

Forms and Functions of Diminutives

Seongha Rhee

(Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

Rhee, Seongha. 2001. *Forms and Functions of Diminutives*. *The Journal of Linguistic Science* 19, 115-146. This paper examines the forms and the functions of diminutive forms from a cross-linguistic perspective. Following inclusion of Korean data this paper presents thirteen semantic types and four most common functions of diminutives. In addition, the patterning of the semantic changes are mapped in a radial category where metaphor and metonymy play a role as grammaticalization mechanisms. Departing from the current researches, it is suggested that not only CHILD and SMALL, but also EGG can be a source of diminutive forms, drawing on the Korean data. (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)

Key words: grammaticalization, diminutive, radial category, metaphor, metonymy, inference

1. Introduction

The diminutive construction is one of the most universally-attested constructions in language, and has received notable attention of the linguists. However, there is relative paucity of the research on the diminutive forms in Korean, with a recent notable exception of Koo (1999), which placed focus on various diminutive forms appearing across dialects in Korea. With this backdrop this paper is intended to augment the research on the diminutive forms in Korean as well as those attested cross-linguistically. In accordance with the current research trend in grammaticalization, which aims at exploring the genesis and developmental journey of grammatical forms, this paper undertakes investigation of the developments of the forms that denote diminutives from a cross-linguistic

and grammaticalization perspective.

Literature on the Korean diminutive forms largely addresses the issue from a synchronic morphological perspective (Choe 1989, Huh 1975, Kim 1999, Kim 1986 *inter alia*) with a few exceptions that employed diachronic and dialectal perspectives (e.g. Koo 1998, 1999).

2. Formal and Semantic Characterization

In this section we will briefly overview formal and semantic characterization of the diminutive forms from a cross-linguistic perspective.

2.1 Forms

It has been noted that diminutive forms are commonly realized by nasals (Jakobson & Waugh 1979), by reduplication (Moravcsik 1978, Mendoza 1998), by higher tonality (Jespersen 1922, Sapir 1915/1949, Ultan 1978, Ohala 1984, Nichols 1971), or by high front vowels or fronted consonants, *inter alios*. Morphological devices to realize diminutive are diverse: affixes, shift in consonant, vowel, or lexical tone, and changes in noun-class or gender (Jurafsky 1996).

The issue as to what constitutes the diminutive in Korean has been controversial. The most commonly cited diminutive markers are *-aki*, *-aci*, and *-ali*, but some scholars included *-ami*, *-akwi*, *-wungi*, *-oli*, *-wuli* (Kim 1980); some included *-tayingi*, *-sakwi*, *-eci*, *-ekci*, *-eng*, *-engi*; still others included *-mayngi*, *-engi*, *-angi*, *-kaypi*, *-ccaki*, etc. (Kim 1986).¹⁾ It has not been established how many diminutive morphemes there are and how they are related. We shall address this issue briefly here.

The best instance that illustrates the variegated diminutive forms is the PDK word *ipsakwi*. According to *Wulimal Khun Sacen* (1992) the

1) For transliteration of Korean, the Extended Yale System was used as proposed in Rhee (1996) in order to accommodate the Middle and the Early Modern Korean data.

following is an impressive list of the forms all attested in Korean which have the same denotation as their "standard" variety of *iphsakwi*, a diminutive form of *iph* 'leaf'.

- (1) iphsakwi (Seoul dialect)
- iphali (Seoul dialect)
- iphssak (Seoul dialect)
- iphsay (Seoul dialect)
- iphsakwu (Seoul dialect)
- ipphali (Seoul dialect)
- iphakwi (Hamnam dialect)
- iphakwu (Hwanghae dialect)
- ipheli (Gangweon & Gyeongsang dialects)
- iphkkang (Jeolla dialect)
- iphsa (Choongnam dialect)
- iphsak (Jeolla dialect)
- iphsaki (Jeonnam dialect)
- iphsakwui (Hwanghae dialect)
- iphsangi (Jeju dialect)
- iphsangki (Jeju dialect)
- iphsangkwi (Jeju dialect)
- iphsangkwi (Pyeongnam dialect)
- iphsayki (Gyeonggi & Jeonbuk dialects)
- iphssakwu (Gyeongsang & Jeonnam dialects)
- ippheli (Gangweon & Gyeongsang dialects)
- ipsa (Jeonbuk & Choongnam dialects)
- ipsak (Jeolla dialect)
- ipsangkwi (Jeju dialect)
- ipsayki (Jeolla dialect)
- ipsayngi (Jeju dialect)
- ipsayngki (Jeju dialect)

ipssaki (Gyeongnam dialect)

