

DM APPROACH TO HISTORICAL DIFFERENCE IN THE SEQUENCE OF KOREAN SUBJECT HONORIFIC *-si*

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1 Introduction

The Korean language exhibits various strategies for expressing honorificity and politeness. Among these, the subject honorific suffix (SH), *-si*, appears when the subject of a sentence is regarded as socially higher than the speaker. In the following example from Modern Korean (MoK), SH *-si* on the predicate morphology, along with the honorific nominative case marker *-kkeyse* on the subject NP, shows that the subject is an honorified one:

- (1) *wang-kkeyse kwungkwel-ey ka-si-ess-ta.*
king-NOM.HON palace-DAT go-SH-PST-DECL
'The king went to the palace.'

The same suffix is also attested in Middle Korean (MiK), a historical variety of the Korean language spoken from the 10th to the 16th century¹, as in (2). Similar to MoK SH, MiK SH *-si* is also used when the subject is honorified. One can observe that the suffixes in both languages are identical in both meaning and form:

- (2) *syeycwon-i ... twolwo wo-si-ni-la.*
Buddha-NOM ... again come-SH-DUR-DECL
'Buddha came back again.' (WS 4:62a)

At first glance, there appears to be little difference between MoK SH and MiK SH. However, a significant distinction emerges when examining their placement in predicate morphology relative

¹ Although MiK encompasses the language spoken during this period, what we can access is mostly limited to the variety from the 15th century, as MiK began to be written using the Korean alphabet from the mid-15th century.

to the suffix *-te*, which is present in both MoK and MiK. In MoK, SH consistently precedes *-te* (the MoK pattern), whereas MiK allows for both the MoK pattern and an alternative pattern where the order of SH and *-te* is reversed (the MiK pattern). This distinction is evident when comparing a MoK sentence (3b) with its MiK counterpart (3a). Employing the MiK pattern in MoK results in ungrammaticality (3b'):

- (3) a. *pwuzin-i ... ho-te-si-ta.* (WS 22:62 a-b)
 lady-NOM ... say-IPFV-SH-DECL
 'The lady said ...'

- b. *pwuin-i ... ha-si-te-la.* (Han 2008)
 lady-NOM ... say-SH-EVID-DECL

- b'. **pwuin-i ... ha-te-si-ta.*
 lady-NOM ... say-EVID-SH-DECL

How can we account for the differing orders of these suffixes in both language varieties? Astute readers may have noticed that the meaning of *-te* varies between MoK and MiK. Although MoK *-te* directly descends from MiK *-te*, in MoK, it functions as a past sensory evidential marker (Song 2002), while in MiK, it serves as an imperfective marker (Choe 2015). Considering that evidential markers typically occupy a higher position than aspect markers, it seems logical for MoK SH to follow the evidential *-te*, whereas in MiK, SH naturally precedes the aspectual *-te*.

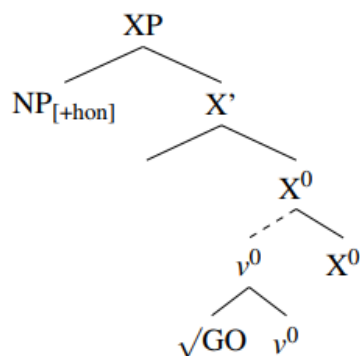
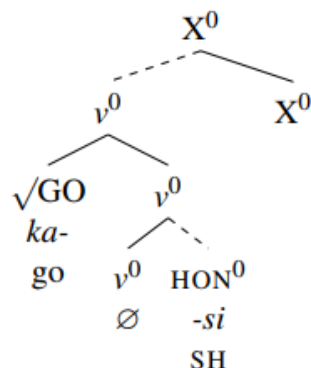
However, I propose that the semantic difference in *-te* between the two varieties is insufficient to fully explain the observed differences. Instead, I suggest that distinct morphosyntactic rules in MoK and MiK play a crucial role. It is my contention that the placement of SH in each variety is determined by these differing morphosyntactic frameworks.

