

The Morpho-Syntax of Expressive Derivations in Japanese: Subject Honorification and Object Honorification in Distributed Morphology

Abstract.

Japanese SUBJECT and OBJECT HONORIFICATION fall under the morphological domain of EXPRESSIVE DERIVATIONS (EDs) (Beard, 1995). EDs are morpho-syntactic operations which cross-linguistically are limited to Augmentatives, Diminutives, Pejoratives, Affectionates, and Honorifics. Salient features of EDs are that they are optional and may apply recursively. In conformity with DISTRIBUTED MORPHOLOGY (DM) (Halle and Marantz 1993), I propose abstract features, [Honor] and [Humble], which are introduced into syntax by an optional EXPRESSIVE PHRASE (ExpP), a complement of Aspect Phrase (AspP), spelled-out post-syntactically at the morphology-phonology interface. These features provide an account for the morpho-syntax of SUBJECT HONORIFICATION (*sonkei-go*) and OBJECT HONORIFICATION (*kenjō-go*). The choice of STYLE, polite or plain, for finite matrix verbs in Japanese is introduced into syntax by the feature [Polite] in an optional STYLE PHRASE (StylP), a complement of Tense Phrase (TP).

Key Words: Japanese Subject and Object Honorification, Distributed Morphology, Expressive Derivations.

1. Derivational or Inflectional Morphology?

EXPRESSIVE DERIVATIONS (EDs) (Beard, 1995) are cross-linguistically limited to Augmentatives, Diminutives, Pejoratives, Affectionates, and Honorifics. Due to their optionality, chosen according to the subjective evaluation of a speaker, and their recursivity, allowing for multiple applications of a given morpho-syntactic operation, EDs have proven a challenge for contemporary syntactic frameworks. (See Sells, 1995 and Namai, 2000, for lexical approaches) While typically considered derivational

morphology, e.g., Beard, 1995, cross-linguistically lexical category change a hallmark of derivational morphology is never found for EDs, casting their derivational status in doubt.. Unlike inflectional morphology, EDs are always optional and may apply recursively. While taking no position on whether EDs are derivational or inflectional in this piece, I argue, contra Sells (1995) and Namai (2000) that there is a distinct syntactic dimension to Japanese SUBJECT HONORIFICATION (*sonkei-go*) and OBJECT HONORIFICATION (*kenjô-go*) (Harada, 1976).

Subject and Object Honorification in Japanese fall under the domain of EDs; that is, they are optional, chosen based on a speaker's subjective evaluations, and they may apply recursively. Within the framework of DISTRIBUTED MORPHOLOGY (DM) (Halle and Marantz, 1993), I propose an analysis of not only the optional morpho-syntax of Subject and Object Honorification, but also the choice of STYLE, an addressee-oriented politeness marker, made for finite verbs in Japanese. I accomplish this through the introduction of abstract features into optional functional heads of VP's extended projection (Grimshaw, 1997). Additionally, the distinction between style-marking on verbs and adjectives, as noted by Sells (1995), finds an explanation within this analysis.

2. Subject Honorification in Japanese

Both Subject and Object Honorification occur only with syntactic subjects that are human. Harada (1976: 501) proposes that “a predicate is put in the subject honorific form if its subject denotes a person SOCIALLY SUPERIOR TO THE SPEAKER (SSS)”. An important amendment to Harada's proposal is that a predicate with a subject SSS is **optionally** put in the subject honorific form. While the syntactic position of subject licenses the verbal

morphology of Subject Honorification, it is, by the above definition, incompatible with first-person subjects.

Subjects are honored by the process of de-agentivizing their actions. This is done by using the light-verb *naru* ‘become’. The productive paradigm is: *o*-V-stem-*ni naru*, where V-stem is the *renyôkei* ‘infinitive’, *-ni* is a enclitic, and the prefix *o*-¹ is a general sign of honorification in Japanese.

This productive paradigm is blocked by EUPHEMISMS (Martin 1975), suppletive verbs inherently honorific of the subject. The paradigm therefore serves as the default in the absence of an appropriate Euphemism². I represent this in the following general VOCABULARY INSERTION SCHEMA³:

Subject Honorification □ Euphemism / [Honor]

Elsewhere □ *o*-V-stem-*ni naru*

¹ Harada (1976: 504) writes: “the honorific prefix has two major variants, *o*- and *go*-... If the [*prefixed*] element is a Sino-Japanese morpheme, the prefix takes the form *go*-; otherwise it takes the form *o*-.” Some examples are *go-kekkon* ‘marriage’, *go-ryokô* ‘travel’, and *go-chûmon* ‘order, request’.

² There are several exceptions, apparent or otherwise, in which a paradigm is in free variation with a Euphemism. The paradigm *o-ide-ni naru*, is in free variation with the Euphemism *irassharu* ‘go, come, be’ HON. It is derived from applying the paradigm to “the obsolete literary verb” *ideru* ‘it leaves’ (Martin, 1975: 341). Another type of exception consists of variation in the usage of Subject Honorification and Humbling. NHK (*Nihon Hôso Kyôkai*), the Japanese equivalent of the BBC, issues an annual report on the state of the national language. Almost inevitably it cites the poor use of Honorification/Humbling by the populace. As early as 1975, Martin cites “*o-iki-ni naru* in substandard, rural or children’s speech.” (ibid: 341). One additional apparent exception is *o-ari-ni naru* from the paradigm applied to the verb *aru* ‘have, there is / are’. While the verb *gozaru* is polite, it is neither Honorific nor Humbling, but a Performative Honorific in Harada’s terminology (1976) and therefore not a genuine Euphemism.

³ VOCABULARY INSERTION shows the relation “between a phonological string or ‘piece’ and information about where the string can be inserted” (Harley and Noyer, 1999: 5). The Vocabulary Insertion schema above is to be understood as: Subject Honorification is realized as a Euphemism in the presence of the abstract feature [Honor]; the paradigm occurs “elsewhere”.

Table 1. Subject Honorification Euphemism/ Paradigm

Base Verb	Euphemism	Paradigm
<i>iru, iku, kuru</i> ‘be, come, go’	<i>irassharu</i>	* <i>o-i-ni naru</i> ,
<i>iu</i> ‘say’	<i>ossharu</i>	* <i>o-ii-ni naru</i>
<i>suru</i> ‘do’	<i>nasaru</i>	* <i>o-shi-ni naru</i>
<i>yomu</i> ‘read’	Ø	<i>o-yomi-ni naru</i>
<i>kaku</i> ‘write’	Ø	<i>o-kaki-ni naru</i>

3. Subject Humbling in Japanese.

The traditional terminology for SUBJECT HUMBLING (*kenjô-go*) tells us it is OBJECT HONORIFICATION (Harada, 1976). This analysis, however, is problematic on several grounds. First, Object Honorification obtains when no objects are syntactically present:

1. Mairi-mas-u.

Go-HUMBLE-POLITE-NON-PAST

‘(I’ll) humbly go.’