From all of the above forms we can see recurring pattern of certain derivational morphology. Excluding those forms that involve no morphological derivation but rather apparent contraction, i.e. *ipsa*, *iphsa* and *iphsay*, the rest can be divided into three major categories according to the diminutive morphemes they utilize, as the following.

(2) A. *-aki* Type

iphsakwi	iphssak	iphsakwu	iphakwi	iphakwu
iphsak	iphsaki	iphsakwui	iphsangki	iphsangkwi
iphsangkwi	iphsayki	iphssakwu	iphssakwu	ipsak
ipsangkwi	ipsayki	ipssaki		

B. *-angi* Type

iphkkang	iphsangi	iphsangki	iphsangkwi	iphsangkwi
ipsangkwi	ipsayngi	ipsayngki		

C. *-ali* Type

iphali	ipphali	ipheli	ippheli
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Some forms such as *iphsangki*, *iphsangkwi*, *iphsangkwi*, *ipsangkwi*, and *ipsayngki*, mostly belonging to Type B, in fact utilize both *-aki* and *-angi* morphemes, thus occupying membership in both types. All 28 instances of the diminutive words of *iph* can be remarkably reduced into three categories of the diminutive forms.

Now we shall review these diminutive morphemes in the light of the research presented in the current literature. The following are the forms listed as diminutive markers in literature.

- (3) Kim (1986): *-aci*, *-eci*, *-aki*, *-eki*, *-ali*, *-eli*, *-mayngi*, *-meyngi*, *-ayngi*, *-ang(i)*, *-eng(i)*, *-cang(i)*, *-ceng(i)*, *-kaypi*, *-kkaypi*, *-sakwi*, *-ccaki*, *-leki*, *-layki*, *-leyki*.

Koo (1998): -aki, -yaci, -aci, -ngaci, -ali, -ngali, -aki, -ngangi, -eli,
-ek

If we take into account all phonological variations from the ambient phonological context, and exclude highly unproductive morphemes both diachronically and synchronically, we can see that most of them belong to the three major types in (2).

There has been some queries regarding the proto-forms of diminutive markers. For example, Koo (1998, 1999), expressing uncertainty of the original meaning of *-aci*, suggests that it is related to *-kaci* 'branch' 'species', and follows Lee (1961) in hypothesizing an adnominal suffix *-ang/eng/ng* in the word formation of *shongaci* 'calf', *mAngaci* 'foal', *kangaci* 'puppy', etc. As to *-kali* and *-ngali*, Koo (1999) suggests that the latter is a nasalized variant of the former, and that they are used to denote animal terms. As to *-aki* and *-angi*, Koo (1999) suggests, *a la* Choi (1968) a phonological relation between them similar to the above-mentioned *-kali* and *-ngali*, and speculates that they had the original function of "extending the nouns" by affixing to the small-sized animals and plants.

Pending more in-depth research, we are inclined to hypothesize two origins of the Korean diminutive markers: *-aki* and *-al*. It seems that *-aki* was very productively used in MidK and EMK as shown below:

- | | | |
|----------|-------------|---|
| (4) psAl | 'rice' | > psAlaki, sAlaki |
| cyenptoy | 'grass' | > cyenptoaki, |
| moycholi | 'quail' | > mochAlaki, motchAlAki, moychAlaki,
moycholaki, |
| stAmtoy | 'heat rash' | > stAmtoyaki, stAmtoyaki, stAmtoyakki,
stAmtoyeki (Koo 1999) |

