

cokka-sey-yo: “respectfully go fuck yourself”

1. Introduction

In languages such as Korean and Japanese, some aspect of ‘politeness’ is grammatically encoded, which is referred to as ‘honorifics’. Honorifics are argued to be built on a number of axes based on who the speaker is targeting to be polite with (Brown & Levinson 1987). Honorific systems in Korean are built on two axes, referent and addressee honorifics (Brown 2015); two systems are grammatically distinguishable so that it is clear to whom that the speaker is intending to be polite. The canonical use of honorifics is shown in (1).

- (1) a. Hearer (elders), referent (intimates) [Hearer honorifics expected]
swuci wa-ss-eyo.
Suji come-PST-DECL.POL
‘Suji came.’
- b. Hearer (intimates), referent (elders) [Referent honorifics expected]
halmeni o-si-ess-e.
grandmother come-HON-PST-DECL.INT
‘Grandmother came.’

These different axes of honorifics have been extensively discussed in the literature (Brown & Levinson 1987; Brown 2015); however, it has not gotten much attention when the hearer and the referent point to the same person as in (2).

- (2) Hearer = referent (elders) [Hearer/referent honorifics expected]
cemsim tu-si-ess-eyo?
lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.POL
‘Did you eat lunch?’

In (2), the referent and addressee honorifics have been assumed to both equally mark politeness toward the second person ‘you’. The assumption appears to be borne out when the honorifics are used canonically. Nonetheless, when the honorifics are used non-canonically, the context reveals that the functions of the two honorific systems are not entirely identical.

Thus, this paper mainly concerns the non-canonical use of honorifics, the context where they give rise to impolite implications; as in (3), honorifics are intentionally used not to honor but to degrade the hearer or the referent.

- (3) Context: The speaker finds out that the addressee has already eaten lunch when they were supposed to have it together.
Hearer = referent (intimates) [Honorifics not expected]

cemsim tu-si-ess-eyo?
 lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.POL

‘Did you eat lunch?’
 ⇒ Sarcastic implication arises.

This contrasts with the canonical use of honorifics. The same utterance in (3) under the right context (i.e. context where honorifics are expected) do not give rise to a sarcastic implication, even when the speaker may have intended to do so.

I propose that the honorific systems serve split functions when both systems target the same person (i.e., second person); specifically, the hearer honorifics mark a relative social distance between the interlocutors whereas the referent honorifics carry a possible FTA toward a hearer/referent, which will be discussed in detail below. Prior to my proposal, I review previous approach to impoliteness (Culpeper 1996), based on the politeness theory (Brown & Levinson 1987). Later in the paper, I show how the proposal cannot be explained within the impoliteness framework.

2. Preliminaries: brief overview of honorific markers in Korean

There are three ways to convey deference or respect in Korean: two morphological suffix markers (i.e., hearer and referent honorifics) and lexical honorifics (i.e., terms of address) as vocative *sir* in English. Lexical honorifics in Korean include the following in (4).

- (4) Lexical honorifics
- A rank or kinship based title with the honorific suffix *-nim* – e.g., *sensayng-nim* ‘teacher (HON)’
 - Reserved term for adult strangers of superior age – e.g., *elusin*
 - Kinship terms reserved for those of superior age – e.g., *oppa* ‘older brother (of a woman)’
 - Deferential term: *olapeni* ‘older brother (of a woman)’

Following subsections summarize the two types of honorifics markers in Korean mainly based on Brown (2015): hearer and referent honorifics. They also show how the markers are distributed in different contexts.

2.1. Hearer honorifics (speech styles)

Hearer honorifics are marked in six speech styles as in (5). It marks the relation of speaker to hearer which can be categorized as the speaker-addressee axis (Comrie 1976 ‘Linguistic politeness axis’).

