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Implications for Teaching the Korean Hearer Honorifics in Sweden and Finland

Abstract

This paper concerns how to teach the Korean hearer honorific sentential endings (i.e. *-nita* and *-yo*) to KFL (Korean as a foreign language) learners in Sweden and Finland, where a similar culture is shared, but very different languages are spoken. In order to discuss the theme, the following aspects are examined: (i) the honorific systems in Korean, Swedish and Finnish and (ii) how the systems are exploited in each language so that the speaker may appear polite. Based upon the examination, implications for KFL teaching of the Korean hearer honorifics, *-nita* and *-yo*, are discussed with regard to the influential factors of the learner's native language and culture as well as classroom instructions.

Keywords: Korean hearer honorifics, *-nita* and *-yo*, Sweden and Finland, sociopragmatic competence

Introduction

Teaching Korean as a foreign language (KFL) in the Nordic countries is not merely a matter of teaching the grammar and pronunciation. It must engage culture in order to give students knowledge on how to appropriately fit their utterances of the target language into the discourse context, which relates to the sociopragmatic competence. Unlike learning grammar and pronunciation, sociopragmatic features are tightly associated with culture; accordingly, it may be more challenging to teach sociopragmatic features of the target language in the classroom than purely linguistic features. To be extreme, I see the linguistic competence – however commendable it might be – as independent of discourse contexts where the language is being used.

Therefore, linguistic carriers of politeness (e.g. syntactic constructions, lexical items, prosodic contours, etc.) may be attained through pedagogical instruction during class, but sociopragmatic competence may not be possible to be formed and fostered unless suitable contexts are provided in KFL learning. KFL teaching or learning independent of a discourse context, is likely to result in knowledge about the language; hence, one may be able to construct sentences and pronounce them according to his/her built-up linguistic competence of the target language. Yet, there is always a danger that the learner innocently may misuse the linguistically (i.e. syntactically and phonologically, and even semantically) correct output, owing to lack of sociopragmatic competence. The learned language must be appropriately used in real life, and as a matter of course, it should be considered what matters in the KFL teaching/learning of sociopragmatic features, formality and politeness in particular. In terms of linguistic competence, it is obvious that the learner's native language (NL) matters, influencing syntactic and phonological systems of the target language. Likewise, would sociopragmatic competence be influenced by the learner's own NL, as well as culture?

The current paper intends to address this question by examining the Swedish and Finnish languages rather than by means of heavy investigation of culture, and to put forward implications for KFL teaching with respect to sociopragmatic features of formality and politeness, which are conveyed by the hearer honorific verbal endings (i.e. *-nita* and *-yo*) in Korean.

Hearer honorifics in Korean

Korean has a highly complicated speech style hierarchy that reflects the relationship of speakers involved in the conversation. These speech styles can be categorized by their corresponding verbal endings; the relationship between each participant in a given conversation is associated not only with the degree of emotional/psychological distance, but also a variety of other factors such as age, generation, gender, kinship, occupation, social tie, rank, hometown, and the context of a discourse. Even during native language acquisition, sociopragmatic mistakes with respect to honorifics may not be tolerated amongst native Koreans while other grammatical mistakes are. Such mistakes might leave unfavourable impressions on the speaker.

Of the six levels of Korean speech styles (categorized by the types of hearer (non-) honorific verbal endings) in Table 1, the two hearer honorific speech styles – specifically the declarative endings, *-nita* and *-yo*, are

the focus of this paper, which are introduced at a very early stage in Korean courses. In the frame of KFL, *-nita* is described as ‘formal’, and, in addition, is given the description of ‘deferential’ and/or ‘polite’ depending on KFL learning materials, whereas *-yo* is mostly described as ‘informal polite’. Despite the contrast in description between ‘formal vs informal’, the two verbal endings are often mixed within one speech event, unless the given discourse takes place in a strictly controlled setting, such as news programmes, public speeches, the military, etc.