Since the identical form, *-aki*, is a full noun denoting 'a baby', it is straightforwardly related to 'a baby' or 'a child', in accordance with cross-linguistic observation that the diminutives are primitively related to

a term that means 'a child'. Following Koo (1999) we can hypothesize that *-angi* [aŋi] is a nasalized variant of *-aki* [agi], where [g] was changed into [ŋ]. Another diminutive morpheme *-aci* [aji] can be regarded as a palatalized form of *-aki* [agi]. Considering that the change from [g] before a high front vowel [i] into [c] is attested in other languages, such as pre-Sanskrit as in **gegome* > **g^vegome* > **g^vagāma* > *ḥagāma* 'went' (Hock 1991: 74), the formation of this variant does not involve any unnatural procedure. Even *Wulimal Khun Sacen* (1992) suggests that the forms in *mAyaci*, *mAtaki*, *syoyyaci*, *sAlaki*, *ak*, *cAnaki* are related to the lexical word *aki* 'child'.

On the other hand, the other diminutive marker, *-al*, is related to 'an egg', as the term as a full noun signifies in PDK. We may consider that the final *-i* is a hypocoristic suffix, which is also frequently attested cross-linguistically. This is in concordance with the universal tendency that the diminutive markers are typically derived from a noun denoting small object, but it is different in that mostly the small object is 'child' (Jurafsky 1996), instead of an egg. In Korean *-al* is often used to signify an individuated entity of a generic object, e.g. typically grain, as shown in the following examples:

(5) <i>nwun</i>	'eye'	<i>nwunal</i>	'eyeball'
<i>chong</i>	'gun'	<i>chongal</i>	'bullet'
<i>ssal</i>	'rice'	<i>ssalal</i>	'grain of rice'
<i>pap</i>	'steamed rice'	<i>papal</i>	'grain of steamed rice'
<i>khong</i>	'bean'	<i>khongal</i>	'grain of beans' (Ma, 1991)

2.2. Semantics

The meanings derived from the incorporation of diminutive forms are of wide variety. Its core semantics, albeit minor controversies, is largely agreed to be 'smallness' as the term 'diminutive' suggests. However, its extended senses are innumerable, and the typology are often arbitrary. This paper presents eleven semantic types of the diminutive forms from

cross-linguistic data and examines each in turn.

In terms of Korean diminutive forms, generally speaking most categories found in cross-linguistic data are also attested in Korean, but some of them, e.g. female gender, approximation, marginality, and typical behavior do not have instances in Korean diminutive forms. In addition, there are two interesting categories that are not attested in other cross-linguistic types, such as animal body-parts, and animal names. We shall examine each category below.

2.2.1 Offspring

Since many diminutive forms across languages are grammaticalized forms from a lexical item signifying 'child', one of the most common senses of the diminutive is the 'offspring' sense, as is shown in the following examples.

(6)	Ojibwa	kwe	'woman'	kwezens	'girl'
	Tibetan	dom	'bear'	dom-bu	'bear cub'
	Nez Perce	'iceyé.ye	'coyote'	'iceyé.ye-qen	'young coyote'
	Ewe	koklô	'chicken'	koklô-ví	'chick'
	Ewe	nyi	'cow'	nyi-ví	'calf'
	Zulu	indoda	'man'	indodana	'son'

(Heine *et al.* 1991; Jurafsky 1996, Poulos 1999)

The following are examples of the diminutive forms in Korean that encode 'offspring' or 'child' as the primary sense.

(7)	songaci	'calf'	(< so 'cow/bull')	
	mangaci	'foal'	(< mal 'horse')	
	pyengali	'chicken'	(< piyuk 'hen/rooster')	(Koo 1999)

2.2.2 Smallness

Directly derivable from the 'offspring' sense is the 'small' sense associated with the diminutive. This is due to our world knowledge that 'offspring' is usually small. However, unlike the offspring sense which is only applicable to animates, the 'small' sense is applicable to inanimates as well as exemplified in the following.

(8)

Yiddish	di mil	'the mill'	dos milexl	'the little mill'
Khasi	ka khnaay	'the mouse'	?ii khnaay	'little mouse'
Cantonese	toi ²¹	'stage'	toi ³⁵	'table'
Ewe	hē	'knife'	hē-ví	'razor'
Ewe	kpé	'stone'	kpé-ví	'small stone'
Ewe	ame	'person'	ame-ví	'short person'
Tsonga	muff	'village'	swimutana	'small village'
Zulu	intaba	'mountain'	intatshana	'small mountain'

(Heine *et al.* 1991; Jurafsky 1996, Poulos 1999)

Similarly Korean diminutives encode 'smallness' as shown in the following examples.

