

## Noun classes and subject honorification in Korean\*

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**Kim, Yong-Ha. 2012. Noun classes and subject honorification in Korean.** *Linguistic Research* 29(3), 563-578. This paper deals with the problem of noun classification and subject honorification in Korean. In particular, it tries to provide a support for the syntactic approaches to subject honorification based on Park's (1975) seminal work on the nature of honorific nominals. By giving some convincing evidence that shows  $\phi$ -features, especially gender features, are crucial factors determining the class of a given noun, this paper opens a way to accommodate subject honorification in the framework of generative grammar. (Andong National University)

**Keywords** dative alternation, noun classes, subject honorification, gender, animacy, humanness, honorificity, agreement

### 1. Introduction

Subject honorification in Korean is a very intricate issue in the sense that it is difficult to address within the realm of syntax because it seems to require some non-syntactic factors including social relations, situations of utterance, the speaker's intention to honorify someone etc. as its name subject honorification suggests. Thus, it is natural for some researchers to have pursued approaches that obviously call for non-syntactic, semantic and pragmatic analyses in accounting for the nature of subject honorification in Korean (cf. Lim 2000, Kim and Sells 2007).

On the other hand, there have been efforts made to account for the phenomenon following the guidelines offered by generative syntax. For example, Choi (2009, 2010), among others, tries to explain subject honorification by positing that the honorific marker *-si-* is an Agr head and that the phenomenon is a kind of agreement between the subject and Agr in a sentence. Let's collectively call this

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group of researchers the syntactic camp, while the former group the pragmatic camp.

These two camps in accounting for the phenomenon of subject honorification have merits and weaknesses on their own, which are too many to say here, but we can say that it seems desirable for the syntactic camp to seek a way to explain subject honorification in terms of agreement, a notion extensively used in syntax. However, what kind of agreement is subject honorification? The first thing that comes to mind in this regard is the agreement of the “honorific” feature, a notion that is difficult to accept as syntactic or formal feature. In order to accommodate things like honorific agreement, the syntactic camp should accept non-syntactic notions like “subject’s intention to honorify someone” as formal features for agreement.

Contrastively the semantic/pragmatic camp does not have to undergo this kind of predicament as it is comfortable with notions like intention, social relation etc. However, the semantic/pragmatic camp should suffer criticism in that it should admit that there are non-linguistic elements like *si* that don’t have any purely linguistic features relevant to syntax/grammar.

Given this situation, this paper tries to provide a support for the syntactic camp regarding the analysis of subject honorification in Korean. It argues based on Park (1975) that subject honorification involves a syntactic operation of  $\phi$ -feature agreement in the sense of Chomsky 1995, 2000. However, different from other works in the syntactic camp, this paper argues that the  $\phi$ -features that are clearly involved in subject honorification are gender features like [ $\pm$  animate] and [ $\pm$  human]. The line of analysis this paper pursues will also shed light on the nature of the so called honorific nominative case particle *kkeyse* as it is involved in the system of gender agreement (or concord) between some particles corresponding to Indo-European prepositions and certain noun classes in Korean.

## 2. Noun classes and genders in Korean

### 2.1 Dative alternation and noun classes

It is well known that Korean has an alternation among dative particles *ey*, *eykey*, and *kkey* according to the classes of nominals they are attached to. It is generally

admitted in traditional Korean grammar that the alternation between *ey* and *eykey* is more basic.

- (1) a. Chelswu-ka kkoch-ey mwul-ul cwu-ess-ta.  
 -Nom flower-Dat water-Acc give-Past-Dec  
 “Cheolsu watered flowers.”  
 b. Chelswu-ka Swunhi-eykey mwul-ul cwu-ess-ta  
 -Nom -Dat water-Acc give-Past-Dec  
 “Cheolsu gave water to Sunhi.”

Notice that the indirect object of sentence (1a), *kkoch* ‘flower’ has life but is not an animate entity, while the indirect object of sentence (1b), *Swunhi* ‘Sunhi’ not only has life but also is an animate entity. We can therefore safely say that the feature that determines the alternation between *ey* and *eykey* is [ $\pm$ animate] in their combined NP’s.<sup>1</sup> However, things are complicated when *kkey* comes in because it is also attached to animate nominals but clearly contrasts with *eykey*.