Table 1. The levels of Korean speech styles

English name	style	Korean name	Declarative ending	Formal/ Informal	Honorific category
Deferential		<i>hapsyo-chey</i>	<i>-nita</i>	Formal	Honorific
Polite		<i>hayyo-chey</i>	<i>-yo</i>	Informal	
Semiformal		<i>hao-chey</i>	<i>-(s)o</i>	--	Semi-honorific
Familiar		<i>hakey-chey</i>	<i>-ney</i>	--	Non-honorific
Intimate		<i>hay-chey</i>	<i>-a/e</i>	Informal	Non-honorific
Plain		<i>hayla-chey</i>	<i>-ta</i>	Formal	

Most native Korean speakers tend to find *-nita* more respectful than *-yo*.¹ Also, *-nita* is exclusively or dominantly used in a more formal context – not only in the settings mentioned earlier, but also during job interviews (by interviewees), weather broadcasts, business meetings and the like. Besides, many native Korean speakers would find the obsessive use of *-nita* masculine and *-yo* feminine as in Yeon and Brown.²

Nowadays, e-mail and text messages are an essential part of daily communication, and *-nita* is the norm in many cases of written discourse in Korean. Even for non-official informal messages, *-nita* is often exclusively used instead of *-yo*, reflecting the relationship between the sender and the receiver. For example, (1) shows a text message sent from a younger female instructor to an older female professor working in the same field. The younger colleague is consistent in using *-nita* throughout the casual message sent directly after lunch, during which both of them had chatted in *-yo*.

If *-yo* was employed in the text message as in spoken dialogue, the older recipient could have found it inappropriate, especially given that the two had met only once briefly, before the day they had lunch

¹ Choi 1977; Suh 1984.

² Yeon 2011, 174.

together. Similarly, Yoon and Lee (2011) reported that in their experiment *-nita* was used more frequently among Korean students when addressing a professor via e-mail. Moreover, the whole control group of nine Korean students in the experiment of Kim (2016) also used *-nita* in the e-mail message addressing a professor. However, it is presumed that these same students in both experiments would prefer *-yo* in face-to-face discussions involving the same content as in the e-mail message delivered to the professor. Regardless of the delivery manner, official, formal or public letters are needless to say, composed in *-nita* at all times.

(1) A casual text message

onul cengmal kamsaha-pnita
 today really thank-HHEnd
 'Thank you very much for today.'

hamkkekey haympeke-lul mos mek-un aswuiwum-ey
 together hamburger-Obj cannot eat-Mod feeling sorry-because
 'I am sorry that we couldn't eat hamburgers together, so

haympeke kakey cwuso-lul allye tuli-lyeko yenlak tuli-pnita
 hamburger shop address-Obj let you know(Hum)-to contact(Hum)-HHEnd
 'I am contacting you to let you know the address of the hamburger shop.'

kakey ilum-un X-i-mye cwuso-nun Y-i-pnita
 shop name-Top X-be-and address-Top Y-be-HHEnd
 'The name of the shop is X, and the address is Y.'

tayphyo menyu-nun bullwu chicu-ka tuleka-n Z-i-pnita
 specialty menu-Top blue cheese-Sub go in-Mod Z-be-HHEnd
 'Their specialty burger with blue cheese on the menu is Z.'

[ABBREVIATIONS]

HHEnd:hearer honorific ending marker, Hum:humble form, Mod:modifier, Obj:objective marker, Sub:subjective marker, Top:topic marker

On the other hand, *-yo* is the most general hearer honorific verbal ending of the six in daily spoken discourse. According to Park (1978), most children speak in the intimate and plain speech styles before school, adding the polite style during their primary school years and including the formal style in their spoken discourse in secondary school. She states that some might use only these four styles through their entire life, while others engage in five or six speech styles. Based upon her observations, it

can be deduced that *-yo* in the polite style is widely used outside the home in Korean society, and can be used in almost all daily speech settings, except for those involving little children. Therefore, it is not surprising that *-yo* is possibly the easiest option for KFL learners to go for when they are not sure which of the complicated six speech styles to choose from.