2 Account for Korean SH in Distributed Morphology

In the framework of Distributed Morphology (DM), the Korean SH *-si* is considered a post-syntactically inserted dissociated agreement marker (Kim & Chung, 2015; Choi & Harley, 2019). In this perspective, SH is adjoined post-syntactically due to the presence of a [+hon] feature in the syntactic structure. Choi & Harley (2019) have proposed morphosyntactic rules whereby SH is adjoined to v^0 when an honorified subject NP, indicated by the [+hon] feature, c-commands v^0 . This results in a dissociated HON^0 being adjoined to v^0 , as specified by rule (4a). Following this, the vocabulary entry (4b) is responsible for inserting the phonological representation *-si* into the adjoined HON^0 through Vocabulary Insertion:

- (4) HON^0 -sprouting rule (Choi & Harley 2019)
 a. $v^0 \rightarrow [v^0 HON^0] / [NP_{[+hon]} \dots [\dots __ \dots]]$
 b. $HON^0 \leftrightarrow -si$

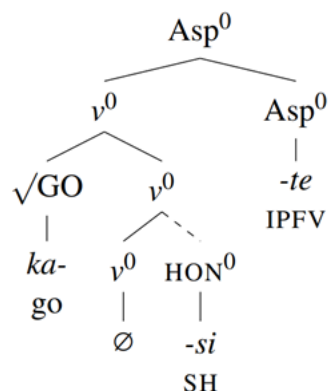
(5) a. Before applying (4a) and (4b)

b. X^0 after applying (4a) and VI

Now, let us examine if this rule adequately explains the order of SH relative to *-te* in MoK and MiK. Rule (4a) posits that SH consistently precedes a predicate stem and other suffixes. This aligns with the pattern observed in MoK, where SH invariably appears before *-te*, given that *-te* is not part of the predicate stem and thus follows SH.

In MiK, however, we encounter a complication. As previously mentioned, MiK permits SH not only to precede *-te* but also to follow it. This variation, as observed in example (6), presents a challenge: the application of rule (4a) to MiK does not naturally produce this MiK pattern, potentially conflicting with the Mirror Principle (Baker 1985). In MiK, since SH is adjoined to v^0 , it consistently precedes *-te*, regardless of the tense-aspect-mood (TAM) meaning conveyed by *-te*.

(6)

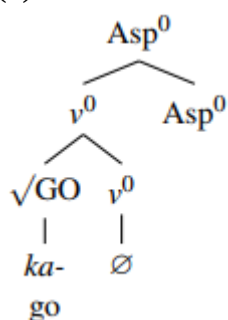


To address this issue, I propose the introduction of a new morphosyntactic rule. Rather than positioning SH at the locus of v^0 , I suggest situating it at Asp^0 within the syntactic structure.

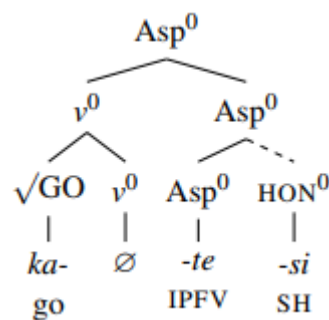
(7) $Asp^0 \rightarrow [Asp^0 HON^0] / [NP_{[+hon]} \dots [\dots __ \dots]]$

Rule (7) effectively accounts for the observed patterns in MiK. This rule positions HON^0 as a sister to Asp^0 . Adhering to the standard assumption that linear order in syntax is determined post-syntactically, SH is not confined to a specific position relative to *-te*. Consequently, rule (7) aptly generates both the MoK and MiK patterns

(8) a.



b.



The proposed rule (7) leads to two specific predictions that distinguish MiK from MoK. Firstly, it predicts the absence of multiple exponence in Long Form Negation (LFN) in MiK. Secondly, it predicts a distinct suppletion pattern for the tri-suppletive verb $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$ in MiK.