- (2) a. Chelswu-ka Swunhi-eykey mwul-ul cwu-ess-ta  
 -Nom -Dat water-Acc give-Past-Dec  
 “Cheolsu gave water to Sunhi.”  
 b. Chelswu-ka emeni-kkey mwul-ul tuli-ess-ta  
 -Nom mother-Dat water-Acc give(Hon)-Past-Dec  
 “Cheolsu gave water to his mother.”

An immediate question that arises with respect to the contrast between (2a) and (2b) is “what is the feature that determines this alternation between *eykey* and *kkey*?” It could not be [ $\pm$ animate] because *emeni* ‘mother’ as well as *Swunhi* clearly is an animate entity. Given that *emeni* is in a sense treated as an honored being, and that *tuli*, a suppletive form of *cwu* ‘give,’<sup>2</sup> is used to honorify *emeni*, one can be

<sup>1</sup> We do not give other examples showing the animate vs. inanimate contrast with respect to the particles at stake because their alternation is well-established in Korean grammar. However, a point that should be made in this regard is that there are cases where the alternation between the two particles does not occur. We will not deal with such cases, but the reader is referred to Yu 2003, and to Kim 2007 for some discussion.

<sup>2</sup> Ko (1987) argues against *tuli* as a suppletive form for *cwu* because it can occur with or without

tempted to take the feature [ $\pm$  honorific] as one crucially involved in this alternation. Using this feature, we can come up with tentative feature specifications for NP's that are combined with the particles.

- (3) a. *ey*-NP's: [-animate, -honorific]  
 b. *eykey*-NP's: [+animate, -honorific]  
 c. *kkey*-NP's: [+animate, +honorific]

However, the feature specifications in (3) are problematic in two respects. First, the feature specifications in (3) have a gap as the feature combination [-animate, +honorific] doesn't have its place in (3). Second, given the fact that honorification is a semantic/pragmatic notion, the feature specifications in (3) are half-semantic and half-grammatical as animacy falls within the  $\phi$ -feature system. Thus, (3) fails to capture the deep nature of the alternation among the dative particles though it seems observationally and descriptively plausible.<sup>3</sup>

To account for the alternation among the dative particles, we'd rather approach this issue via some other route. First of all, one can take a close look at the forms of the particles in question as they have similar phonetic forms, which suggest their morphological kinship. A first haste analysis of their forms would treat *ey* in (3a) as the most basic form, then *eykey* as a derived form by attaching *key* to *ey*, and finally *kkey* as an element formed by the deletion of *ey* from *eykey* plus tensification of the first consonant. Of course, this imaginary analysis is far from correct but it contains a truth: all the particles contain *ey* as a common part.

Then, what is the correct analysis of the forms of the dative particles? Park (1975) argues convincingly that the first syllable *ey* [e] in *eykey* is not the dative particle *ey* but is the monophthongized form of the genitive particle *uy*. His argument is supported by the fact that this *ey* is pronounced as *u*, [i] in the south-west dialect of Korean, and hence the dative particle for *eykey* is *ukey* in this dialect. Park's (1975) argument receives further support when it comes to the morphological

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*sap*, a prefinal ending used for object honorification. As Ko's argument is mainly based on data from middle Korean and the inflectional mechanism of object honorification is no longer productive in modern Korean, we do not accept his argument. See Chung 2007 and 2009 for the treatment of this form in the framework of Distributed Morphology.

<sup>3</sup> Eytan Zweig pointed out at a UOY syntax & semantic research group meeting that he saw no reason to reject [ $\pm$  honorific] as a  $\phi$ -feature. We will discuss this problem in section 2.2.

decomposition of *eykey* and *kkey*. His analysis of *eykey* and *kkey* is shown in (4)

- (4) a. *eykey*: ey (< uy) + ku + ey  
 b. *kkey*: s + ku + ey (Historically *skuey* was changed into *kkey*)

What is the morpheme *s* in the decomposition of *kkey* in (4b)? It is a well known fact in the realm of diachronic Korean linguistics that Middle Korean has two forms of genitive case particle, i.e., *uy* and *s*. The former was used to mark genitive case on animate NP's and the latter on inanimate NP's. The following examples from Middle Korean shows the alternation of genitive case particles.