- (5) Korean speech styles (modified from p.305, Brown 2015)
- | English name | Korean name | Decl. ending (inter.) | (In)formal | Category |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------|
| deferential style | <i>hapsyo-chey</i> | -supnita (-supnikka) | Formal | Honorific |
| polite style | <i>hayyo-chey</i> | -eyo (-eyo) | Informal | |
| semiformal style | <i>hao-chey</i> | -(s)o | Formal | Authoritative |
| familiar style | <i>hakey-chey</i> | -ney | Formal | |
| intimate style | <i>hay-chey</i> | -e (-e) | Informal | Non-honorific |
| plain style | <i>hayla-chey</i> | -ta | Formal | |

Regarding six speech styles above, I note that semiformal style *-(s)o* and familiar style *-ney* are archaic which are no longer used. Moreover, plain style *-ta* is argued to be “plain” style, but seems to be tied to some pragmatic function (Brown 2015); this will not be discussed in this paper. Thus, this paper will focus on the three speech styles: deferential, polite, and intimate style, which are shown in (6).

- (6) A: Did Suji have lunch?
 a. Hearer (intimates) [No hearer honorifics expected]
 B: *ung kyay cemsim mek-ess-e*.
 yes that.person lunch eat-PST-DECL.INT
 b. Hearer (stangers/peers) [Hearer honorifics (polite) expected]
 B: *ney kyay cemsim mek-ess-eyo*.
 yes.HON that.person lunch eat-PST-DECL.POL
 c. Hearer (elders) [Hearer honorifics (deferential) expected]
 B: *ney kyay cemsim mek-ess-supnita*.
 yes.HON that.person lunch eat-PST-DECL.DEF
 ‘Yes, she ate lunch.’

All three examples in (6) shows different speech styles. (6a) shows the intimate style which is generally used when the hearer honorifics are not expected. (6b) and (6c) show the polite and deferential style, respectively; they differ in that (6c) is more formal and deferential than (6b).

2.2. Referent honorifics

Referent honorifics are marked with *-(u)si*. It marks the relation of speaker to referent which can be categorized as the speaker-referent axis (Comrie 1976). Referent honorifics also show optional subject agreement as in (7): *-kkeyse* is an honorific form of nominative *-ka*.

- (7) Referent (elders) [Referent honorifics expected]
 A: Do you know who is at the door?
 B: *halmeni(-kkeyse) o-si-ess-e*.
 grandmother-HON come-HON-PST-DECL.INT
 ‘Grandmother came.’

They are often accompanied by lexical suppletions as in (8): *cinci* is an honorific form of *umsik* ‘food’, and *capswu-* is an honorific form of *mek-* ‘eat’.

- (8) Referent (elders) [Referent honorifics expected]
 A: Do you (intimate hearer) know if grandmother had lunch?
 B: *halmeni cinci capswu-si-ess-e*
 grandmother food.HON eat.HON-HON-PST-DECL.INT
 ‘Grandmother ate (food).’

2.3. Distribution of the two markers

Brown (2013) briefly discusses that the marking of honorifics depends on whether the hearers or referents are status superiors, intimates, equals or subordinates. Nonetheless, the distribution of the markers depending on different contexts has not been sufficiently discussed. This subsection shows how the different combination of the two honorific markers are used to reflect the different relation of the interlocuters.

So far, the context has been simplified to when the referent and the hearer do not correspond (i.e., third person referent); the speaker's intention to be polite or not is expressed with or without the marking of the honorifics. Since the referent and addressee honorifics are grammatically encoded in different ways, example such as (9) can express honorifics to both the referent and the addressee individually.

- (9) Hearer (elders), referent (elders) [Hearer/referent honorifics expected]

emeni, halmeni o-si-ess-eyo?
mother grandmother come-HON-PST-INTR.POL

'Mother, did grandmother come?'

Nonetheless, intuitively, the use of both markers in the context when the referent and the hearer correpond (i.e., second person referent) seems to be redundant since they target the same person. As far as the canonical use is concerned, the function of the markers appears to be undistinguishable; yet, the combination of the markers seems to suggest that the markers imply different degree of politeness. Three possible combinations of the hearer and the referent honorifics are described in (10).

(10)	Intimates	Strangers	Elders
	<i>-e</i>	<i>(si) + -eyo (-supnita)</i>	<i>si + -supnita (-eyo)</i>

Each terminology refers to the possible relations of the hearer/referent to the speaker listed below in (11). Generally, the 'elders' would be expected to receive stronger degree of politeness comparing to 'strangers'; 'intimates' would not be expected to receive any kind of honorifics; the parentheses represent the optionality of the markers.