Additionally, there are cases where it is putatively licensed by an inanimate object:

2. O-nimotsu-o o-mochi shi-mas-u.

luggage-ACC carry-HUMBLE-POLITE-NON-PAST

‘(I’ll) humbly carry your luggage’.

An analysis that claims that this process is, in fact, Object Honorification, entails that the syntactic object, ‘luggage’, would be the object of honorification. Additionally, as noted by Harada (1977: 152), Object Honorification applies to *tokoro*-complements. One might

be tempted to appeal to an empty possessor in example 2 as the trigger for putative Object Honorification e.g., *sensei-no nimotsu* ‘the teacher’s luggage’. Example 3, however, shows *sensei* ‘teacher’ marked with nominative case:

3. Tarô-wa sensei-ga oboresô-ni natta tokoro-o o-tasuke shi-ta

Tarô -TOP teacher-NOM drown-seem-DAT place-ACC save-HUMBLE-PAST

‘Tarô humbly saved the teacher when he was about to drown’

For di-transitive verbs, it is the indirect object that is the apparent trigger for honorification. Indeed, for di-transitive verbs, direct objects can never serve as triggers:

4a. Sensei-ni aniki-o go-shôkai itashi-ta.

teacher-DAT older brother-ACC introduce-HUMBLE-PAST

‘(I) humbly introduced my older brother to the teacher.’

b. *Aniki-ni sensei-o go-shôkai itashi-ta.

older brother-DAT teacher-ACC introduce-HUMBLE-PAST

‘(I) humbly introduced the teacher to my older brother.’

What felicitous examples all have in common is that they express humility on the part of the subject, typically first person. An additional stipulation on Subject Humbling is that non-suppletive forms must have a benefactive interpretation (Harada, 1976: 527). This explains the unacceptability of example 4b, **aniki-ni sensei-o go-shôkai shita* ‘I humbly introduced the honorable teacher to my older brother’. In addition to having a humble subject, the action must be done for the benefit of a person “socially superior to the speaker” (SSS).

By reanalyzing Object Honorification as Subject Humbling, a significant generalization is captured in that the subject, as is the case for Honorification, is in a

morpho-syntactic relation with the verb⁴. In contrast with Honorification, Humbling is incompatible with second person subjects and almost inevitably occurs with first person subjects.

Like Subject Honorification, Subject Humbling uses Euphemisms in complimentary distribution with a productive paradigm, *o*-V-stem *suru*. Since de-emphasis of agentivity honors the subject, emphasizing agentivity humbles the subject. This is accomplished with the light-verb *suru* ‘do’:

Subject Humbling □ Euphemism / [Humble]

Elsewhere □ *o*-V-stem-*suru*

Table 2. Subject Humbling Euphemism/ Paradigm

Base Verb	Euphemism	Paradigm
<i>iru</i> ‘be’	<i>oru</i>	* <i>o-i suru</i>
<i>iu</i> ‘say’	<i>môsu</i>	* <i>o-ii suru</i>
<i>suru</i> ‘do’	<i>itasu</i>	* <i>o-shi suru</i>
<i>kaku</i> ‘write’	∅	<i>o-kaki suru</i>
<i>yomu</i> ‘read’	∅	<i>o-yomi suru</i>

4. The Morpho-Syntax of Style and Subject Honorification / Humbling in Japanese.

In line with DM, I argue that optional Subject Honorification and Humbling, as well as the verbal morphology of Style, can be accounted for by abstract features introduced into the heads of optional functional phrases. By allowing the features and their relevant functional phrases to be optional I avoid the need to postulate zero morphemes when the

⁴ Note that this reanalysis provides an explanation for the near one-to-one correspondance between Subject Honorification and Subject Humbling Euphemisms, i.e., *nasaru* / *itasu*

overt morphology is not present. To do this, I adopt THE VISIBILITY GUIDELINE FOR FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES (Fukui and Sakai, 2003) that requires “a functional category to be visible in the primary linguistic data” (ibid: 327).

Style is an addressee-oriented politeness marker, a PERFORMATIVE HONORIFIC (Harada, 1976: 502), which is a speaker-determined choice of polite or plain available for every finite matrix clause. Its morphology is introduced in an optional STYLE PHRASE, a complement of Tense Phrase (TP). This performative honorific contrasts with the PROPOSITIONAL HONORIFICS, Subject Honorification and Humbling, in that it makes no reference to syntax. As noted by Harada, Performative Honorifics are compatible with the lexical semantics of all verbs:

6. Ame-ga furi-mashi-ta.

rain-NOM fall-POLITE-PAST

‘It rained.’

Propositional Honorifics, however, only occur with human subjects:

7. *Ame-ga o-furi-ni nar-imashi-ta.

rain-NOM fall-HONOR-POLITE-PAST

‘It honorably rained’

8. *ame-ga o-furi shi-mashi-ta.

rain-NOM fall-HUMBLE-POLITE-PAST’.

‘It humbly rained.’

Empirical support for the postulation of a functional StylP derives partly from phonology. The presence of the style morpheme *–mas(i)–* alters the underlying accent of

‘do’, *irassharu / oru* ‘be’, *irassharu / mairu* ‘come, go’, *ossharu / môsu* ‘say’,

inherently accented verbs, e.g. *tabé-ru* ‘eat’, which becomes *tabe-más-u* (Martin, 1975). Crucially, it is only the presence of marked values in functional heads that affect the underlying accent of verbs, e.g., a [Past] feature or a [Causative] feature, which alters the inherent accent so that *tabé-ru* ‘eat’ becomes *tábe-ta-PAST* and *tabe-sáse-ru-CAUSATIVE*, respectively. (See Miyagawa (1989) for discussion)

According to DM, NARROW SYNTAX consists of:

Only hierarchical nesting of constituents, but no left to right order among the morphemes... Linear order [*is*] established by rules that relate Syntax to Morphology (Halle and Marantz, 1993: 115).

