

Capstone Seminar

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and high-ranking official or royalty terms²

personal pronouns in modern-day Mandarin Chinese is mostly obsolete, with the most common personal pronoun (if used at all) used by any gender being *wo* (我). In modern-day (South) Korean³ and Japanese, the use of both of these practices are still in use, albeit in variations regarding the specific language and culture

commonly utilized are *boku* (僕 / ぼく), *watashi* (私 / わたし), *ore* (俺 / おれ), and *atashi* (あたし / あたし)

ore and *atashi* are used by those who identify as male, with the former being a softer and less abrasive variant with the latter being far more informal and often borderline rude, while *watashi* and *boku* are often used by those who identify as female, with the latter being a less-used

typically-used pronoun. *ore* can be used by anyone, however, as it is the pronoun expected in formal situations such as writing or speaking and can be seen as gender neutral, but in everyday speech hearing someone who identifies as male using *ore* is oftentimes seen as strange or unusual. In modern Korean, only two first-pronouns are used, that being *jeo* (저) and *na* (나).

(Fix the font here) Unlike Japanese, however, these two pronouns carry no gender significance, but instead formality. While Japanese pronouns do bear a certain formality indicative of the speaker's situational awareness (e.g. as a male, using *ore* in a formal setting such as a classroom setting as opposed to *boku* or even *watashi* would be seen as inappropriate), *jeo* is

² ENAcademic, *Chinese Honorifics*. (regular font here)

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culture prevalent in South Korea. (regular font here)

used only in formal situations (either to humble oneself in front of someone of higher status or to show respect to a particular situation) while *na* is used in casual situations (such as in speaking to close family members/friends/associates or in casual conversation/locations)⁴. As opposed to

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a later section, focusing on the societal and cultural significance of second-person pronouns in East-Asian cultures as opposed to English-speaking countries.

Within the use of secondary (and even some tertiary) pronouns resides the use and often manipulation of relationships and societal normalities, commonly referred to in Japanese as the overly literal *uchi* and *soto* (), or literally 'inside' and 'outside'

relationships that refer directly to the relational and oftentimes subconsciously understood interactions between public and private, family and outsider, employee and employer, and so on and so forth.

These relationships break down into two variations: direct and indirect usage. The first category relies directly on various translations of the English word 'you' and directly referring to another person in conversation. While in English countries saying the phrase "What are (fix the font here) you

to indicate reference to another member bears no directly lack of formality or implication of rudeness (in English, the use of the vocal tones and speaking of the phrase itself belie the

() and () in Japanese to address someone is considered extremely rude and a directly disrespectful to that person. (

) used in rare circumstances where the speaker either doesn't know the person's name or it is a rhetorical question direction at an unknown person is accepted though not preferred, and the direct usage of (font) *anata* to someone you are speaking one-on-one to and/or know the name of

the person being spoken to shows the implication of disrespect toward said person, deigning that they are b

⁶. Once again, this concept is echoed in Korean, with words for second-person reference existing: *neo* () serves as the basis, with various conjugations for context (referring to someone's possessions or another's actions), but is considered to be the use of *banmal* when directly used spare for the rare context similar to the usage of *anata*. In a situation *neo* would be uncomfortable to use, the word *dangshin* () can also be used, but as is the case with *anata*, it is not preferred and also can be used as a pet name between two partners, which is why both terms exist in a space of ironic unknowingness between two strangers and is preferably dropped. As such, within the cultures there is heavy value on the use of names, as well as suffixes (and sometimes prefixes in the circumstance of terms of endearment, but will not be addressed at this time) affixed to said names to grant respect and importance to the person being spoken to at that

- (i.e. pronoun-

identifies a sheer arrogance and a show of major disrespect⁷. Stemming once again from traditional Chinese, the use of occupational honorifics and also status/gender honorifics (e.g. the many workplaces and family interactions, the latter of which will be discussed further with the inclusion of family- honorifics. For a professor or a teacher the family name is used with the title attached to it, thus *Tanakasensei* () in Japanese and Kim

⁶Asif Agha,

⁷Asif Agha,

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seonsaegnim (_____) in Korean creating a title of someone who is a master of their trade and someone who is to be referred to by someone who is not of equal status in terms of respect and thus self-⁸. With the inclusion of this title and its use, an inside/outside relationship is formed as that of the student and the master, in which the student can be referred to by any variation of their name, while the master is to be referred to by either the full use of name-title or just the use of the title as a marker, with the use of their given name and the use of title for more casual student/teacher relationships. Many of these occupational suffixes exist in these languages, such as for higher-level operatives, and thus the

and their family name was Song and referring to them as only *Song-ssi*)⁹. Of the standard honorific suffixes used, both Korean and Japanese expanded general honorifics outside of gendered titles into more common-place terms depending on gender and age of the person. In the gender-neutral and basic/expected of suffixes used in everyday conversation with either those the *san* () and *ssi* () affixed to the

