(60) a. *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ess-ki-nun ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-PST-NMLZ-TOP read-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'The king DID read the book (but...).'

b. ? *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ki-nun ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-PST-NMLZ-TOP read-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

c. ? *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ess-ki-nun ilk-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-PST-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-ess-ki-nun ilk-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-PST-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL

In the cases where tense morphology is absent on the first predicate, one significant change regarding the acceptability emerges: the pattern where the first predicate lacks subject honorification is now considered fully grammatical, as seen in (61b). Judgments for the other logically possible cases are the same as the pattern with the tense-marked first predicate. Thus, the acceptability varies for lack of subject honorification on the second predicate, and having no subject honorification is considered ungrammatical.

(61) a. *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ki-nun ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-NMLZ-TOP read-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'The king DID read the book (but...).'

b. *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-ki-nun ilk-**usi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-NMLZ-TOP read-**HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

c. ? *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-**usi**-ki-nun ilk-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-**HON$_S$**-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse ku chayk-ul ilk-ki-nun ilk-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON that book-ACC read-NMLZ-TOP read-PST-DECL

Suppletive honorification gives us more convenient patterns to describe than regular honorification. Whenever suppletive honorification is not marked on any of the first and the second predicates, it is considered ungrammatical, regardless of whether tense marking is present on the first predicate. (62) and (63) represent the pattern with tense on the first predicate and without tense on the first predicate, respectively.

(62) a. *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **tusi**-ess-ki-nun **tusi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat.HON$_S$**-PST-NMLZ-TOP **eat.HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'The king DID have his meal (but...).'

b. * *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **mek**-ess-ki-nun **tusi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat**-PST-NMLZ-TOP **eat.HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

c. * *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **tusi**-ess-ki-nun **mek**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat.HON$_S$**-PST-NMLZ-TOP **eat**-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **mek**-ess-ki-nun **mek**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat**-PSTNMLZ-TOP **eat**-PST-DECL

(63) a. *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **tusi**-ki-nun **tusi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat.HON$_S$**-NMLZ-TOP **eat.HON$_S$**-PST-DECL
'The king indeed had his meal.'

b. * *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **mek**-ki-nun **tusi**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat**-NMLZ-TOP **eat.HON$_S$**-PST-DECL

c. * *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **tusi**-ki-nun **mek**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat.HON$_S$**-NMLZ-TOP **eat**-PST-DECL

d. * *wang-kkeyse swula-lul **mek**-ki-nun **mek**-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON meal.HON-ACC **eat**-NMLZ-TOP **eat**-PST-DECL

The aforementioned patterns show both the challenge and importance of predicate contrastive constructions to theories of subject honorification. On the one hand, we never know the success of the theory of subject honorification because the acceptability of speakers does not converge. This suggests the possibility that there is more than one group of speakers in terms of the syntactic structure of predicate contrastive topic constructions (cf. Han et al. 2007). If there is a variation in syntactic structures and the variation in acceptability of RegH can be attributed to the variation in syntactic structures, we would be able to test the explanatory ability of the current theory. Without investigating this, testing the theory of subject honorification would be inevitably partial. On the other hand, these constructions cannot be ignored since they do provide optional patterns of subject honorification that require explanations. For these reasons, I conclude this section by emphasizing the importance of predicate contrastive topic constructions to the theories of subject honorification and promising subsequent research on subject honorification patterns based on the explanations for the speaker variation reported here.

6 Conclusion

In this paper, I attempted to provide a comprehensive analysis of Korean subject honorification through the lens of GenHM. The current approach has enabled a reevaluation of the longstanding debates between syntactic and post-syntactic interpretations of Korean subject honorification, along with Chung (2009); Kim and Chung (2015); Choi and Harley (2019); Jou (2024), among others. By adopting GenHM, the current study attempted to systematically address the limitations of earlier models, particularly in their handling of complex predicate constructions and the dynamic interaction between syntactic structure and the pattern of subject honorification. In this way, the current paper contributed to the deeper understanding regarding how syntactic syntactic configurations drive morphological outcomes, emphasizing the optionality and the obligation possibly available for languages.

In Section 3, using Generalized Head Movement extensively, I first showed that *do*-support does not have to be post-syntactic. By means of Split-by-Intervention, Orphan Assignment, and the insertion of *ha-* 'do' as a defective pronunciation, I showed that post-syntactic understanding of *ha*-support is not the only analysis to choose. This reevaluation opens the door to subject honorification as a syntactic process, which is more in line with general understandings of agreements cross-linguistically. I also showed that the current analysis can provide a way to understand a different grammatical pattern found between regular honorification and suppletive honorification, as a bridge to the analyses provided in the subsequent sections.

In Section 4, I tackle the presence of suppletive honorification in *po*-constructions, which occurs without equivalent overt regular honorification. Choi and Harley (2019) argue this demonstrates the complexity of the locality condition for allomorphy in Korean within a complex X domain. My analysis challenges this assumption, suggesting that the locality condition for SupH should be considered based on adjacency between the conditioning Agr_S and the conditioned root, despite apparent non-adjacency between two nodes. What yields the non-adjacency is a post-syntactic metathesis, and two nodes are adjacent in the narrow syntax.

In Section 5, I showed the difficulty and the importance of investigating predicate contrastive topic constructions. Due to the high degree of variation in acceptability judgment, I underlined that one will never be able to fully test the theory of subject honorification without knowing whether there is any variation in syntactic structures among speakers and whether the variation in acceptability of optional RegH patterns can be accounted for in terms of the variation in syntactic structures. At the same time, I also emphasized that one should take these constructions into account to provide a comprehensive analysis of subject honorification in Korean.

Also, there are numerous more complex predicate constructions available in Korean that I could not address in this paper simply due to the lack of space. These constructions require us to test the theory developed in the current paper and lead to a more flourishing understanding of the mechanism of agreement in general and the interaction between agreement and syntactic structure.

Abbreviations

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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