- (11) a. Intimates: e.g., children, friends, intimates (including elders)
b. Strangers: e.g., strangers (younger, peers)
c. Elders: e..g, elders, people with higher social status

One observation is that not all group of people who gets the hearer honorifics, specifically the polite style, gets the referent honorifics, as in (12a). It is even acceptable to refer to the referent without the referent honorifics without being impolite, as in (12b).

- (12) Referent: Suji, a peer who you're not familiar with.
a. *swuci-ssi cemsim mek-ess-eyo?*
Suji-Ms. lunch eat-PST-INTR.POL
'Ms. Suji, did you eat lunch?'

- b. *swuci-ssi cemsim mek-ess-ta-y.*
 Suji-Ms. lunch eat-PST-EVID-DECL.INT
 ‘Ms. Suji said she had lunch.’

One possible explanation is that the referent honorifics *-si* shares the same degree of politeness with the deferential style but not with the polite style. But this assumption can be easily canceled by an example in (13).

- (13) *sensayng-nim cemsim tu-sy-ess-eyo?*
 teacher-HON lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.POL
 ‘Teacher, did you eat lunch?’

Two hypotheses can be raised here. First, the hearer and referent honorifics have different standards regarding the degree of politeness that they imply, as in Figure 1.

	Degree of politeness		
Referent	(none)	<i>-si</i>	
Hearer	Intimate	Polite	Deferential

Figure 1: The first hypothesis on the different degree of politeness between the referent and hearer honorifics. This will be later argued against.

Second, the referent and hearer honorifics serve different functions, at least when they collide. In §5, I will argue for the second hypothesis based on the pattern observed in the non-canonical use of honorifics.

3. Literature review: impoliteness

This section reviews different strategies of ‘impoliteness’ proposed by Culpeper (1996); the theory was extended from the politeness theory proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987). Thus, prior to the impoliteness theory, the politeness theory will be briefly summarized.

3.1. Politeness strategies

Brown & Levinson (1987), in their seminal work, have proposed different strategies to be polite. Their proposal assumes interlocutors to have ‘face’ which is defined as “the public self-image” specifically in two aspects, negative and positive face; and they assume that certain acts threaten face, referred to as ‘face-threatening acts’ (FTA). Negative face refers to the interlocuter’s desire to be unimpeded whereas positive face refers to their desire to be appreciated and approved of. Given that the speaker is willing to preserve the hearer’s face, the speaker is assumed to follow the strategies that minimize the face threat of the FTA, specified in (14).

- (14) On the scale: Lesser to greater risk of face loss (p. 69-70, Brown & Levinson 1987)
- Bald on Record: the FTA is done “in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible”

- b. Positive politeness: “oriented toward the positive face of [the hearer], the positive self-image that he claims for himself”
- c. Negative politeness: “oriented mainly toward partially satisfying (redressing) [the hearer]’s negative face, his basic want to maintain claims of territory and self-determination”
- d. Off-record: the FTA is done so that “there is more than one unambiguously attributable intention so that the actor cannot be held to have committed himself to one particular intent”
- e. Withhold the FTA

Honorifics are argued to be one of the negative politeness strategies where the speaker gives deference to the hearer. They are further argued not to be “in origin arbitrary markers of social status, but rather are frozen outputs of face-oriented strategies”, specifically by redressing FTA by minimizing treat.

3.2. Impoliteness strategies

Culpeper (1996) has proposed different strategies to be impolite based on Brown & Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory. Each politeness strategy is argued to have its opposite impoliteness strategy as in (15); impoliteness strategies are used to attack face whereas politeness strategies are used to preserve face.

- (15) On the scale: lesser to greater attack on face (Culpeper 1996)
 - a. Bald on record impoliteness: “the FTA is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimised.”
 - b. Positive impoliteness: “the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee’s positive face wants.”
 - c. Negative impoliteness: “the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee’s negative face wants.”
 - d. Sarcasm (or mock politeness): polite strategy but actually attacks face: “the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realisations.”
 - e. Withhold politeness: “the absence of politeness work where it would be expected.”

Given the impoliteness strategies above, two strategies are related the non-canonical use of honorifics: mock politeness¹ and withhold politeness. These two impoliteness strategies will be discussed in the following section.