As an expository device, morphemes prior to Vocabulary Insertion are represented by strikethrough in the Narrow Syntax, while maintaining the DM hypothesis of LATE INSERTION (Halle and Marantz, 1993), the claim that:

The phonological expression of syntactic terminals is in all cases provided by the mapping to PHONOLOGICAL FORM (PF)...Only after syntax are vocabulary items inserted in a process called SPELL-OUT (Harley and Noyer, 1999: 3).

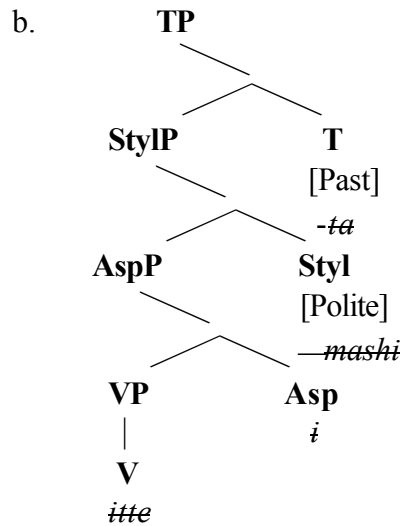
In this piece I adopt a modified BARE PHRASE STRUCTURE (Chomsky, 1995) with intermediary nodes left unlabeled.

The presence of the optional Style Phrase is determined by the abstract morpheme [Polite] realized as the polite style *–mas(i)*, as in example 9b; the absence of the feature in the NUMERATION (Chomsky, 1995) would result in the absence of the functional phrase (9d):

meshiagaru / *itadaku* ‘eat’, *go-zonji* / *zonjiru* ‘know’, etc.

9a. Itte i-mashi-ta.

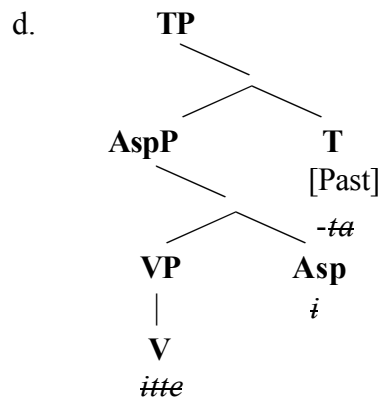
Go-NON-FINITE be-POLITE



c. Itte i-ta.

Go-NON-FINITE be-PAST

‘(He) has gone.’

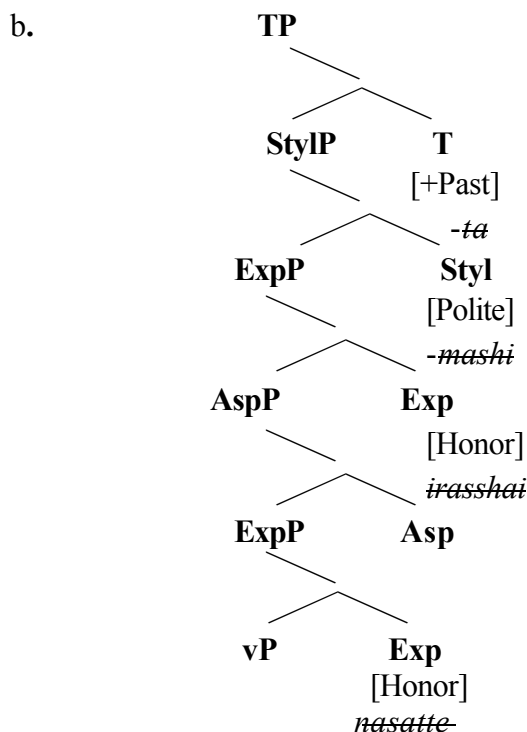


Subject Honorification and Subject Humbling, are the result an optional EXPRESSIVE PHRASE (ExpP). The abstract feature [Honor] results in Subject Honorification, [Humble] results in Subject Humbling:

10a. Nasatte irassha-imashi-ta.

do-HONOR-NON-FINITE be-HONOR-POLITE-PAST

‘(An esteemed person) deemed to be doing (something).’



Note the recursion of ExpP, one of several types of possible feature recursion, here optionally taking AspP as its complement. Contrast this with *nasatte i-mashi-ta*, i.e., honorific verb with non-honorific aspect. ExpP with AspP as complement can also occur in isolation yielding *shite irassai-mashi-ta* ‘was doing’, i.e., non-honorific verb and honorific aspect.

Since Honorification and Humbling are syntactic while Style is addressee-oriented, their presence has no implications for the choice of Style, polite or plain. Martin (1975) notes, however, that Subject Humbling tends to be addressee-oriented and therefore more frequently occurs in conjunction with Polite Style. Examples 10a and 11a show

respectively Honorification and Humbling with plain Style, while their b-examples show Honorification and Humbling with Polite Style:

10a. Sensei-wa go-kenkyû-o nasatte irassharu.

Teacher-TOP research-ACC do-HON-NON-FINITE is-HON-PLAIN

b. Sensei-wa go-kenkyû-o nasatte irasshaimasu.

teacher-TOP research-ACC do-HON-NON-FINITE be-HON-POLITE

‘The honorable teacher deems to be doing research.’

11a. Watashi-wa kenkyû-o itashite oru.

I-TOP research-ACC do-HUMBLE-NON-FINITE be-HUMBLE-PLAIN

b. Watashi-wa kenkyû-o itashite orimasu.

I-TOP research-ACC do-HUMBLE-NON-FINITE be-HUMBLE-POLITE

‘I’m (humbly) doing some research.’

As previously mentioned, EDs may apply recursively. This unique characteristic of EDs has been attributed to their non-binary gradient nature (Beard, 1995: 164). In the canonical case of recursion for Japanese Honorification and Humbling, the verb-stem of a Euphemism is submitted to the productive paradigm. Examples 12b and 13b show the Euphemisms for ‘do’, *nasaru* (Honor) and *itasu* (Humble), submitted to the productive paradigms as Verb-stems, i.e., *o-V-stem-ni naru* and *o-V-stem suru*, respectively⁵:

⁵ Within DM, the Euphemisms are suppletive allomorphs of the non-suppletive verbs. Realization of the features Honor and Humble is inherent; the morphology is a zero-morph, e.g. *nasari-Ø* ‘do-HONOR’. This is analogous to the suppletive allomorph of *bad*, i.e., *worse-Ø* ‘bad-COMPARATIVE’ or the allomorph of *mouse*, i.e., *mice-Ø* ‘mouse-PLURAL’. Note that unlike EDs, comparative and plural morphology is non-recursive, i.e., **worse-r* and **mice-s*. The unacceptability of recursive paradigms, e.g., **o-yasumi-ni o-nari-ni naru* ‘(one) deems to honorably rest-HONOR-HONOR’ is related to a more general restriction on overt productive morphology entering into further derivation, for example,

12a. Sensei-wa nasai-mas-u.

teacher-TOP do-HONOR-POLITE-NON-PAST

b. Sensei-wa o-nasari-ni nari-mas-u.