categories, which will be discussed later in relation to the Korean gendered terms. In the circumstance of senior/and junior relationships, this cultural value is one of the most prominent in not only Korean and Japanese cultures but also in the predecessor of Chinese culture, in which this ideal took root and spread. In both Japanese and Korean, there are terms used to identify the senior (*senpai* (先輩 / せんぱい) in Japanese, and *sunbaenim* (선배님) in Korean) in comparison to the junior (*kouhai* (後輩 / こうはい) in Japanese, and *hubae* (후배) in Korean), but it is important to note that a person is never referred to by the junior term as a title much like someone of a senior status would with the aforementioned senior term; essentially, you will always hear *Tanaka-senpai* and *Eunwoo-sunbaenim* (following the respective last name/family name differences mentioned earlier in regards to correct respectful usage) but never a specific person referred to as *Akira-kouhai* or *Chanhee-hubae*. This discrepancy lies in the distinction that those of higher status or in this case, experience, deserve and are expected to be referred to by the title that identifies them as being of such stature, while the junior designation is only simply that of a category, and never a title. This form of honorific originated from the *qianbei* (前輩, lit. 'one from the generation before me) in sect-based China where techniques and other teachings were taught quite literally in a generational manner; the variants in Japanese and Korean share the similar character of 前 or 後 when written out in the Latin alphabet in East Asian-speaking countries, with the closest equivalent being that of a *professor* or *sir* when referring to someone of unknown status, but the senior/junior status culture- while oftentimes toxic and abused in workplaces or schools- just

carries no weight in comparison to these East-Asian cultures¹¹. While a variety of gendered honorifics and titles exist, these terms of senior and junior bear no gender identity and can be

this inside/outside relationship exists another aforementioned relationship dynamic still seen today as practiced in Korean and Japanese cultures; these lie entirely within gender and the perpetuity of male over female and old over young and what is expected to be given to these

existence of gendered familial terms that rely not only on the gender of the family member but that of their age as well. While Chinese, Korean, and Japanese all share these, there are discrepancies between the three, majorly between Korean and Japanese as the former uses these same honorifics to refer to non-family members as well. Firstmost, the most commonly used terms between siblings are as follows:

the speaker, so there are only four used commonly (with slight pronunciation variations): They are *ane/onee* (/) for an older sister; *imouto* () for a younger sister; *onii/aniki* (/) for an older brother; and *otouto* () for a younger brother.

For Korean, the honorific used relies not only on the addressee's gender identity but also that of the speaker for respect toward an older party, so there are six that are commonly used: *unni*() and *noona* () both refer to an older female; *hyung* () and *oppa* () refer to an older male; *namdongsaeng* (),

¹¹ David C Kang,

literally 'young man person', is the only term used for referring to a younger brother, and *yeodongsaeng* (), is the only term used for a younger sister. If you are a female speaker, then the terms you will use will traditionally be *oppa* and *unni*, while if you are a male speaker you will use *hyung* and *noona* exclusively in a traditional sense; referring to a younger sibling is in reference only and not in title, therefore gender of the speaker does matter in this case. (Side note: using the opposite honorifics than the

same-sex twins who are quite close may decide to skip the formality due to the age difference being minimal. A unique facet of Korean familial honorifics lies in the fact that these terms are used outside of blood-

second-

in a new and altered modern way. Many titles seen today actually originate from royal, noble, or generational servitude titles and are no longer used by their original purpose. Of these archaic categories, three varieties of these pronouns (first and second) existed that helped shape the

(*Xia*,) lofty titles and pronouns often play on this

Shang,) or a term using the character *gua*

()

archaic terms is within the use of second-person polite versus impolite pronouns. All three terms for referring to a group of people including the speaker (i.e. a very formal version of 'we') remain in use today, but are identifiably archaic and extremely formal due to being the original archaic terms and typically seen only in very formal business settings or in literature. In Chinese, two of these terms are *wobei* () or *wubei* () and are typically used only in a literary sense as opposed to the more common *women* (), the Japanese term is either *wareware* () or *warera* () using the *wa* () character and pronoun addressed earlier, and the Korean term that replaces the common place *uri/urin* (/) is *jeohui* (), which indicates a very formal setting and therefore equivalency in status amongst all present members¹⁵. It is also of importance to note that many of these lofty titles and terms/suffixes in all three cultures today remain only in use within the Church and other religious situations as a testament to the holy and godly nature of securing such offices. While many of these linguistic pieces are no longer used for the reason they were originally used, the culture they emulated remains and continues to shape these modern-day cultures, all irrevocably tied together.

Within a language lies the requirement to address and identify oneself but also to address and engage another, establishing status and respect toward the listener with a simple use of honorifics or pronouns. In modern-day Japanese and Korean culture these pronouns and terms of

¹⁵ David C Kang,

endearment, respect, and status- while used and implemented differently within the cultures to establish different colors and systems respective to their historical values- stem from the timely preeminence of historical Chinese and its linguistic values of honorific times beginning from the most simple of masters and teachers, *laoshi* () and *shifu* (), and the humble student or servant, *pu* (/) and *bi* ()¹⁶ and adapting to the modern-day uses seen in the classrooms, workplaces, and even families of 21st Japan, Korean, and China. While the linguistic and societal basis of these terms remain the same, the intent, usage, and shaping of these terms in looking at not only the specific culture but also the literal translation of the chosen terms reflect the importance of these honorifics within East-Asian cultures that is unknown or unfamiliar to English-speaking cultures, highlighting history with every use of a specific term to harken back to a time period before these cultures could stand on their own in recognition. As such, from an American approach, the East-Asian honorific system bears no counterpart history-wise, and thus provides those unaffiliated with Asia values from the time of establishment to modern day variations and implementations.

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¹⁶ ENAcademic,

from *Academic Dictionaries and Encyclopedias*.

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2) Notes:

b. Use a full citation for the first quote for a source.

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