¹Sarcasm (or irony) which is the “mock politeness for social disharmony” is noted to be the opposite of banter, “mock impoliteness for social harmony” (Culpeper 1996). Brown & Levinson (1987) argue for ‘irony’ to be an act of performing FTA by avoiding responsibility, thus an off-record politeness. Nonetheless, Culpeper (1996) rather argues that ‘sarcasm’ is an act of performing FTA to be actively impolite. I follow Culpeper’s view on sarcasm (or irony) that it is not just an act of performing FTA but also an active act of being impolite making the act clearly visible in the discourse rather than concealing it to avoid responsibility.

4. Impoliteness strategies of honorifics in Korean

This section shows different impoliteness strategies that occur regarding the two honorific systems in Korean. It first focuses on the impoliteness strategies regarding third person referents where referent and hearer honorific markers are marked separately. Each system (i.e., referent and hearer) is considered based on the two-way distinction, whether it is marked or not, regarding the relative status of the interlocutors.

(16)	a.	Intimates —	Strangers /Elders (-si)	[Referent honorifics]
	b.	Intimates -e	Strangers /Elders -eyo/-supnita	

I first briefly discuss Brown (2013) where honorifics are observed to imply sarcasm or mock politeness. Then, I show the non-canonical use of honorifics in the context of third person referent can be explained within the impoliteness framework. In the following section, I will argue that the impoliteness framework cannot fully explain the non-canonical use of honorifics, specifically in the context of second person referent (i.e., when the referent and the hearer correspond).

4.1. Brown (2013) & limitations

The non-canonical use of honorifics has been first observed by Brown (2013) as one of the impoliteness strategies, specifically sarcasm (or mock politeness).² The main contribution of Brown is to observe various data where honorifics seem to give rise to sarcastic implication. It is argued that the impoliteness use of honorifics appears both with intimates and adult strangers.

- (17) Brown (2013, p.173-174)
- a. Hearer = referent (intimates)
*yay-ka mwe-l cal mos **capswusi**-ess-nya?*
 ‘Have you eaten (**HON**) something badly?-(PLAIN)’
 - b. Hearer/referent: adult strangers
*hemha-key sa-nun key mwe-nteyyo **i-sen-yeng yesanim***
 ‘and just what is ‘living crudely’, **your ladyship** Lee Sun Young-(POLITE)’

²Brown argues that given their sarcastic use, honorific markers are not deferential in an absolute sense but contextually give rise to either politeness or impoliteness. However, (1) shows that honorifics clearly carry the ‘honorific’ function; when honorifics are absent in the context where they are expected, the utterance is considered rude and offensive (i.e., not being respectful enough to the addressee). This might result in not respecting, thus attacking, the addressee’s negative face.

- (1) Hearer = referent (elders) [Honorifics expected]
- # *cemsim mek-ess-e?*
 lunch eat-PST-INTR.PLN
- ‘Did you eat lunch?’
 ⇒ Rude/offensive

Thus, in this paper, I follow the approach that analyzes the honorific systems in Korean as canonically ‘honorific’.

Also, it is argued that both the referent honorifics and the hearer honorifics give rise to impoliteness.

- (18) a. *yosay yay-ka acwu isangha-yyo*
 ‘you’re really weird these days-(POLITE).’
 b. *tayk-uy il-ina sinkyeng ssu-si-e*
 ‘mind(HON) your(HON) own business’

Nonetheless, Brown does not distinguish how two honorific markers (i.e., hearer honorifics, referent honorifics) gives rise to different type of impoliteness and how they interact in different contexts. First, the types of honorifics that gives rise to impoliteness implications seem to depend on the relative (social) status of the hearer/referent. As in (19), it is not the case the the same utterance with honorifics gives rise to sarcasm regardless of the relative status of the interlocuters. The different relative status described in (19a) and (19b) shows that the sarcasm only arise when honorifics are used toward the intimates and not elders.

- (19) *onul mwe capswu-sy-ess-e?*
 today what eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.INT
 ‘What did you eat today?’
 a. Hearer = referent (intimates)
 ⇒ Sarcasm arises.
 b. Hearer = referent (elders)
 ⇒ Sarcasm does not arise. [modified from p.173, Brown (2013)]

Second, it seems that the referent honorifics and the hearer honorifics give rise to different type of impoliteness implication (e.g., *yay* ‘this kid’).