Teacher-TOP do-HONOR-HONOR-POLITE-NON-PAST

‘The esteemed teacher will deem to do (it).’

13a. Watashi-wa itashi-mas-u.

I-TOP do-HUMBLE-POLITE-NON-PAST

b. Watashi-wa o-itashi shi-mas-u.

I-TOP do-HUMBLE-HUMBLE-POLITE-NON-PAST

‘I’ll humbly do (it).’

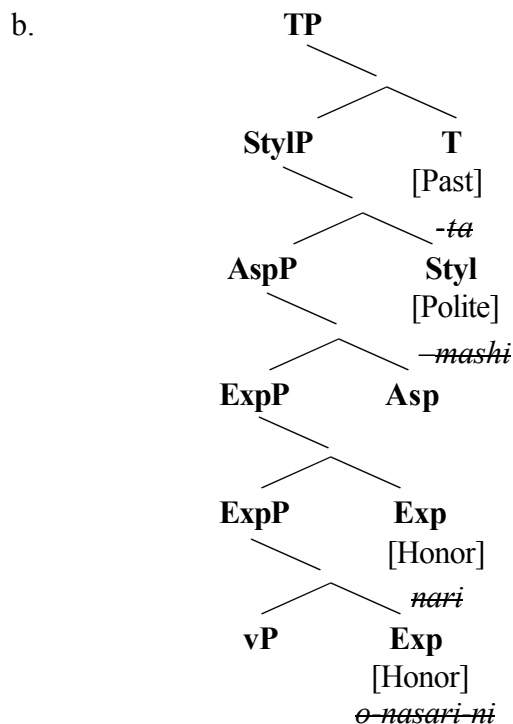
When recursion applies, the feature of the recursive ExpP, [Honor] or [Humble], remains identical to that of its antecedent ExpP. As a first approximation consider example 13, which shows the Euphemism *nasaru* ‘do’ recursively submitted to the paradigm:

14a. O-nasari-ni nar-imashi-ta

do-HONOR-HONOR-POLITE-PAST

‘(An esteemed person) deemed to do (something).’

productive plurals are restricted from compounds, e.g., **rat-s eat-er*, but inherent plurals



5. The Morpho-Syntax of the Paradigms

Extant analyses of the paradigm, *o*-V-stem-*ni naru*, have claimed that the V-stem is in fact a noun (e.g., Suzuki, 1989 and Dubinsky, 1989). It well known that the V-stem or *renyôkei* ‘infinitive’ is homophonous with the most productive source of zero-derived nominalizations in Japanese. Additionally, the postposition *-ni*, is typically attached to nouns. However, phonological evidence aside⁶, this claim is problematic. Many ‘infinitives’ have no independent existence as nouns, e.g., **yomi* from *yomu* ‘read’ and **kaki* from *kaku* ‘write’. Additionally, where ‘infinitives’ are nouns, their meanings are often highly idiosyncratic, e.g., *dashi* ‘soup stock’ from the verb *dasu* ‘expel’ and *chirashi* ‘a leaflet’ from the verb *chirasu* ‘scatter’.

are not, e.g., *mice-eat-er*.

⁶ A zero-derived Noun from the infinitive typically shows stress on the final syllable. However, the infinitive appearing in the Honorific/ Humbling paradigms is atonic, i.e., unstressed, e.g., *hanashi* ‘a talk’ → *o-hanashi-ni naru* ‘deem to talk’ (Martin, 1975: 335-337).

Paradigms containing such ‘nouns’ *o-dashi-ni narimashita* ‘deemed to expel’ and *o-chirashi-ni narimashita* ‘deemed to scatter (something)’ could only mean ‘deemed to become honorable soup stock’ and ‘deemed to become an honorable leaflet’ when understood compositionally.

Dubinsky (1989, chapter 8: 12) takes the position that the V-stem of the paradigm is a noun, making the analogy between this argument assigning ‘noun’ and VERBAL NOUNS, e.g., *benkyô* ‘study’. There are, however, many non-trivial differences between the Honorific/Humbling V-stems and Verbal Nouns, for example, Verbal Nouns undergo clefting, but Honorifics do not:

15a. *Benkyô shi-ta-no-wa eigo-de sôgagaku-ja nai.*

study DO-PAST-GEN-TOP English-BE math BE-NEG

‘The thing I study is English, not Math’.

b. **O-yomi-ni natta-no-wa hon-de zasshi-ja nai.* .

read-HONOR-PAST-GEN-TOP book-BE magazine-BE-NEG

‘The thing (someone) deemed to read was the book, not the magazine.’

Verbal Nouns undergo coordinated sentence ellipsis, while Honorifics do not:

16a. *Tarô-wa benkyô shi-ta kedo Jirô-wa shi-na-katta.*

Tarô-TOP study DO-PAST but Jirô-TOP do-NEG-PAST

‘Tarô studied, but Jirô didn’t’

b. **Yamada-sensei-wa o-yasumi-ni nat-ta ga, Kubo-sensei-wa nar-ana-katta*

Prof. Yamada-TOP rest-HONOR-PAST but Prof. Kubo-top do-HONOR-NEG-PAST

‘Prof. Yamada deemed to honorably rest, but Prof. Kubo did not’

Harada (1976:525) in one of several additional arguments against the noun-hood of honorific V-stem-infinitives notes their inability to be anaphorically deleted:

17a. Kyôju-ni nari-mashi-ta-ka? Ee, nari-mashi-ta.

professor-DAT become-POLITE-PAST-Q. yes become-POLITE-PAST

‘Did (he) become a professor?’ ‘Yes, he did’

b. Kono hon-o o-yomi-ni nar-imashi-ta-ka? *Ee, nar-imashi-ta.

this book-ACC read-HONOR-POLITE-PAST-Q. yes do-HONOR-POLITE-PAST

‘Did (he) honorably deem to read the book?’ ‘Yes, he did.’ (ibid: 525).