To sum up, the key points of the two hearer honorific verbal endings are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of *-nita* and *-yo*

Hearer honorific verbal endings	
<i>-nita</i>	<i>-yo</i>
Formal & Polite	Informal & Polite
Most respectful / deferential	Feminine
Masculine	Most widely used in spoken discourse in
Written discourse	Korean society

With respect to formality, it is assumed that KFL learners may take a straightforward approach to the difference between *-nita* and *-yo*; they would simply perceive one as formal and the other as informal, as described in Tables 1 and 2. Thus, the learners should be able to use them appropriately as long as they discern a given situation according to the degree of formality.

Our next question might be, how would KFL learners perceive ‘polite’, the English term for *-yo*? Would they see any difference between *-nita* and *-yo* regarding the characteristic of ‘polite’? If they do, how would they process the information, or how would they assimilate these forms into their language learning? To cope with these questions, let us take a look at the dialogues in (2).

(2) Examples of different verbal endings in spoken discourse

a.

sensayng: *mwe masi-llay-yo?*

teacher: what drink-will-HHEnd?

Teacher: ‘What would you like to drink?’

haksayng 1: *kholla-yo. akka-pwuthe masi-ko siphess-supnita*

student 1: cola-HHEnd. a while ago-since drink-wanted-HHEnd

Student 1: ‘Cola. I’ve wanted to drink it for a while.’

haksayng 2: *ce-nun kwaynchanha. sensayng-nim-un?*

student 2: I(Hum)-Sub fine. teacher-HSuf-Top?

Student 2: 'I am fine. How about you, teacher?'

cey-ka ka-se sa-olkey.
I(Hum)-Sub go-and get-will.
'I will go and get you (drinks).'

b.

sensayng: enu nala mal-lo ha-l-kka?
teacher: which country language-in speak-shall-Q
Teacher: 'Which language shall we speak?'

haksayng 3: acik yenge-ka phyenha-ntey-yo
student 3: still English-Sub easy-Conj-HHEnd
Student 3: 'I still find English easier (than Korean).'

haksayng 4: yenge-ka phyenha-pnita
student 4: English-Sub easy-HHEnd
Student 4: 'English is easier (for me).'

haksayng 5: yenge-lo haycwu-si-myen coh-keysse.
student 5: English-in speak-SubHon-if nice-would
Student 5: 'It would be nice if you spoke in English (for me).'

[ABBREVIATIONS]

Conj:conjunction, HHEnd:hearer honorific ending marker, HSuf:honorific suffix, Hum:humble form, Obj:objective marker, Q:interrogative suffix, Sub:subjective marker, SubHon:subject honorific suffix, Top:topic marker

(2) presents two conversations between a teacher and various students. The initial response of Student 1 does not include the expression of 'please' next to *kholla-yo* 'cola', and therefore might appear blunt or overtly straightforward. Ironically, his/her utterances are deemed polite enough due to the hearer honorific endings. This is also true of Students 3 and 4, although one may be found to be more polite than the other, depending on the speaker's tone of voice or the listener's stylistic preference. However, because they are lacking the hearer honorific verbal endings, Students 2 and 5 come across as impolite and unacceptable no matter how polite the contents of their utterances may be. Even the correct use of *ce*, the humble form of 'I' and *-si*, the subject honorific suffix do not compensate for the absence of a hearer honorific verbal ending. On the other hand, the teacher is free to choose whether or not to use the hearer honorific endings in the contexts given in (2), depending

on his/her relationship with the students. From the example dialogues in (2), we can presume that KFL learners may be aware that the hearer honorific verbal endings of *-nita* and *-yo* convey politeness in themselves and that they may find *-yo* more useful than *-nita* in terms of sociopragmatic convenience (not necessarily in terms of punctual verbal conjugation) because overall, it is more in use in Korean society. At the same time, it is possible for KFL learners to overgeneralize using *-yo*.

Let us next look at an example of written discourse. Judging from the following text message sent to the author by a female Korean exchange student in (3), the discourse context is informal, but its tone is extremely polite. In order to be both informal yet polite, KFL learners might be inclined to choose *-yo* over *-nita* even in written discourse. This is especially true if they only have the knowledge of the distinction (i.e. formal deferential vs informal polite) between the two hearer honorific verbal endings as described in Table 1, unless they have been explicitly taught to use *-nita* in the context of the message presented in (3).