3 Prediction 1: No Multiple Exponence for Long Form Negation

Long-form negation (LFN) represents one of the two primary sentential negation constructions in Korean, the other being short-form negation (SFN). In LFN, the root verb remains in its non-finite form. Instead, the negation is followed by the verb *ha-*, which succeeds the non-finite main predicate and undergoes conjugation.

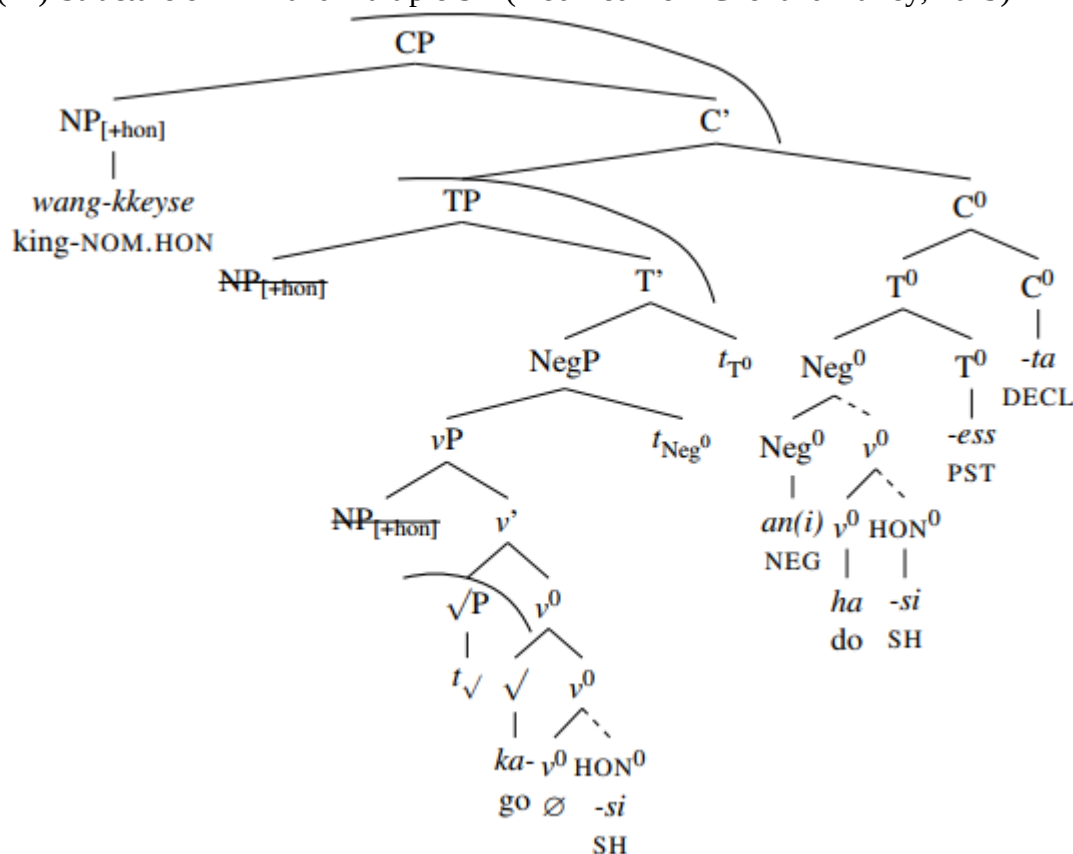
In the context of subject honorification, MoK LFN displays an optional feature known as multiple exponence of SH (Yi, 1994). In cases where subject honorification is applied within an LFN sentence, SH may be present on the main predicate, the negation, or both, as indicated in (9). It's important to note that subject honorification is required on at least one of these elements — either the main predicate or the negation. The absence of subject honorification in both elements leads to ungrammaticality.

- (9) *wang-kkeyse ka-(si)-ci ani-ha-(si)-ess-ta.*
 king-NOM.HON go-SH-CI not-do-SH-PST-DECL
 'The king did not go.'