I submit that the paradigm occupies a single head, by postulation head of ExpP. This is accomplished through MORPHOLOGICAL MERGER (MM), essentially head-to-head movement between a functional head and its complement (Halle and Marantz, 1993), which claims that “at any level of syntactic analysis or PF (phonological form), a relation between X and Y may be replaced by the affixation of the lexical head of X to the lexical head of Y” (Harley and Noyer, 1999: 5).

Bobaljik (1995: 55-6) writes:

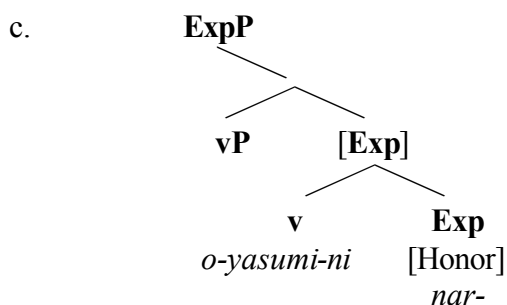
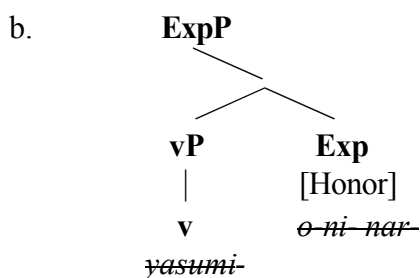
In UG [*there is*] is some principle which says that a lexical item which is an affix must come to be associated in an appropriate manner with some other item...this is not a requirement of syntax, but a morpho-phonological requirement which must be satisfied in the mapping from syntax to phonology, the Morphology component. (See Baker, 1988 for the STRAY AFFIX FILTER)

DM recognizes that VOCABULARY ITEMS, which include affixes, have CATEGORIAL and SUBCATEGORIAL information (Halle and Marantz, 1993: 122). At Spell-Out, the circumfix *o-* *-ni* and the prefix *o-* obey their categorical specifications subcategorizing for V-stems:⁷

18a. O-yasumi-ni naru.

Rest-HONOR-NON-PAST

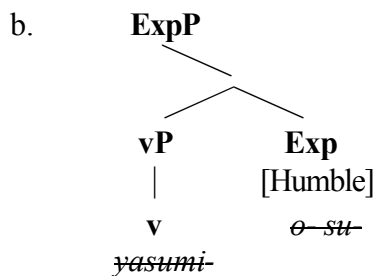
‘(An esteemed one) deems to rest.’



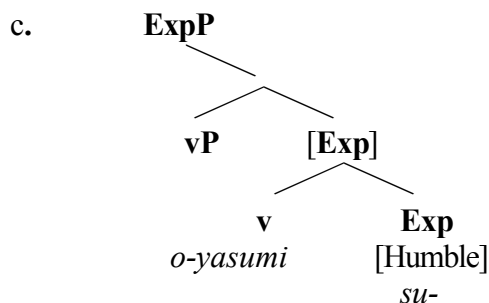
19a. O-yasumi suru.

rest-HUMBLE-NON-PAST

‘(I) humbly rest’



⁷ Note that the prefix *o-* and its allomorph *go-* also subcategorize for Nouns and



A principled explanation for the blocking of the paradigm by Euphemisms is provided by the fact that paradigms, like Euphemisms, compete for insertion in the same terminal node.

Koizumi (2000 and 1995) has argued extensively for overt verb-raising in the Narrow Syntax, appealing to co-ordination, pseudo-clefting and scrambling phenomena. (See Fukui and Sakai, 2003 for counter-arguments) In line with DM (Halle and Marantz, 1993: 170), and consistent with PHRASE-LEVEL MERGER at PF (Fukui and Sakai, 2003), this analysis is a claim for “verb-raising” at the Morphology-Spell Out interface, pre-PF⁸.

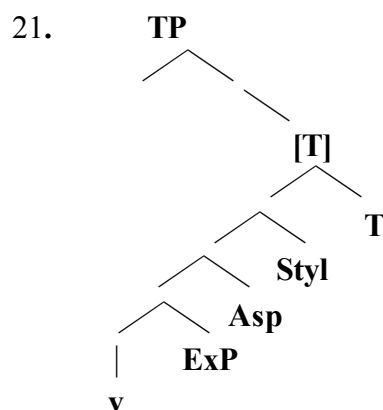
All arguments are assigned from their canonical base position in the Narrow Syntax; that is, the Euphemism, *irassharu* ‘be, go, come’, is unaccusative and therefore, licenses its Theme in spec of VP from the head of VP before raising to as far as head of TP (see below). The V-stem of the paradigms, as well, must assign their arguments from canonical base position, e.g., *yasumi* ‘rest’, *kaki* ‘write’, and *ake* ‘open (it)’, as unergative, transitive, and lexical causative respectively, are heads of vP, their Agents spec of vP, in line with Chomsky (1995). All “verb-raising” is accomplished by MM post-Narrow Syntax, but prior to PF proper:

Adjectives. The circumfix *o- -ni* only attaches to a V-stem.

⁸ For Fukui and Sakai (2003: 348 footnote 22), PF is broadly construed as “the operations applying after Spell Out, including the operation itself ... the term PF refer[s] to the collection of operations which are performed outside of the narrow syntax.”

20. A Verb *V* merges with all adjacent functional heads including head of TP, except when the EXTENDED EXPONENCE of Progressive/Perfect aspect *EE* (iru) is inserted in head of AspP, then *EE* merges with all adjacent functional heads including the head of TP. Where *EE* is present, the *V*, as *V-te*, remains in its inserted node, head of VP or head of vP, or merges with head of ExpP, if present.

Since “linearization [accomplished by Morphological Merger] entails prior Vocabulary Insertion [which comprises Spell-Out]” (Noyer, 1998: 2), the following complex head is assembled prior to PF at the Morphology-Spell-Out interface:



Vocabulary Insertion, concomitant with MM, takes place cyclically from bottom to top. Euphemisms, like all suppletive morphemes, occur when a lexical head is conditioned by an abstract functional feature:

22a. √GO/ Past □ *went*

b. √BAD / [Comparative] □ *worse*⁹

⁹ Here I employ Pesetsky (1995)’s notation √ to designate ROOT. It has been suggested by Marantz (1997b) that “true suppletion should be limited to universal syntactico-semantic categories” (Harley and Noyer, 1999: 13). Beard (1995: 165) notes the cross-linguistic universality of EDs: “given the wide range of human attitudes...[EDs] are restricted to those which reflect only five or so attitudes of the speaker [*i.e.*, *Augmentatives*, *Diminutives*, *Perjoratives*, *Affectionates* and *Honorifics*]”.