(3) A text message from a Korean exchange student

kyoswu-nim annyengha-se-yo
 professor-HSuf how are you-SubHon-HHEnd
 'Professor, how are you?'

ce-nun hyencay hankwuke swuepsikan-ey hankwuke towumi-lo
 I-Top currently Korean class-in Korean assistant-as

tholon-ey chamye cwungi-n XX-lako ha-pnita
 discussion-in taking part-Mod XX-named-HHEnd
 'My name is XX, and I am currently taking part in the Korean discussion class as a Korean assistant.'

onul saylow-un swuep-ui ches-swuep-i
 today new-Mod class-Gen first-class-Sub
 'The first class of a new course'

hankwuke towumi sikan-kwa kyepchikey toyess-supnita
 Korean helper hour-with overlapped happened-HHEnd
 'happens to overlap with the Korean class.'

ches-swuep-un ppaci-l swu epse-se
 first-class-Top skip-can not-because
 'Because I cannot skip the first class,

onul hankwuke sikan-ey ka-l swu epsul-kes kath-supnita
today Korean class-to go-unable-Nom seem-HHEnd
'I am afraid I am unable to attend the Korean class today.'

com te ilccik malssum tulye-yaha-nuntey
a bit more early tell(Hum)-should-but
'I should have told you a bit earlier, but

tangil-ey malssum tulye coysongha-pnita
the same day-on tell(Hum) apologise-HHEnd
'I apologize that I am telling you on the same day.'

taum sikan-pwuthe-nun sikan-ul cocengha-ye
next class-from-Top class-Obj reschedule-and
'I will reschedule my timetable, and

swuep-ey chamsekha-tolok ha-keyss-supnita
class-in attend-make sure-will-HHEnd
'will make sure to attend the class from now on.'

[ABBREVIATIONS]

Gen:genitive marker, HHEnd:hearer honorific ending marker, HSuf:honorific suffix, Hum:humble form, Mod:modifier, Nom:nominalizer, Obj:objective marker, Sub:subjective marker, SubHon:subject honorific suffix, Top:topic marker

At this point, it would be worthwhile to look at the written discourses in (1) and (3) with respect to politeness. The content of the casual text message in (1) appears friendly, but would the content itself make the message polite if the expressions 'thank you' and 'sorry' were not mentioned? What is it that conveys politeness in (3), the formal deferential verbal ending, *-nita*, or the content? If *-nita* is replaced by *-yo*, would this written discourse sound less polite or even impolite? I do not intend to start a debate on this question, but wish to emphasize that politeness is indeed associated with the hearer honorific verbal endings themselves, and the choice between *-nita* and *-yo* might matter in not only formal but also informal written discourse in Korean.

While politeness can be marked in the verbal endings in Korean as explained above, one tactic regarding Finnish politeness is avoiding the address term entirely (Yli-Vakkuri 2005); this will be termed 'no address' later in Section 3. On the other hand, Utrzen (2013) reports that expressions of politeness in Swedish are related to attitudes of respect, consideration and tact, as well as to body language and prosody; these traits are

found to be polite among all cultures and societies.

Swedish vs Finnish

In order to discuss the sociopragmatic aspects of KFL regarding *-nita* and *-yo*, Swedish and Finnish are chosen for the reason that the two languages are very different, but Sweden and Finland share a similar culture. Yli-Vakkuri (2005) remarks that “Finnish codes of behaviour and speech culture are very similar to those of Sweden – in spite of the languages belonging to different families, Finnish being a Finno-Ugric language, and Swedish being an Indo-European language”.³ Sweden and Finland are socioculturally quite similar for historical reasons, as Finland had been annexed to Sweden for approximately seven centuries until 1809, when it went under Russian rule. Finland became an independent republic in 1917 but is still a bilingual country with both Finnish and Swedish as official languages although the population of Swedish-speaking Finns is a linguistic minority of 5.3% in Finland.⁴ To name but one example with respect to similarity of culture, pupils in these countries call their teachers by first name, and it is common practice that students address teaching staff by first name at university, as noted in Harzing (2016). By contrast, it is forbidden for pupils/students to use either first name, surname, or even the full name alone of a teacher/professor in Korean society. In addition, it must also be noted that Swedish society leans more towards informality and intimacy, whereas Finnish society is characterized by higher levels of formality and distance (Pettersson and Nurmela 2007). Instead of exploring the issue of cultural similarities or differences in detail, the Swedish and Finnish languages are examined in comparison to the hearer honorific verbal endings in Korean in the following section.