(9)

kolang	'furrow'	(< kol 'valley')
tolmengi	'small stone/pebble'	(< tol 'stone')
almayngi	'tiny core'	(< al 'egg, content')
kkolayngi	'tiny tail'	(< kkolo 'tail')
ppwulengi	'tiny root'	(< ppwuli 'root')
homayngi	'tiny hand hoe'	(< homi 'hand hoe')
tolang/ttolang	'tiny stream'	(< tolh 'stream')

2.2.3 Female Gender

It has been often observed that diminutive is closely associated with the

concept of femaleness. This is widely attested cross-linguistically as shown in the following examples.

(10)	Hebrew	mapa	'tablecloth' (M)	mapit	'napkin' (F)
	Berber	ixzr	'stream' (M)	tixzrt	'little stream' (F)
	Hindi	ghantā	'bell' (M)	ghantī	'small bell' (F)
					(Jurafsky 1996)

However, there are no instances where diminutives encode 'female gender' in Korean.

2.2.4 Approximation

Somewhat surprisingly, diminutive forms often encode 'approximation' as part of their semantics. Therefore, when they are attached to a stem, the semantics denoted by the stem becomes attenuated, i.e. the semantic force is weakened as shown in the following.

(11)	Karok	-impuka	'warm'	-impúk-ač	'warmish'
	Greek	ksinos	'sour'	ksinutsikos	'sourish'
	Nahuatl (huitz)-tli		'it's a pointed thing'	huitzpīl	'it's a little pointed thing'
					(Jurafsky 1996)

In Korean, however, there are no instances of diminutives that encode approximation.

2.2.5 Imitation

Diminutive forms often yield 'imitation' sense which is often indistinguishable from the previously exemplified 'approximation' sense. Imitation refers to physical resemblance involving natural objects, where the derived items need not be smaller than the originals. Some of such examples are as follows:

(12) Dom.Spn	boca	'mouth'	boquete	'hole'	
	Hungarian	csillag	'star'	csillagocska	'asterisk'
	Mandarin	zhu	'pearl'	fo zhur	'monk's beads'

(Jurafsky 1996)

The examples of imitation sense are extremely scarce in Korean. The following is such an example.

(13)	kalak	'long, narrow object'	(< kallay 'branch')
		(finger, chopstick, noodle, etc.)	

2.2.6 Marginality

Another sense of the diminutive directly derivable from the imitation sense is marginality. It refers to the marginal status of the denotation relative to the status of the original, as shown below.

(14)				
Ewe	kesinɔ́	'rich person'	kesinɔ́-ví	'a parvenu, somebody who is not really rich'
Ewe	núŋlɔ́lá	'writer'	núŋlɔ́lá-ví	'inexperienced writer'
Ewe	núfíálá	'teacher'	núfíálá-ví	'inexperienced teacher, somebody who has just started teaching'
Ewe	dɔ́yɔ́lá	'healer'	dɔ́yɔ́lá-ví	'assistant of or apprentice to a healer'
Ewe	βu'kulá	'driver'	βu'kulá-ví	'somebody who knows how to drive but has not yet acquired a driving license'

(Heine *et al.* 1991)

When marginality is driven to its extreme the sense borders on pretence or fraudulence as in the following example in Ewe.

- (15) Ewe amegã 'elder, boss' amegã-ví 'somebody who pretends to
be an elder or a boss'
(Heine *et al.* 1991)

However, there are no instances in Korean where diminutives encode either marginality or fraudulence.

2.2.7 Weakness/Insignificance

Likewise, smallness and marginality senses from the diminutive give rise to 'weakness/insignificance' sense. As is the case with 'approximation' 'weakness/insignificance' sense from the diminutive weakens the semantic force of the original denotation. Some of such examples are as follows:

- (16) Ewe gbe 'voice' gbe-ví 'weak, faint voice'
Ewe ya 'wind' ya-ví 'light wind, breeze'
Ewe dɔ 'disease' dɔ-ví 'minor suffering, such as a cold'
Ewe nya 'matter/word' nya-ví 'an insignificant matter, a minor
thing' (Heine *et al.* 1991)

The 'weakness/insignificance' sense is often attested cross-linguistically as seen above, and so is in Korean. The following are some of such examples.