Non-suppletive Roots adjacent to the abstract features Honor and Humble condition the insertion of suppletive forms:

23a. \sqrt{shi} - ‘do’ / [Honor] \square *nasar*-

b. \sqrt{shi} - ‘do’ / [Humble] \square *itas*-

The fact that suppletive verbs belong to the Japanese system of Subject Honorification and Humbling is crucial empirical support for the existence of the postulated functional phrase ExpP with its abstract morphemes [Honor] and [Humble].

MM is responsible for linearization of the affixes for PF in the default:

24a. \sqrt{yasum} - ‘rest’ / [Honor] \square *o-yasumi-ni nar*-

b. \sqrt{yasum} - ‘rest’ / [Humble] \square *o-yasumi-su*-

6. The Morpho-Syntax of Focus in Honorifics

The focus particle *–mo* and contrast particle *–wa* may infix the paradigm (Harada, 1976).

There is a process of V-stem focus in Japanese superficially similar to focus in honorifics, except that the focused V-stem with its internal arguments may raise and *suru*-support, a Japanese variety of *do*-support, is required¹⁰. This is shown in example 25:

25a. Tarô-ga sushi-o tabe-ta.

Tarô-NOM sushi-ACC eat-PAST

‘Tarô ate sushi.’

b. Tarô-ga sushi-o tabe-mo shita.

¹⁰ In contrast with English *do*-support, which is forced when MM is disrupted and bears only tense features (Chomsky, 1955 and Bobaljik, 1995), *suru*-support is forced by the verb-final requirement of Japanese (see Cinque, 1999: 58 for discussion) and is a full VP able to host the causative, passive and desiderative morphemes, as well as, the functional phrases StyleP and AspP.

Tarô-NOM sushi-ACC eat-FOCUS do-PAST

‘Even eat sushi, Tarô did.’

c. Sushi-o tabe-mo Tarô-ga shita.

Sushi-ACC eat-FOCUS Tarô-NOM do-PAST

‘Even eat sushi, Tarô did.’

d. *Tarô-ga tabe-mo sushi-o shita.

Tarô-NOM eat-FOCUS sushi-ACC do-PAST

‘Tarô even eat sushi did.’

Examples 25c and d show a contrast between internal and external arguments. External arguments need not raise (25c), while 25d shows that internal arguments must raise with the focused verb stem.

In the case of focused honorifics, arguments, whether internal or external, may never intervene between the honorific V-stem and the light verb *naru* as shown in example 26b (cf. 25c):

26a. Sensei-ga o-yasumi-ni-mo natta.

Teacher-NOM rest-FOCUS-HONOR become-PAST

‘The honorable teacher deemed even to rest.’

b. *O-yasumi-ni-mo sensei-ga natta.

Rest-HONOR-FOCUS teacher-NOM become-PAST

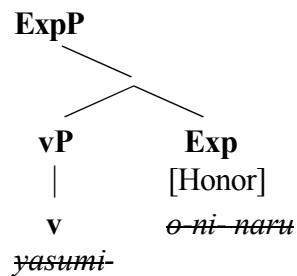
‘Even deemed to rest the honorable teacher did’

Bobaljik (1995: 57) argues that MM obeys an ADJACENCY CONDITION, which requires a stem and an affix to be adjacent. “Adjacency as a morphological notion, is not purely linear/phonetic in that adverbs [*and*] adjoined material generally are not relevant.” He

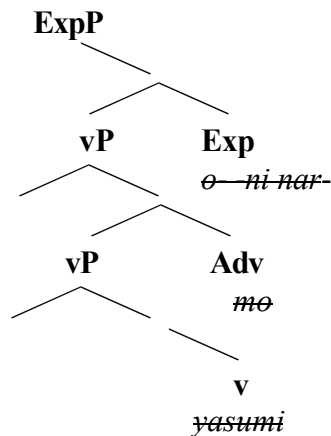
encapsulates this hypothesis in the example: “*An adverb never disrupt-s adjacency*” (ibid: 73), demonstrating that the MM of AgrS and V is possible under certain conditions where strict string adjacency on the surface is not observed. Since Subject Honorification and Humbling require MM for the proper attachment of affixes, the unacceptability of 26b, where Adjacency is disrupted, falls out.

To account for the non-disruption of adjacency by adjunction I adopt the notion of NON-CYCLIC MERGE in the Narrow Syntax proposed in Epstein et al (1998: 56-58). The intermediate structure 27a, prior to adjunction, is the structure relevant for MM:

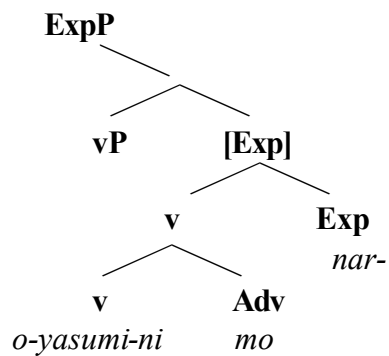
27a. Narrow Syntax: Cyclic Merge



b. Narrow Syntax: Non-Cyclic Merge



c. Morphological Merger / Spell-Out:



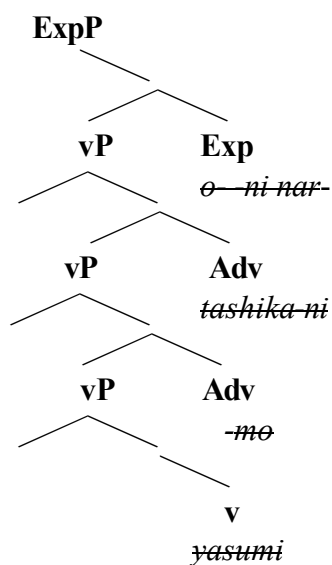
Multiple Adjunction non-cyclically also occurs without disrupting Adjacency:

28a. O-yasumi-ni-mo tashika-ni nat-ta.