Swedish

Swedish is an Indo-European language belonging to the Germanic language family together with English, German, Dutch and the other Nordic languages of Norwegian, Danish and Icelandic. Swedish has an honorific form for important, respected or distant relationships, similar to the French *vous/tu* and German *Sie/du*. The Swedish second person plural pronoun *ni* is honorific, and the non-honorific counterpart is the second person singular pronoun, *du*.⁵ That is, Swedish utilizes the T/V system,

³ Yli-Vakkuri 2005: 189.

⁴ Statistics Finland 2015.

⁵ Ilie 2005: 179.

which stands for Latin *tu*, indicating informal, and *vos*, formal.⁶

Table 3. T/V forms in Swedish (from Norrby et al., 2015b)

	Subject	Object	Possessive
Singular or T	<i>du</i> 'you'	<i>dig</i> 'you'	<i>din, ditt, dina</i> * 'your'
Plural or V	<i>ni</i> 'you'	<i>er</i> 'you'	<i>er, ert, era</i> * 'your'

* inflected to agree with the gender and number of the head noun

However, unlike French and German, the honorific address term *ni* is rare in contemporary Swedish, restricted to very few settings such as upper-class restaurants and shops, and the informal address term *du* appears as the default choice in most contexts and to most interlocutors (Clyne, Norrby and Warren 2009). Clyne, Norrby and Warren describe *ni* as “a thin social veneer, which disappears as soon as the participant roles change ever so slightly”.⁷

On the other hand, Norrby et al. (2015b) describe *ni* as formal and *du* as informal, stating further that despite the apparent binary system, in actual functional terms contemporary Swedish address practices are more similar to the English system where there is only one pronoun of address, *you*; nevertheless, how to use *ni* and *du* is not as simple as *you* in English, nor does the identical pronominal address form in English, *you*, necessarily let English speakers perceive one another as equally.

At one point, *ni* was disappearing in Sweden, owing to the social stigma related to its asymmetrical use, as a person in an inferior social position (i.e. lacking a title) might be addressed by *ni*, but would have to respond by using his/her interlocutor's title (Ahlgren 1978). Later, Mårtensson (1986) noticed that *ni* was being reinstated to some extent in the service sector as a means of expressing politeness and respect for an older customer. This historical phenomenon has seemed to lead a Swedish speaker to avoid direct address altogether in some contexts, as a politeness strategy, where neither *du* nor *ni* is appropriate (Paulston 1975). Three ways of (not) expressing an address term when asking ‘what do you want?’ (or ‘what would you like?’) in Swedish are given in (4).

⁶ Brown and Gilman 1960.

⁷ Clyne, Norrby and Warren 2009: 112.

(4) Expressions of ‘what do you want?’ (Selections from Paulston (1975))

Vad vill du ha?
what want you (Singular Informal) have

Vad vill ni ha?
what want you (Plural Formal) have

Vad får det vara?
what may it be

Still, recent research such as Norrby et al. (2015a) reports that their data of Swedish utterances collected in Sweden point at a light level of informality in the medical consultations, with frequent use of *du*. In the same study, it is also noted that a Finland-Swedish doctor, in not addressing a patient directly, shows respect for the patient’s personal integrity by maintaining social distance; however, in the Sweden-Swedish data, the tendency is the opposite. On the other hand, Norrby et al. (2015b) in support of the data collected in a service encounter, reports that younger customers use *du* to a fairly limited extent (40%), while older ones are dominantly in favour of *du*, reaching nearly 90% in the interaction in both Sweden and Finland.