- (20) a. *yay-ka yocum isanghay-yo.*
 this.kid-NOM these.days be.weird-DECL.POL
 ‘You (this kid) are weird these days.’
 ⇒ Implication: treating the addressee as a kid.
 b. *i yangpan-i yocum isangha-sy-e.*
 this man.HON-NOM these.days be.weird-HON-DECL.INT
 ‘You (this man.HON) are weird these days.’
 ⇒ Implication: sarcasm [modified from p.174, Brown (2013)]

This assumption is supported by (21) where the impoliteness which arise from the hearer honorifics, giving rise to implication where the speaker is treating the hearer as a child, is only compatible with a referential term *yay* ‘this kid’; in contrast, the impoliteness which arise from the referent honorifics, giving rise to sarcastic implication, is only compatible with a referential term *i yangpan* ‘this man’.

- (21) a. ?? *i yangpan-i yocum isanghay-yo.*
 this man.HON-NOM these.days be.weird-DECL.POL
 ‘You are weird these days.’
 ⇒ Intended implication: treading the addressee as a kid.

- b. ?? *yay-ka yocum isangha-sy-e.*
 this.kid-NOM these.days be.weird-HON-DECL.INT
 ‘You are weird these days.’
 ⇒ Intended implication: sarcasm

Finally, the cases need to be separated where impoliteness arises due to the overt use of vulgar terms. As in (20), the utterance ‘just mind your own business’ already implies the speaker’s intention to be impolite regardless of the honorifics; (22b) is a canonical counterpart of (22a) where the honorifics are absent as expected.

- (22) a. *tayk il-ina sinkyengssu-si-e.*
 you.HON business-just(?) mind-HON-DECL.INT
 ‘Just mind your (HON) own business.’
 ⇒ Sarcasm
- b. *ne il-ina sinkyengss-e.*
 you business-just(?) mind-DECL.INT
 ‘Just mind your own business.’
 ⇒ Impolite [modified from p. 174, Brown (2013)]

Therefore, the non-canonical use of honorifics seems to require further research on how different types of honorifics are used differently based on the relative social status of the interlocuters.

4.2. Impoliteness: two ways to be off expected

This subsection analyzes the non-canonical use of honorifics within the impoliteness framework, specifically as two ways of being off expected. I argue that, when the referent and hearer do not correspond, they function as a mean of redressing FTA, respecting FTA; the referent honorifics are used only to target the referent, and the hearer honorifics are used only to target the hearer. Specifically, the impoliteness strategy is done in two ways, as in (23): (i) the absence of honorifics when expected (i.e., to be not polite); (ii) the presence of honorifics when not expected (i.e., to be overly polite).

- (23) a. To be not polite: impoliteness implication arises from withholding politeness, damaging the negative face.
 b. To be overly polite: impoliteness, specifically sarcasm, implication arises from being polite in an obviously insincere way.

No impoliteness arises when honorifics are used in expected contexts, as in (24) and (24b), even when the speaker intends to be impolite including being sarcastic.

- (24) a. Context: The speaker had plans to go home with their grandmother. After learning that she had already gone home, the speaker intends to make a sarcastic comment about the referent.
 Hearer (intimates), referent (elders) [Referent honorifics expected]
halmeni cip-ey ka-sy-ess-e?
 grandmother house-LOC go-HON-PST-INTR.INT

‘Did grandmother go home?’

⇒ No impoliteness arises.

- b. Context: The speaker told the hearer to tell Suji to come home early. After learning that she hasn’t come home yet, the speaker intends to make a sarcastic comment to the hearer.

Hearer (elders), referent (intimates)

[Hearer honorifics expected]

swuci cip-ey acik an wa-ss-eyo?

Suji house-LOC yet NEG come-PST-INTR.POL

‘Did Suji not come home yet?’

⇒ No impoliteness arises.

The contexts in this subsection will be underspecified.

4.2.1 To be not polite (withhold politeness)

(25) shows that the absence of the hearer honorifics, when expected, gives rise to impoliteness implication toward the hearer regardless of the referent honorifics.