- (5) a. 사르 · 모 · 몸  
 Salam-uy mom  
 human-Gen body  
 "human body"
- b. 사스 · 모 · 등  
 Sasum-uy tung  
 deer-Gen back  
 "a deer's back"
- c. 도스 · 귀 입과 눈  
 Tocek-uy ip-kwa nwun  
 thief-Gen mouth-Conj eye  
 "A thief's mouth and eyes"
- (6) a. 큰 일 인연  
 Khun Il(s) Inyen  
 Big event(Gen) nidana  
 "Nidana by a big event"
- b. 拘尺城人 사르 · 모  
 Gwuchekseng(s) salam  
 Guceok Castle man  
 "A man from Gucheok Castle"
- c. 하늘 · 개 눈  
 Hanul(s) nwun  
 heaven(Gen) eye

- “Heaven’s eye”
- (7) a. 아바님ㅅ 뒤  
 Apenim(s) twui  
 father(Gen) back  
 “Father’s back”
- b. 부텃 몸  
 Pwuche(s) mom  
 Buddha(Gen) body  
 “Buddha’s body”
- c. 如來ㅅ 몸  
 Yelay(s) mom  
 Tathagata(Gen) body  
 “Tathagata’s body”

What is interesting from the data in (5)-(7) is the fact that honorific NP’s in (7) are genitive-marked with the same particle as is attached to inanimate NP’s in (6): that is, *s*. This fact tells us two crucial truths concerning the two dative particles *eykey* and *kkey*: (i) these particles have a genitive particle in them (according to the diachronic analysis), and (ii) honorific NP’s are treated as inanimate NP’s with respect to genitive-case marking.

Now, let’s turn to another mysterious element *ku* in the decomposition in (4), repeated here as (8)

- (8) a. *eykey*: uy + ku + ey  
 b. *kkey*: s + ku + ey (historically *skuey* was changed into *kkey*)

Park (1975), who has presented the morphological decomposition of the particles as in (8), admits that it is difficult to clearly determine the identity of *ku*. However, he observes an interesting usage of *kkey* as a ‘noun + locative’ expression in examples like (9).

- (9) Ku hakkyo-ka Yongsan eti-**kkey** iss-ta-nun iyaki-nun  
 that school-Nom somewhere-near be-Dec-Comp story-Foc  
 tul-ess-ta.

hear-Past-De

“I just heard that the school was somewhere in Yongsan.”

As the gloss clearly shows, *kkey* means ‘near’ or ‘around’ in this sentence. Another interesting fact reported by Freeze (1992), which is crucially related with this, is that Hindi also employs a similar element to *ku* when constructing a sentence with a predicate of possession.

- (10) Larkee-kee **paas** kuttaa hai.  
 boy(Obl)-Gen proximity dog be(3.Sg.Pres)  
 “The boy has a dog.” (lit. “By the boy is a dog.)

The particles we are considering have another usage that should be noted in this context. They are used to mark the possessor in Korean sentences of possession. See the following sentences.

- (11) a. Ku ai-ey**key** kay-ka iss-ta.  
 that child-Dat dog-Nom exist-Dec  
 “The child has a dog.”  
 b. Ku sensayngnim-**kkey** kay-ka iss-usi-ta  
 that teacher-Dat dog-Nom exist-Hon-Dec  
 “The teacher has a dog.”

Having followed the exhibition of examples in this section, one can notice that the *key* part of the particles in question corresponds to *paas* in the Hindi example (10), and then that the locative usage of *kkey* is not an accident in examples like (9). We will not further pursue the nature of *ku* here, but let’s assume that it represents a possessor’s/experiencer’s certain (mental/physical) domain.

At any rate, what is obvious from the discussion so far is the fact that the particles *eykey* and *kkey* (diachronically) have genitive markers in them, and the latter (also diachronically) contains the inanimate genitive marker *s*. This means that honorific NP’s are regarded as inanimate NP’s in Korean, and hence gives us the following feature specifications instead of (3).

- (3') a. *ey*-NP: [-animate, -honorific]  
 b. *eykey*-NP: [+animate, -honorific]  
 c. *kkey*-NP: [-animate, +honorific]

However, (3') still does not remedy the problems with (3) in the sense that it does not fill in the gap of full feature specifications, and just fixes one of the feature values of *kkey*-NP's. As we already suggested when we discussed the feature specifications in (3) above, we would not be happy with the blatant feature specification [ $\pm$ honorific] when addressing NP classes. Then, what feature(s) can most convincingly separate honorific NP's from inanimate NP's, which also have the [-animate] feature?