The concept of ‘honorific’ in Korean and ‘formal vs informal’ in Swedish cannot be viewed as equal parallels. However, the Korean hearer honorifics can be compared to the Swedish second-person pronouns in the sense that the hearer is always the second person during discourse. In Korean, the subject is often omitted, and a hearer honorific marker is specified in the verb as an ending suffix, according to the level of speech style. On the other hand, a sentential subject is always present in Swedish, and *ni* or *du* is placed when the subject is the hearer. In other words, the hearer honorific system in Swedish is binary and embedded in the second-person pronoun, although the division may not always be so clear-cut and its concept must be different to the Korean one. By contrast, the hearer honorific system in Korean is multi-levelled and embedded in the verbal endings. Furthermore, it is possible that no address term is used in Swedish, but one type of verbal ending reflecting speech style must be chosen in Korean.

Then, how would Swedish speakers learn *-nita* and *-yo* in particular, when both have the feature of ‘honorific’? Would they employ the binary system for *ni* and *du* to learn the Korean hearer honorific verbal endings as illustrated in Table 4?

Table 4. Comparison of Swedish and Korean with respect to ‘hearer-honorific’

	Swedish	Korean
Formal	<i>ni</i> [+honorific]	<i>-nita</i> [+honorific]
Informal	<i>du</i> [-honorific]	<i>-yo</i> [+honorific]

Finnish

Although typologically different from Swedish, Finnish is a Finno-Ugric language, possessing a theoretically similar system to Swedish in terms of the honorific address term.

Table 5. Second-person pronouns in Swedish and Finnish

	Second person pronouns	
	singular	plural (formal / honorific)
Swedish	<i>du</i>	<i>ni</i>
Finnish	<i>sinä</i>	<i>te</i>

As can be seen in Table 5, *sinä* and *te* in Finnish may be regarded as parallels to *du* and *ni* in Swedish, respectively. In Finnish, the address, conforming the conjugation rules as demonstrated in Table 6, is encoded in the verb and the possessive form as a suffix. The (first, second or third) person must be marked on the verb in the corresponding suffix form. The subject pronouns presented in brackets are optional, but the verbal suffixes are obligatory, to be specified in agreement with the sentential subject.

On the other hand, ‘possessive’ can be realized in the form of either genitive pronoun or suffix. According to Laitinen (2006), dropping a subject pronoun has a clear social meaning, for instance, reflecting the formality of a situation. In Finnish, it is also possible to describe one’s own activity or someone else’s without an explicit agent in the sentence through the passive, the plural form, and the third person singular generic.⁸ The use of agent-free sentences enables a speaker to avoid using any markings of second person.⁹

⁸ Muikku-Werner 1993.

⁹ Yli-Vakkuri 2005.

Table 6. Personal pronouns encoded in the verb (present tense) and the possessive form

Singular	Pronoun	puhu-a 'speak'	Possessive pronouns	nimi 'name'
1st person	(minä)	puhu-n	(minun)	nime-ni
2nd person	(sinä)	puhu-t	(sinun)	nime-si
3rd person	(hän)	puhu-u	(hänen)	nime-nsä
Plural				
1st person	(me)	puhu-mme	(meidän)	nime-mme
2nd person	(te)	puhu-tte	(teidän)	nime-nne
3rd person	(he)	puhu-vat	(heidän)	nime-nsä
Passive		puhu-taan		

The example of a reminder posted on the door of a changing room in Yli-Vakkuri (2005) indicates that the Finnish *te* in (5b) would look too formal and artificial. Thus, in this context, a term of address is avoided, and so is the verb reflecting a term of address; yet, in (5a) no term of address is used.

(5) Examples from Yli-Vakkuri (2005: 191)

Finnish Unohtu-i-ko jotain?
 forgotten-Past-Q something
 'Was something forgotten?'

Finnish Unohd-i-tte-ko (te) jotain?
 forget-Past-2PPS-Q (you) something
 'Did you forget something?'