- (25) a. Hearer (elders), referent (intimates)

[Hearer honorifics expected]

swuci cip-ey wa-ss-e?

Suji house-LOC come-PST-INTR.INT

‘Did Suji come home?’

⇒ Impoliteness arises.

- b. Hearer (elders), referent (elders)

[Hearer/referent honorifics expected]

halmeni cip-ey o-sy-ess-e?

grandmother house-LOC come-HON-PST-INTR.INT

‘Did grandmother come home?’

⇒ Impoliteness arises.

Similarly, (26) shows that the absence of the referent honorifics, when expected, gives rise to impoliteness implication toward the referent regardless of the hearer honorifics.

- (26) a. Hearer (intimates), referent (elders)

[Referent honorifics expected]

halmeni cemsim mek-ess-e?

grandmother lunch eat-PST-INTR.INT

‘Did grandmother have lunch?’

⇒ Impoliteness arises.

- b. Hearer (elders), referent (elders)

[Hearer/referent honorifics expected]

halmeni cemsim mek-ess-eyo?

grandmother lunch eat-PST-INTR.POL

‘Did grandmother have lunch?’

⇒ Impoliteness arises.

4.2.2 To be overly polite (sarcasm or mock politeness)

(27) shows that the presence of the hearer honorifics, when not expected, gives rise to sarcasm toward the hearer regardless of the referent honorifics.

- (27) a. Hearer (intimates), referent (intimates) [No honorifics expected]
swuci-ka cip-ey wa-ss{-eyo/-supnikka}?
Suji-KA house-LOC come-PST-INTR.POL/-INTR.DEF
'Did Suji come home?'
⇒ Sarcasm arises.
- b. Hearer (intimates), referent (elders) [Referent honorifics expected]
halmeni-kkeyse cip-ey o-sy-ess{-eyo/-supnikka}?
grandmother-NOM.HON house-LOC come-HON-PST-INTR.POL/-INTR.DEF
'Did grandmother come home?'
⇒ Sarcasm arises.

Similarly, (28) shows that the presence of the referent honorifics, when not expected, gives rise to sarcasm toward the referent regardless of the hearer honorifics.

- (28) a. Hearer (intimates), referent (intimates) [No honorifics expected]
swuci imi cemsim tu-sy-ess-ta-y.
Suji already lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-EVID-DECL.INT
'I heard that Suji have already had lunch.'
⇒ Sarcasm arises.
- b. Hearer (elders), referent (intimates) [Hearer honorifics expected]
swuci imi cemsim tu-sy-ess-ta(y){-yo/-pnita}.
Suji already lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-EVID-DECL.POL/-DECL.DEF
'I heard that Suji have already had lunch.'
⇒ Sarcasm arises.

5. When the two markers collide

This section concerns the non-canonical use of honorifics when the referent and hearer honorifics point to the same person (i.e., second person referent); (29) shows the canonical use of honorifics when the referent and the hearer correspond.

- (29) Hearer = referent (elders) [Hearer/referent honorifics expected]
halmeni, cemsim tu-sy-ess{-eyo/-supnikka}?
grandmother lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.POL/-INTR.DEF
'Grandmother, did you have lunch?'

I argue that the two honorific systems serve split functions, given that different implications arise regarding which type of honorifics is absent. The combination of the two honorific systems is considered based on the two-way distinction regarding the relative status of the interlocutors.

(30)	Intimates	Strangers/Elders
	<i>-e</i>	<i>(-si)+ -eyo/-supnita</i>

In this section, I propose the split function of the two honorific systems and argue that it cannot be fully accounted for within the impoliteness framework.

5.1. Hypothesis & predictions

I hypothesize that the functions of the referent and hearer honorifics are split as below in (31).

- (31)
- a. Referent *-si*: It functions as redressing a negative face.
 - b. Hearer *-eyo/-supnita*: It functions as marking a relative social distance between the interlocutors; it also reflects the speaker's intentions as to how they are willing to treat their hearer.

Given these hypotheses, I predict the following, as in (32) and (33).