According to Choi and Harley (2019), the process unfolds as follows: when Neg^0 is projected between the VP domain and higher syntactic projections, v^0 ceases further head-movement and remains in situ. Neg^0 , in contrast, undergoes head-movement to T^0 and C^0 , resulting in the formation of a complex- C^0 . To compensate for the morphological gap in complex- C^0 due to the absence of v^0 , a light verb *ha-* is post-syntactically adjoined to Neg^0 as per rule (10). This insertion of v^0 fulfills the conditions for the HON^0 -sprouting rule (4a). Choi and Harley (2019) incorporate the concept of cyclicity in morphosyntactic rules, allowing for the application of this rule once per phase. This mechanism triggers the insertion of HON^0 for each v^0 within the syntactic structure, as illustrated in (11).

- (10) v^0 -sprouting (do-insertion) rule (Choi and Harley, 2019:1339)
 $\text{Neg}^0 \rightarrow [\text{Neg}^0 v^0] / [\text{ } T^0]_{T^0}$

(11) Structure of LFN and multiple SH (modified from Choi and Harley, 2019)



Based on Choi and Harley's (2019) analysis of LFN, it is predicted that the phenomenon of multiple exponence, as observed in MoK, would not occur in MiK. This is because, in MiK, SH is adjoined to Asp^0 rather than v^0 . Consequently, the post-syntactic insertion of the light verb *ha-* no longer satisfies the conditions for SH-insertion in MiK.

This prediction is corroborated by the data from *Wŏrin Sŏkpo* (1459), which contains 1599 instances of the LFN construction. Within these examples, 152 instances exhibit subject honorification. Notably, only one instance appears to demonstrate multiple exponence. Furthermore, SH consistently occurs in finite negation where subject honorification is applied. This finding is particularly significant, considering that Asp^0 should only appear on the finite negation in both MoK and MiK.

4 Prediction 2: Different Suppletion Pattern for $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$

Another implication of rule (7) is the prediction of a unique suppletion pattern for the trisuppletive verb $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$ in Korean. This verb possesses two additional suppletive stems: the subject honorific stem *kyeysi-* and the negative stem *eps-*, besides the standard form *iss-*. When $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$ is used in contexts requiring subject honorification, the honorific *kyeysi-* is employed, and negative *eps-* is used in short-form negation. In both scenarios, the specific morphemes indicative of each condition are not pronounced. Consequently, SH is omitted in the case of honorific suppletion, and the negation marker *ani-* is not pronounced in negative suppletion.

(12) a. *kyeysi-ess-ta*.
exist.HON-PST-DECL
'existed (honorific)'

b. **iss-usi-ess-ta*.
exist-SH-PST-DECL

c. **kyeysi-si-ess-ta*.
exist.HON-SH-PST-DECL

(13) a. *eps-ess-ta*.
not.exist-PST-DECL
'did not exist.'

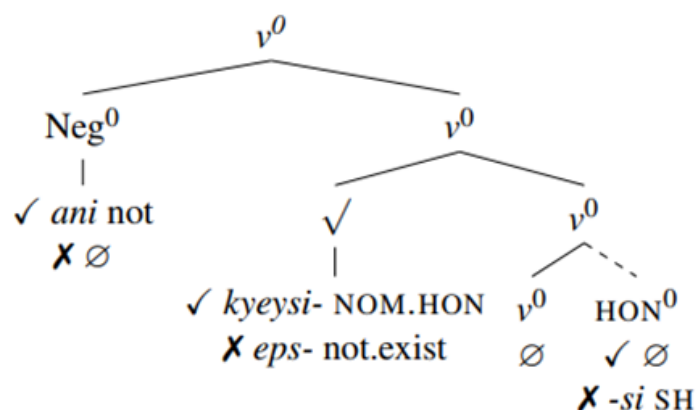
b. **ani-iss-ess-ta*.
not-exist-PST-DECL

c. *ani-eps-ess-ta*.
not-not.exist-PST-DECL
'was not absent.'