[ABBREVIATIONS]

Q:interrogative suffix, 2PPS:second person plural/formal/honorific verbal suffix

Likewise, Finnish speakers tend to omit terms of address when they are unsure whether to use the familiar/informal *sinä* or the formal *te*. In other words, speakers utter terms of address when having confidence in which one to use. Similarly, the formal honorific form and non-honorific forms are used in Korean when it is clear to whom one is speaking or in what manner one should speak, but *-yo* would be used in order to appear neutral and polite. Hence, I attempt to tack together the use of address terms in Finnish and the use of the verbal endings in Korean as demonstrated in Table 7.

Table 7. Degree of formality in speech situations and corresponding expressions

in Finnish and Korean (modified from Yli-Vakkuri (2005:197))

Degree of formality	Finnish address terms	Korean honorifics
OFFICIAL FORMAL (ceremonial)	<i>te</i> titles respectful epithets	<i>-nita</i>
UNOFFICIAL FORMAL	<i>Te</i>	<i>-nita</i>
	generic verb forms (ellipsis), no address (Ø) <i>Sinä</i>	<i>-yo</i>
FAMILIAR INTIMATE INFORMAL PRIVATE	<i>sinä</i> nicknames, pet names, abusive, kinship etc.	(-yo) NH

According to Yli-Vakkuri (2005), some Finnish speakers demand the use of the official formal code of politeness in the speech setting of (B), while others naturally use the familiar/intimate/informal/private mode of address. In this situation, neither the *te* nor *sinä* forms are used, as shown in the darkest column in Table 7. Concerning verbal endings in Korean, some Korean speakers may similarly demand *-nita* in the discourse setting (B), while others prefer to use *-yo*.

If we now consider *te*, *sinä* and ‘no address’ (Ø), the speech setting in (B) is the broadest in Finnish used outside the home, just as the discourse setting involving *-yo* is in Korean. Korean speakers are able to discern whether to use *-nita* or *-yo* within a given discourse setting (B), but Finnish KFL learners may prefer *-yo* in the same way they avoid a term of address in their NL, even in situations where *-nita* should be used. Both *-nita* and *-yo* are considered ‘honorific’ and ‘polite’ although *-yo* is more broadly used than *-nita*. Therefore, Finnish learners may choose *-yo* if they are unsure between the two, as it is somewhat similar to the concept of ‘no address’ and considered polite. On the other hand, it is standard practice to use *te* and *-nita* in a speech setting (A) and *sinä* and a non-honorific (NH) speech style in a speech setting (C). Regardless, in Korean, *-yo* can be used in the context of (C) excluding ‘abusive’.

Implications for KFL teaching

We now examine the instructions introduced in the KFL classroom, in other words, what is taught regarding *-nita* and *-yo*. The key words used to give students the sociopragmatic idea of *-nita* and *-yo* are generally

‘informal polite’, and ‘formal deferential’/‘formal polite’, respectively. Certain key words may appear too abstract to comprehend the use of *-nita* and *-yo* for KFL learners, regardless of the modest list of discourse settings in the book, especially when students learn Korean while living in their own culture. In fact, Kim (2016) indicates that Swedish and Finnish speakers’ acquisition of *-nita* and *-yo* is influenced by their NL address systems, as well as the instructions given in the classroom. The NL influence must occur, since the learners define the formality and politeness with regard to *-nita* and *-yo*, relying on their own culture.

Table 8. Discourse Situations (Peterson 2010)