- (32) Referent *-si*
- a. Absent when expected: impoliteness implication arises from withholding politeness, damaging the negative face.
 - b. Present when not expected: impoliteness, specifically sarcasm, implication arises from being polite in an obviously insincere way.
- (33) Hearer *-eyo/-supnita*
- a. Absent (i.e., intimate *-e* is used) when expected: it implies the relative status of the interlocutors to be more intimate.
 - b. Present when expected: it implies the speaker's intention to treat the hearer as a child, by using the honorifics in an obviously insincere way.

5.2. Analysis: the interaction of the two markers

In this section, I show that the hypotheses and predictions proposed above are borne out.³

5.2.1 The function of referent honorifics *-si*

(34) shows that, even when the level of the hearer honorifics are expressed as deferential, the absence of the referent honorifics, when expected, gives rise to impoliteness implication toward the hearer/referent.

- (34) Hearer = referent (elders)
- cemsim mek-ess{-eyo/-supnikka}?*
 lunch eat-PST-INTR.POL/-INTR.DEF
- 'Did you have lunch?'
- ⇒ Impoliteness

³There are no distinction in the observation between the declaratives and the interrogatives; they pattern in the same way.

(35) shows that, regardless of the change in the hearer honorifics, the presence of the referent honorifics itself, when not expected, gives rise to sarcastic implication toward the hearer/referent.

(35) Hearer = referent (intimates)

cemsim tu-sy-ess-e?

lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.INT

‘Did you have lunch?’

⇒ Sarcasm

5.2.2 The function of hearer honorifics *-eyo/-supnita*

(36) shows that the absence of hearer honorifics, expressed with the intimate speech style, does not give rise to any impoliteness implications including sarcasm. Rather, it shows the speaker’s intention to be intimate, yet still be polite, thus closer to the hearer.

(36) Hearer = referent (elders)

cemsim tu-sy-ess-e?

lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.INT

‘Did you have lunch?’

⇒ Arise intimacy, but not face-threatening

(37) contrasts with (36) in that both honorific systems are absent. Given that (37) gives rise to impoliteness implication, it further supports that the referent honorifics are the one that relates to interlocuter’s face and gives rise to impoliteness.

(37) Hearer = referent (elders)

cemsim mek-ess-e?

lunch eat-PST-INTR.INT

‘Did you have lunch?’

⇒ Impoliteness

(38) shows that the presence of hearer honorifics does not give rise to any impoliteness implications either. It rather shows the speaker’s intention to treat the hearer as a child.

(38) Hearer = referent (intimates)

cemsim mek-ess-eyo?

lunch eat-PST-INTR.POL

‘Did you have lunch?’

⇒ Implication: the speaker intends to treat the hearer as a child

(39) contrasts with (38) in that both honorific systems are present. Given that (39) gives rise to sarcastic implication, it also supports that the impoliteness arise from the use of the referent honorifics and not from the hearer honorifics.

(39) Hearer = referent (intimates)

cemsim tu-sy-ess-eyo?

lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.POL

‘Did you have lunch?’

⇒ Sarcasm

Given (37) and (39), I argue that, when the face is already under threat due to the absence or presence of the referent honorifics, the hearer honorifics no longer play a role in contributing to implications; the effect of the referent honorifics is stronger than that of the hearer honorifics.

5.3. Back to politeness

In §2, as for the canonical use of honorifics, I tentatively claimed that the functions of the two honorific systems appears to be undistinguishable even when they point to the same person. Given their split functions discussed above, I revisit the tentative claim made in §2 and argue that the two honorific systems show split functions even when they are canonically used. Example (12a) is repeated below in (40a). Above, I have shown that the explanation that the hearer and referent honorifics imply different degree of politeness cannot fully explain the example such as (40b).

(40) Hearer = referent (Ms. Suji, Teacher Kim)

a. *swuci-ssi cemsim mek-ess-eyo?*

Suji-Ms. lunch eat-PST-INTR.POL

‘Ms. Suji, did you eat lunch?’

b. *kim sensayng-nim cemsim tu-sy-ess-eyo?*

Kim teacher-HON lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-INTR.POL

‘Teacher Kim, did you eat lunch?’

I argue that the basic function of the referent honorifics is to preserve face and the basic function of the hearer honorifics is to mark relative distance; furthermore, in each context, one type of systems must function to preserve face. This is illustrated in Figure 2.