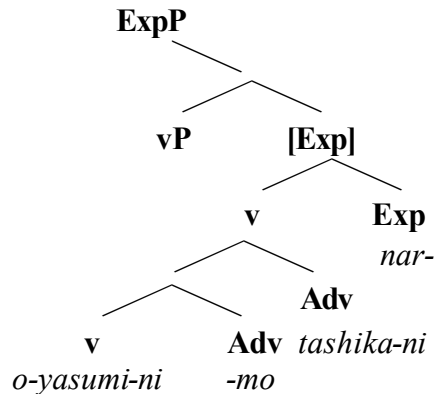
Rest-HONOR-FOCUS definitely PAST

‘An esteemed person definitely deemed also to rest.’

b. Narrow Syntax: Non-Cyclic Merge:



c. **Morphological Merger / Spell-Out:**



7. The Lexicalist Approach

Sells (1995) cites perceived problems with syntactic approaches to Japanese Subject Honorification as justification for the lexicalist approach. He writes:

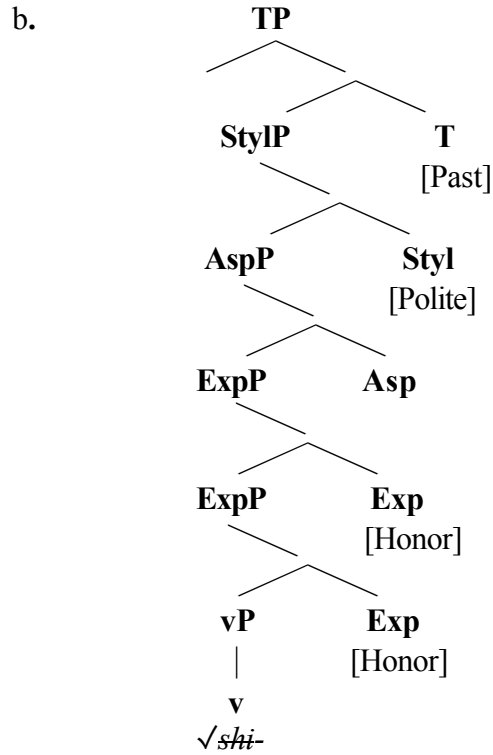
Under the syntactic view, there is no source for the form [*o-nasari-ni naru*], since by hypothesis *nasari* comes from what would be the underlying form, namely, *o-shi-ni naru*...Clearly what is happening in this case is that the root of the irregular form is listed in the lexicon and can be put in the honorific form just like any other root. However, this is inconsistent with (the strongest version of) what drives the syntactic view, namely that each relevant piece of morphological information should be present as a discrete node in the underlying structure (ibid: 292).

Example 29 is a syntactic derivation for the recursive application of Subject Honorification that maintains “the strongest version” of the syntactic approach. Its underlying form is that of 29b. The structure is generated in the Narrow Syntax based on abstract features contained in the NUMERATION (Chomsky, 1995), including at least, [Past], [Polite], [Honor], [Honor], and the abstract Root \sqrt{shi} - ‘do’:

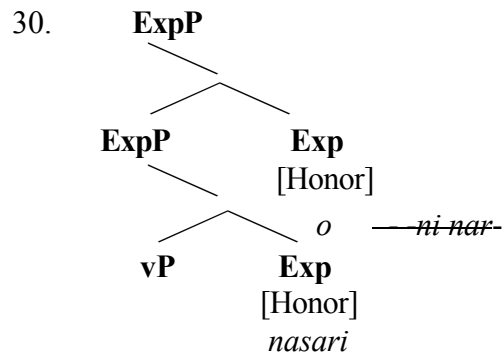
29a. O-nasari-ni nari-mashi-ta

do-HONOR-HONOR-POLITE-PAST

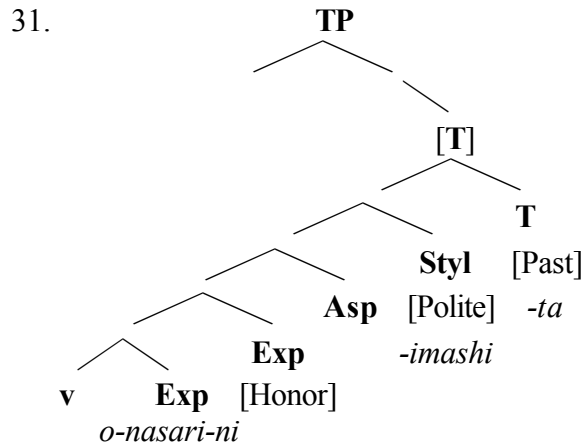
‘(An honorable person) deemed to do (something)’



The abstract morpheme [Honor] in the head of ExpP conditions the insertion of the suppletive Euphemism *nasar*, as shown in 30:



Complete MM of the functional heads with further Vocabulary Insertion yields 31:



Concerning Style, Sells writes:

The syntactic view presupposes that there is a consistent hierarchy of functional categories ...it is clear that there is no such hierarchy ... [For verbs], the [Style] morpheme *-mas(i)-* is followed by the regular tense suffixes:

32. *tabe-mashi-ta*

eat-POLITE-PAST

‘(Someone) ate.’ (Sells, 1995: 298, example 36b)

Polite forms for adjectives have [Style] outside Tense:

33. *ôki-katta desu*

big-PAST POLITE

‘(Something) was big.’ (ibid: example 37b)

This leads to what is essentially a paradox for the syntactic view: there are no consistent underlying structures that can account for both (Sells, 1995:298).

For Sells, this asymmetry between Style-marking on VP, pre-tense-marking, and on AP, post-tense-marking, is a phenomenon unexplainable for a morphological theory which assumes the MIRROR PRINCIPLE (Baker, 1985). Though the mirror principle is not

assumed in this analysis, something very close is; that is, morphology is the result of abstract features introduced into appropriate syntactic terminals.

Cross-linguistically, the true adjectives of Japanese (*keiyôshi*) are notable in that they realize tense as a bound morpheme. In contrast with VP, whose functional projections I have claimed include AspP and StylP, AP is impoverished in that its extended projection does not include either of these projections.

The lack of AspP accounts for two relevant facts about AP that makes them distinct from VP. First, AP cannot assign accusative case, marked by *-o*, e.g., **Te-o ita-i* ‘My hand hurts.’ (Cf. *Te-o itameru* ‘I hurt my hand’) Second, AP cannot occur in the progressive aspect, e.g., *isogashikute iru* ‘*I’m being busy’¹¹.

The lack of StylP means that the choice between Plain and Polite cannot be made as would otherwise be expected based on analogies with VP. As a default, the Polite style is realized in an optional Modal Phrase (ModP), independently a necessary functional category of Japanese, located above TP¹² (Whitman, 1989 and Koizumi, 1993).