When both subject honorific suppletion and negative suppletion conditions are present, the verb $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$ adopts the suppletive subject honorific stem *kyeysi-* and the negation *ani-* is pronounced. Choi and Harley (2019) propose, under the assumption that Vocabulary Insertion operates root-outward, that the root $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$ first encounters HON^0 as its conditioning feature, as depicted in the syntactic structure (15). They also suggest that the insertion of suppletive stems influences their respective conditioning heads, leading them to remain unpronounced. Therefore, when the conditions for the negative suppletion of $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$ are not met, Neg^0 is pronounced as *ani-*, given that the phonological representation *eps-* for negative suppletion is required for the zero-pronunciation of Neg^0 .²

- (14) a. $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}} \leftrightarrow \text{kyeysi-} / [[_] [v^0 \text{HON}^0]_v^0]$
b. $\text{HON}^0 \leftrightarrow \emptyset / [\{ \text{kyeysi-}, \text{cwumwusi-}, \text{tusi-}, \dots \} [_]]$
c. $\text{HON}^0 \leftrightarrow \text{-si}$
d. $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}} \leftrightarrow \text{eps-} / \text{Neg}^0 = [_ v^0]_v^0$
e. $\text{Neg}^0 \leftrightarrow \emptyset / _ = [\{ \text{eps-}, \text{molu-} \}]_v^0$
f. $\text{Neg}^0 \leftrightarrow \text{ani-}$
g. $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}} \leftrightarrow \text{iss-}$

(15)

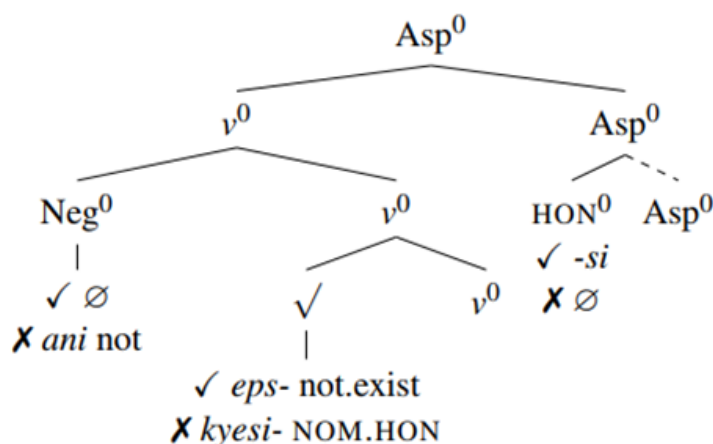


² (14e) and (14f) are implied in Choi and Harley's analysis, though not explicitly stated.

When considering MiK, a distinct suppletion pattern for $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$ is predicted, as rule (7) alters the locality condition for suppletion compared to the MoK structure (15). Specifically, in MiK, HON^0 is adjoined to Asp^0 , which is outside of v^0 (17). Consequently, the vocabulary entries (14a) and (14b) undergo corresponding modifications (16). Under these conditions, $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$ first interacts with Neg^0 in its search for a conditioning feature, leading to the realization of negative suppletion. As a result, Neg^0 remains unpronounced, and the subject honorification is expressed through the default form -si.

- (16) a. $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}} \leftrightarrow \text{kyesi-} / [\text{ } v^0]_{v^0} [\text{HON}^0 \text{ Asp}^0]_{\text{Asp}^0}$
 b. $\text{HON}^0 \leftrightarrow \emptyset / [\{ \text{kyeysi-}, \text{cwasi-} \} v^0]_{v^0} [\text{ } \text{Asp}^0]_{\text{Asp}^0}$

(17)



This prediction is borne out in the data from *Wŏrin Sŏkpo* (1459). Among 133 instances featuring both honorific and negative suppletion conditions for $\sqrt{\text{EXIST}}$, only three tokens display the subject honorific suppletion *ani-kyesi* (not-exist.HON). In contrast, the majority exhibit the negative suppletion *eps-usi* (not.exist-SH). This prevalence of *eps-usi* in MiK, as opposed to its marginal occurrence in MoK, validates the accuracy of the proposed prediction.

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