We can get a clue from a special kind of particle (*i*)*se*. As is well known, Korean has a lot of classifiers that are combined with numeral expressions (henceforth numeral classifiers NC). When classifiers mark the classes of NP's they are associated with, the basic distinction among NP's in Korean is based on animacy and humanness (cf. Wu 2001). The particle in question, (*i*)*se*, is attached to NC's that represent the number of human beings while it cannot be used for non-human animate NC's (Note also that (*i*)*se* is attached to only those NC's that are associated with subject NP's).

- (12) a. Haksayng-i    twu myeng-**ise**    maykcwu-lul    masi-n-ta.  
 student-Nom    two Cl-ISE    beer-Acc    drink-Pres-Dec  
 "Two students are drinking beer."  
 b. Kyoswunim-i    twu pwun-**ise**    maykcwu-lul    tul-si-n-ta  
 professor-Nom    two Cl-ISE    beer-Acc    eat-Hon-Pres-Dec  
 "Two professors are drinking beer."  
 c. \*Kay-ka    twu mali-**se**    mwul-ul    masi-n-ta.  
 dog-Nom    two Cl-SE    water-Acc    drink-Pres-Dec  
 "Two dogs are drinking water."

What the grammaticality contrast between (12a,b) and (12c) tells us is that plain human NP's and honorific human NP's have a common feature, i.e., [+human] while non-human animate NP's have the [-human] feature in its grammatical feature specification. We, therefore, have the following feature specifications for Korean

NP's.

- (13) a. *ey*-NP's: [-animate, -human]  
 b. *eykey*-NP: [+animate, -human], [+animate, +human]  
 c. *kkey*-NP: [-animate, +human]

As can be obviously observed, the feature specifications in (13) are more plausible and more systematic than those in (3') repeated here as (14).

- (14) a. *ey*: [-animate, -honorific]  
 b. *eykey*: [+animate, -honorific]  
 c. *kkey*: [-animate, +honorific]

First of all, (13) does not employ semantic/pragmatic features like [ $\pm$  honorific]. Secondly, there are no gaps in (13) in that all the four possible combinations of the [ $\pm$  animate] and [ $\pm$  human] features find their places in this system though *eykey* covers two of them. Thirdly, and most importantly, these feature specifications open a chance to treat subject honorification in Korean as a kind of agreement involving  $\phi$ -feature checking.

## 2.2 On genders

Now that we have observed that animacy and humanness of NP's are involved in the alternation among the dative particles, it's time to identify what kinds of features they are. I argue that they are gender features. As is well-known in the discipline, the involvement of animacy and humanness in gender systems is not a novel idea. See the following gender systems cited from Corbett 1991.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Zande is a member of the Zande subgroup of the Uangian branch of Adamawa-Ubangian, which in turn is a branch of Niger-Congo. Dyirbal is an Australian language spoken in north-east Queensland. Lak belongs to the Northe-East Caucasian family, sometimes called Dagestanian.

## (15) Zande gender system

Criterion	Gedner	Example	Gloss
male human	masculine	kumba	man
female human	feminine	dia	wife
other animate	animal	nya	beast
residue	neuter	bambu	house

## (16) Dyirbal gender system

gender I (bayi)	male humans, non-human animates		
gender II (balan)	female humans, water, fire, fighting		
gender III (balam)	non-flesh food		
gender IV (bala)	residue		

## (17) Lak gender system

Criterion	Gender	Example	Gloss
male rational	I	las	husband
female rational	II	ninu	mother
other animate	III	nic	bull
residue	IV	nex	river

As one can easily find out, the basic criteria involved in these gender systems, rather obviously, are animacy and humanness. This fact also supports the gender system proposed for Korean in this paper on the basis of animacy and humanness. Indo-European languages including English also have certain kinds of gender systems, the majority of which is the tripartite gender system including masculine, feminine, and neuter. However, Corbett (1991) presents an interesting claim about the origin of this gender system. According to him, a new perspective on Indo-European gender has been provided by the discovery and decipherment of Hittite texts (of the second millennium BC). Nouns assigned to the neuter gender were almost exclusively semantically inanimate. As a result of the Hittite evidence, many now accept Meillet's view (1931) that Indo-European once had two genders, common and neuter, and that the former later split into masculine and feminine (Corbett 1991:309).