	Situation	Finnish	Korean
1	You work at a telecommunications company. You ask your assistant to take your phone messages while you are in a business meeting. Your assistant has worked in your department for five years. You say:	sinä 99% te 1%	-yo, NH
2	You are a secretary, and you have worked at the company for three weeks. Today you want to meet a friend for lunch, so you ask your supervisor if you can leave early. You say:	sinä 4% Ø 96%	-nita, -yo
3	You are waiting for a bus near your apartment. You have an old timetable, and you don’t know when your bus will arrive. A woman who lives in your building is also at the bus stop, but you don’t know her. She has a new timetable. You say:	sinä 40% te 33% Ø 27%	-yo
4	You are cooking dinner at home, and your (close relation) is in the kitchen. You need salt, and your hands are oily. You say:	sinä 92% Ø or plural 8%	NH, (-yo)
5	You are on your way downtown on the bus, and your mobile phone’s battery is dead. You need to phone your friend to decide where you will meet for coffee. The person sitting next to you, who is about the same age, has a mobile phone. You say:	sinä 85% te 11% Ø 4%	-yo
6	You are in the audience at movie. The two little girls in front of you are talking, and you can’t hear the movie. You decide to say something to their mother. You say:	sinä 8% te 8% Ø or plural 84%	-yo
7	You are eating at a restaurant. You are already eating your meal, and then you decide you would like to have some water. The waiter comes to the table, and then you say:	sinä 16% te 1% Ø 83%	-yo

Table 8 demonstrates the comparisons of the sociopragmatic competence between Finnish and Korean in various discourse situations. There are

seven situations that Peterson (2010) provided in her experiment involving 68 Finnish speakers (21 men and 47 women), who were somewhat younger than the average Finnish population. Nearly half of them were under the age of thirty. The rates of each type of address term uttered by the informants are presented, and on the far right side of Table 8 is the column for the speech style forms that would presumably be used by Korean speakers belonging to the same generation in corresponding situations.

Drawing attention to Situation 2, it is likely that Finnish KFL learners, when speaking Korean, may be mistaken in their use of *-yo* rather than *-nita* to be polite, considering the discourse context (C) in Table 7. They may even use *-nita* more frequently in Situation 3 than in Situation 2, which would be the opposite among Korean speakers.

Therefore, it appears necessary to teach *-nita* and *-yo* through the provision of concrete examples by showing pictures, video clips, etc. (Brinton 1991, Strauss 1999, Byon 2007), instead of verbally providing a plethora of abstract explanations of the Korean speech styles in class. It would be more efficient to compare the use of *-nita* and *-yo* to the learner's NL in the given discourse setting. For instance, the president of the nation should be addressed with *te* in official occasions in Finland, as it is exclusively with *-nita* in Korea. Also, culture/language-specific contexts – e.g. in a message written to a professor or a boss, in the formal *Taekwondo* lesson, etc. – need to be accompanied by the teaching of *-nita* and *-yo*. Moreover, KFL learners in the classroom should be introduced to not only the contexts for exclusive use of either *-nita* or *-yo*, but also various examples including both hearer honorifics by one speaker or in one speech event. This may help the learners to understand the Korean honorifics better with awareness that such kind of speech act – that is, the mixture of *-nita* and *-yo* – can take place even when referring to the same person in Korean.

For Swedish KFL learners, we now return to the questions posed in Section 3.1: (i) How would Swedish speakers learn to distinguish between the use of *-nita* and *-yo* sharing the identical feature of 'honorific'? and (ii) Would they employ the binary system for *ni* and *du* to learn it? Nowadays, the address term *du* is increasing and *ni* losing ground (Paulston 1976), and Ilie (2005:180) notes that younger generation address elderly people using *du* rather than the formerly preferred respectful term, *ni*. Moreover, the address type of 'no address' is not as common in Swedish as in Finnish (Norrby et al., 2015a and 2015b). Thus, it is assumed that the Swedish practice of address term may be closer to

English, with a singular address term, *you*. For this reason, it might be regarded more challenging for Swedish KFL learners to attain the sociopragmatic competence of *-nita* and *-yo*. Nevertheless, it does not imply that Swedish speakers are less sensitive to formality and politeness, as the features can be embedded in other forms such as lexical items, syntactic structures and prosodic contours. KFL teaching should enable them to switch their NL features to the corresponding ones in Korean through concrete and precise input provided by careful instruction. Although the path to attaining sociopragmatic competence of *-nita* and *-yo* may be diverse, according to the learner's NL, KFL learners should be able to reach their destination if they, based on the knowledge gained in class, are sufficiently exposed to the sociopragmatic and cultural side of the hearer honorifics.

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