The ModP contains the following binary features: [\pm Epistemic], [\pm Polite]:

¹¹ Adjective Phrase has a Subject Honorific form and hence in this form, an ExpP, and a StylP, in addition to its TP. The form on its surface appears to be the *-te iru* of the progressive aspect, e.g., *Sensei-wa o-ishogashikute irassharu*. Recall that *irassharu* is the Euphemism for *iru*. However, its interpretation, i.e., ‘The esteemed teacher is busy/*‘The esteemed teacher is being busy’, demonstrates that the *-te iru* is an allomorph of the copula *-de iru/-de aru*. This is indicative of the fact that APs never come to possess AspP.

¹² The occurrence of **iku desu* ‘will go-POLITE’ is ruled out since the realization of the feature [Polite] in ModP is a default, only invoked when its canonical realization as a bound morpheme is unavailable. This plays out in an interesting manner in past tense polite negation. There are two acceptable forms: where the bound polite morpheme blocks the bound tense morpheme, the past tense is realized as a copula, e.g., *ikimasen deshita* ‘did not go-POLITE’. Alternatively, where the bound past tense morpheme blocks the bound polite morpheme, the default is used, e.g., *ikanakatta desu* ‘did not go-POLITE’.

Table 3. The Morphological Pieces of Modal Phrase

	[+Epistemic]	[-Epistemic]
[+Polite]	<i>deshoo</i>	<i>desu</i>
[-Polite]	<i>daroo</i>	<i>Æ</i>

34a. Sensei-wa irassha-imashi-ta deshô

Teacher-TOP be-HON-POLITE-PAST [+EPISTEMIC, +POLITE]

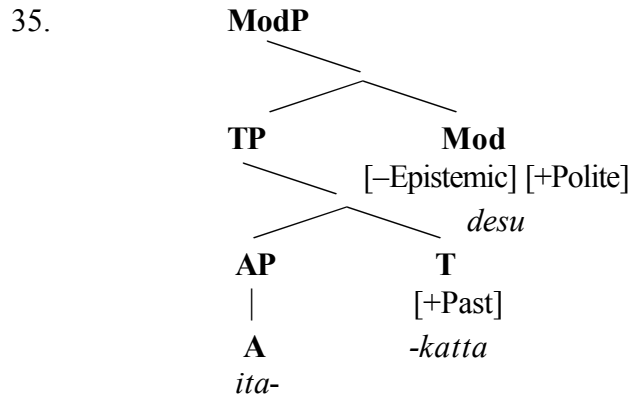
‘The esteemed teacher probably deemed to be in’

b. Koshi-ga ita-katta desu-yo!

Lower back-NOM painful-PAST-+POLITE-ASSERTIVE

‘My back is killing me.’

Note that the modal, in 34a, occurs post-tense marking, and therefore, cannot be specified for tense. Crucially, this is the same property found in the default polite-style modal, *desu* in b, which cannot be specified for tense, e.g., **Koshi-ga ita-i deshita*. (cf. *Koshi-ga itakatta desu*). This lack of Tense is distinct to the Modal *desu*, as opposed to the copular *desu/da* used for Nominal Predicates and Adjectival Nouns (*keiyôdôshi*). Whereas the default realization of [Polite] found in ModP cannot be specified for tense, the copular *desu/da* for predicate Nouns and Adjectival Nouns can be, e.g., *Tori deshita / datta*. ‘It was a bird.’ and *Kirei deshita / datta* ‘It was pretty’, Noun and Adjectival Noun, respectively:



8. Conclusion

In this piece, I have argued for a morpho-syntactic approach to Subject Honorification and Humbling that allows for the optional realization of their relevant functional phrases. Other syntactic approaches to Subject Honorification (Ura, 1993 and Toribio, 1990) have claimed it is an example of overt subject-verb agreement via feature checking. The optionality of Honorification and Humbling, however, is the essential characteristic that precludes a feature checking approach. (See Namai, 2000, for a similar view.) In the absence of specific counter-evidence, I suggest the ExpP is only present when the morphology of Subject Honorification and Humbling is overtly realized, this in accord with the Visibility Guideline for Functional Categories (Fukui and Sakai, 2003). This is the simplest and most economical way to explain the optionality of EDs. In contrast with Ura (1993) and Toribio (1990), who claim that Subject Honorification is an instance of subject-verb agreement, I claim that Subject Honorification and Humbling are cases of SEMANTIC SELECTION. Recall that all and only verbs that select human subjects can optionally select for Subject Honorification and Humbling.

Licensing of Pragmatic Morphology:

a. SUBJECT HONORIFICATION, a morpho-pragmatic expression of respect, is optional **iff** the subject is human and is SOCIALLY SUPERIOR TO THE SPEAKER, Harada (1976)'s SSS. This entails that the subject cannot be first person.

b. SUBJECT HUMBLING, a morpho-pragmatic expression of humility, is optional **iff** the subject is human and is first person or a member of the speaker's IN-GROUP, e.g., family. For non-suppletive forms, the subject's action must benefit a person SSS.

c. POLITE STYLE is optional for all verbs and reflects the social status of the addressee. It is typically used when addressing superiors, strangers and in public speech.

In contrast with other optional functional categories, which include Negative Phrase (NegP), Causative Phrase (CauseP) and Modal Phrase (ModP), the pragmatic morpho-syntax of ExpP and StylP are only visible at PF and are completely vacuous at LF. While both Case and the pragmatic morphology of ExpP and StylP are uninterpretable at LF, Case is mandatory at PF while ExpP and StylP remain optional.

Subject Honorification and Humbling display unique morphological characteristics, being neither clearly derivational nor inflectional. The optionality and recursivity of Subject Honorification and Humbling seem related and might plausibly be attributed to their syntactic and semantic vacuity. But this is not the full story since Style is non-recursive, although it too does not affect the syntax or semantics.

In this regard, recall Beard's observation on the non-binary gradient nature of EDs. Style is distinctly binary, i.e., polite or plain, while EDs display a distinct semantic elasticity. Of interest is the fact that Subject Honorification can also be used sarcastically to deflate the pompous (Martin, 1975). This is parallel to the use of Diminutives in

Turkish for sarcasm or contempt, as well as affection (Thomas, 1967). Because of this pragmatic-semantic elasticity, Wierzbicka (1992: 238-9) writes:

(C)onventional linguistic labels such as diminutive or pejorative prove singularly unhelpful... [*however, the*] changeable value of a given [ED] can be accounted for, to some extent, in terms of irony, sarcasm, jocularity and other similar devices.

Indeed, diminutives often show the same recursivity as discussed for Subject Honorification and Humbling above and it is likely that ExpP will have a reflex within a DP-shell. I leave this issue open for future research.

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