That said, it is not implausible to argue, on the basis of our observation about the aspects of the dative alternation in the previous subsection, that Korean has a

gender system (though it is not rich) that governs the agreement/concord between NP's and certain particles.

Before concluding this section, two remarks on our NP classification are in order. Eytan Zweig (p.c.) has raised the question why honorificity cannot be a criterion for noun classification. Some languages have rather complex systems of gender than those illustrated in (15)~(17). In particular, the Bantu languages including Swahili (cf. Lyons 1968) show seemingly arbitrary arrays of genders, which are difficult to account for based on familiar animacy and humanness systems. Furthermore, other languages have gender systems that are not semantically built but are formally constructed based on morphological or phonological shapes of nouns. Therefore, there is no logical basis in claiming that honorificity should not be directly involved in a gender system. Though we cannot examine the whole gender systems of languages here, the discussion in this subsection is enough to show that animacy and humanness is the most fundamental criteria for gender distinctions, and hence it seems desirable to appeal to them in the classification of nouns unless there is some clear reason to directly use the blatant feature [ $\pm$ honorific]. On the other hand, we take the full feature combinations without a gap to be a merit of our noun classification in (13). With respect to this, Peter Sells (p.c.) has pointed out to me that the gap shown in (3) or (3') may not be a flaw since we have many such gaps in various linguistic systems involving feature combinations. I agree with him that the completeness of a system with feature combinations should be proved on empirical grounds. The crucial evidence in this respect is the existence of the particle *(i)se*, which clearly shows the independent necessity of the human-nonhuman distinction. Given this, it is also desirable to use the independently necessary human-nonhuman distinction without further introduction of other criteria like honorificity.

### 3. Subject honorification as gender feature agreement

Another important point of this paper is that the subject honorification in Korean involves  $\phi$ -feature agreement, especially gender-feature agreement. One can wonder whether there is any relationship between this point and the discussion above. Note that there is a particle in the Korean subject honorification that is morphologically

closely related with the dative particle *kkey* though the main concern in this area is the morpheme *si* marked on verbs. When honorific NP's occur in a sentence in Korean, they can be marked with the particle *kkeyse*. Similarly to the dative particles, *kkeyse* also is engaged in alternation with other particles. Let's take a look at the following examples.

- (18) a. Kim kyoswunim-kkeyse cokyo-lul chayyongha-si-ess-ta.  
 professor-Hon assistant-Acc employ-Hon-Past-Dec  
 "Professor Kim employed an assistant."  
 b. Wuli kwa-eyse cokyo-lul chayyongha-ess-ta.  
 we department-from assistant-Acc employ-Past-Dec  
 "Our department employed an assistant."

Note that *eyse* also contains *se* as its part, and hence we can see another case of alternation between dative particles with *se* put aside. Traditional Korean grammarians have suggested that *eyse* is a special kind of particle that marks nominative case on NP's with group referents, and hence they call this element group nominative particle while they refer to *kkeyse* as honorific nominative particle.<sup>5</sup>

As the term *dative* suggests, the alternation among the dative particles is closely related with the theta role/inherent case assigned to the relevant NP's by predicates like *cwu* 'give.' On the other hand, as we can see from the fact that *eyse* and *kkeyse* are frequently referred to as special kind of "nominative" particle (cf. Sells 1995), the alternation between *eyse* and *kkeyse* is not relevant to theta role/inherence case. However, it is also undesirable to give *kkeyse* the status of nominative particle since they are different from the typical nominative particle *i/ka*.

- (19) a. Chelswu-ka ttal-i yeypu-ta.

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<sup>5</sup> An immediate question here would be whether *eykeyse* can be used with animate NP's to complete the familiar pattern of alternation. Unfortunately, *eykeyse* is not used to mark animate subjects though it is used as an elative particle with similar meaning to English *from*. However, if certain bound nominals replace *ku* in the decomposition in (8), the pattern of alternation reappears with the addition of data like the following.

- (18) c. Chelswu chuk-eyse iuy-lul ceykiha-ess-ta.  
 side-from issue-Acc raise-Past-Dec  
 "Chelsu's party raised an issue."