	Referent ≠ hearer		Referent = hearer
	Referent	Hearer	Referent/hearer
Referent honorifics	-si (face)	-	-si (face)
Hearer honorifics	-	-eyo/-supnita (face, distance)	-eyo/-supnita (distance)

Figure 2: A unified function (i.e., referent and hearer do not correspond) and a split function (i.e., referent and hearer correspond)

When the referent and hearer collide, the two markers remain to show split function. In contrast, when the referent and hearer does not correspond, the referent honorifics remain to functions as preserving face whereas the hearer honorifics are used both as preserving face and marking relative

distance. Thus, in the latter case, the hearer honorifics may be ambiguous between (i) marking of distance and (ii) both preserving face and marking of distance. This explains the examples in (41) and (42).

(41) Referent (Ms. Suji, Teacher Kim)

a. *swuci-ssi cemsim mek-ess-ta-y.*

Suji-Ms. lunch eat-PST-EVID-DECL.INT

‘Ms. Suji said she had lunch.’

b. *kim sensayng-nim cemsim tu-sy-ess-ta-y.*

Kim teacher-HON lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-EVID-DECL.INT

‘Teacher Kim said she had lunch.’

(42) Hearer (Ms. Suji, Teacher Kim)

pak sensayng-nim cemsim tu-sy-ess-tay-yo.

Park teacher-HON lunch eat.HON-HON-PST-EVID-DECL.POL

‘Teacher Park said she had lunch.’

a. *swuci-ssi, ...* (To Ms. Suji)

b. *kim sensayng-nim, ...* (To teacher Kim)

In (40), for both Ms. Suji and Teacher Kim, the hearer honorifics *-eyo* is used. Nonetheless, the referent honorifics *-si* is used only when referring to Teacher Kim; this shows that in the examples, the speaker intends to show deference only to Teacher Kim and not to Ms. Suji. I argue that, contrast to previous analysis where hearer honorifics mark deference in any context, the hearer honorifics in (42) are ambiguous depending on the hearer (e.g., Ms. Suji, Teacher Kim); they mark distance when spoken to Ms. Suji (e.g., (42a)) whereas they both function as preserving face and mark distance when spoken to Teacher Kim (e.g., (42b)).

Therefore, given my final proposal on the function of Korean honorific systems (e.g., Figure 2), I argue that the impoliteness framework along with the politeness framework cannot fully explain the split functions of the markers and the ambiguous function of the hearer honorifics. The actual analysis is beyond the scope of this paper.

6. Further predictions: already vulgar

The proposal in §5 further accounts for the interaction between the two honorific markers and slurs. I argue that vulgar expression, as in (43), sets up the context where the honorifics are not expected regardless of the relative status of the interlocutors.

(43) *cokka.*

fuck.off

‘Go fuck yourself.’

The predicted pattern of the use of markers with slurs are illustrated below in (44).

(44) With slurs (regardless of relative status of the interlocutors)

- a. Referent *-si*: It gives rise to sarcasm.
- b. Hearer *-eyo/-supnita*: It gives rise to an implication where the speaker intends to treat the hearer as a child.

These patterns are shown in (45).

- (45) a. # *cokka-yo*.
 fuck.off-DECL.POL
- b. *cokka-sey(-yo)*
 fuck.off-HON-DECL.POL
 ‘Go fuck yourself.’
 ⇒ sarcasm

7. Conclusion

In this paper, I have explored the different functions of the two honorific systems in Korean, the referent and hearer honorifics. Specifically, I propose that when both honorific systems target the same person (i.e., second person referent), they serve split functions; the referent honorifics function as preserving the interlocuter’s negative face whereas the hearer honorifics mark a relative social distance of the interlocuters. Furthermore, given that honorifics have been analyzed as politeness strategy, I have shown that the both canonical and non-canonical use of honorifics cannot be fully explained with in the (im)politeness strategies.

Abbreviations

DECL = declarative, DEF = deferential, EVID = evidential, HON = honorifics, INT = intimate, INTR = interrogative, KA = -i/ka, LOC = locative, NEG = negative, NOM = nominative, PLN = plain, POL = polite, PST = past.

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