- Nom daughter-Nom pretty-Dec  
 “Cheolsu’s daughter is pretty.”
- b. Kim sensayngnim-kkeyse ttnim-\*kkeyse/i yeypu-si-ta.  
 teacher-Hon daguth-Hon/Nom pretty-Dec  
 “Mr. Kim’s daughter is pretty.”
- (20) a. Chelswu-nun say cengpwu-ka silh-ess-ta.  
 -Top new government-Nom dislike-Past-Dec  
 “Cheolsu disliked the new government.”
- b. Kim kyoswunim-kkeyse-nun say chongcangnim-\*kkeyse/i  
 professor-Hon-Top new president-Hon/Nom  
 silh-ess-ta.  
 dislike-Past-Dec  
 “Professor Kim disliked new president.”

Given that multiple Case checking is allowed while multiple  $\phi$ -feature agreement is not (cf. Miyagawa 2005, 2010), and that the alternation between *eyse* and *kkeyse* shown in (18) is determined by gender-features, it may be safe to say based on (19) and (20) that *kkeyse* is not a nominative marker but an agreement marker that indicates the animacy and humanness of subject NP’s.

Furthermore, treating *key* as an agreement marker provides support for the syntactic analysis of subject honorification against the lexicalist criticism such as Sells 1995. What Sells (1995) is concerned with in this respect is the honorific subject marker *-kkeyse* in sentences like (21) (cf. Kim 2011: 675).

- (21) Sensayngnim-tul-kkeyse-man-i kulen il-ul ha-si-pnita.  
 teacherPl-Hon-only-Nom such work-Acc do-Hon-Dec  
 ‘Only teachers do such work.’

According to Sells (1995), though *kkeyse* falls in the same morphological slot as postpositions, one of its roles is marking the nominative Case of the subject. He further points out that this element seems to be even more of a “grammatical” marker than is of a regular nominative marker. Thus, it can’t mark syntactic subjects, nominative objects, or non-thematic adjuncts as a regular nominative marker does. Sells (1995) therefore argues that *kkeyse* marks only nominative subjects. According

to him, the syntactic approach to noun-particle combinations cannot account for why the two subject markers, *kkeyse* and *i* can simultaneously occur in different slots respectively in (20). On the other hand, he makes the point that the lexicalist approach proposed by him can explain the cooccurrence of the two markers since it is not uncommon that the same information can be multiply marked in morphology.

However, if we take the approach presented in this paper, we should treat *kkeyse* not as a nominative subject marker but as a subject agreement marker. This effectively refutes Sells' (1995) lexicalist criticism that *kkeyse*, in a sense redundantly, marks the same information as the nominative marker *i/ka* does.

Other interesting support for the honorification as gender-feature agreement comes from the behavior of *si* in the verbal inflection in Middle Korean. Different from Modern Korean, Middle Korean employs an element *o*, which indicates that the subject of a sentence is a 1<sup>st</sup> person addressor.

- (22) 내    흥 · 마    命終호라  
 Nay hama    myengjongha-o-la  
 I    already die-1<sup>st</sup>-Dec  
 "I already died."

According to Sohn (1994), this inflectional element is not attached to adjectival stems while it is able to be freely combined with verbal stems. As is the case in Modern Korean, *si* does not distinguish between verbal and adjectival stems when it is used to mark honorification agreement. This is in conformity with Baker's (2003, 2008) observation that predicate adjectives in many languages can agree with the subject of predication in number and gender but not person, even though verbal predicates in the same language might well show agreement in person as well as number (cf. Baker 2011).

#### 4. Conclusions

In this paper we have seen that noun classes in Korean are based on the gender features [ $\pm$ animate] and [ $\pm$ human]. The feature specifications and classifications of Korean NP's (ultimately nouns) presented in this paper come from the observation of

the alternation among the dative particles *ey*, *eykey*, and *kkey*. Given that the alternation between *ey* and *eykey* is due to the animacy of NP's they are combined with, and that *kkey* alternates with *eykey* on the basis of honorificity of NP's they are attached to, we can be tempted to use animacy and honorificity to account for the alternation among these particles. However, adapting Park's (1975) analysis of the dative particles with reference to Middle Korean facts, and more carefully considering the aspects of particle usages in Korean, we can create a more desirable system of noun classes using animacy and humanness as the criteria for gender classification. We have also learned that the animacy/humanness-based gender system opens the way to analyze the subject honorification as a case of  $\phi$ -feature agreement.

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