- (17) payttayki 'belly' (< pay 'belly')
tungttayki 'back' (< tung 'back')
khoppayki 'nose' (< kho 'nose')
ayswungi 'fledgling' (< ay 'child')
kwittayki 'ear' (< kwi 'ear')
polttayki 'cheek' (< pol 'cheek')
talikkayngi 'leg' (< tali 'leg')
ppyamttakwi 'cheek' (< ppyam 'cheek')

2.2.8 Exactness

Somewhat surprisingly the diminutive can give rise to 'exactness' sense. This is rather surprising that other senses typically associated with the diminutive tend to be toward the periphery rather than the core. This issue shall be addressed in §xx. The examples in question are as follows:

(18)	Latin	parvus	'small'	parvulus	'very small'
	Karok	?áfiva	'bottom'	?áfiva-îč	'the very bottom'
	Mex.Spn	ahora	'now'	ahorita	'just now, right now'
	Ewe	amedáhe	'poor person'	kesinótó-ví	'a truly poor, deplorable person'

(Heine *et al.* 1991; Jurafsky 1996)

In Korean the 'exactness' sense is attested in a few words. However, the original, pre-derivational counterparts are lexical gap, and therefore, further research is admittedly called for. A few examples are as follows:

(19)	cwulkeli	'exact stem'	(< cwulki 'stem')
	ungeli	'condensed exact core'	(< ??)
	kokayngi	'deepest core'	(< ??)

2.2.9 Individuation

The diminutive marker can encode 'individuation' as a part of its semantics, where 'individuation' refers to an individuated object of a mass noun or an instantiation of a more abstract verbal concept. The following are some of such examples. In the following are some of such examples.

(20)	Yiddish	der zamd	'sand'	dos zemdl	'grain of sand'
	Berber	azMur	'oliive trees'	tazMurt	'an olive tree'
	Nahuatl	(ā)-tl	'water'	(ā-tzin)-tli	'water in well/tank'

Ewe	Eɛe	'Ewe'	Eɛe-ví	'an Ewe'
Ewe	du(me)	'village'	dume-ví	'a native of a village'
Ewe	pome	'kinship'	pome-ví	'a relative'

(Heine *et al.* 1991; Jurafsky 1996)

Some of the Korean examples of 'individuation' are as follows:

(21) kwimekeli	'deaf person'	(< kwimek- 'be deaf')
cwumek	'fist'	(< cwuy- 'grasp, make fist')
nameci	'remainder'	(< nam- 'remain')
pwusuleki	'crumb'	(< pwusulu- 'disintegrate')
ccwukuleki	'empty grain'	(< ccwukule- 'flatten')
ccwukengi	'empty grain'	(< (?) ccwukule- 'flatten')
iphali	'(single) leaf'	(< iph 'leaf')
iphsakwi	'(single) leaf'	(< iph 'leaf')
wusumkamali	'laughable person/object'	(< wus- 'laugh')
kwukyengkamali	'spectatable object'	(< kwukyeng 'spectation')
thelek	'(single) hair'	(< thel 'hair')
kkutayngi	'end part'	(< kkuth 'end')
kocang	'village'	(< koc 'place')
kwutengi	'pit'	(< kwut 'tunnel')
kitong/kitwung	'pillar'	(< kit 'pillar/supporter')
kkolaci	'shape'	(< kkol 'shape')
cakttayki	'support stick for A-frame'	(< cakttay 'stick')
hengkephtteyki	'piece of cloth'	(< hengkeph 'cloth')
yottayki	'blanket'	(< yo 'blanket')
kecekttayki	'straw-mat'	(< kecek 'straw-mat')
kongi	'pestle'	(< ko 'pestle')
pwucikkayngi	'furnace stick'	(< ??)

2.2.10 Partitive

The semantics of the diminutive includes 'partitive', a synecdoche or part-whole relation between the derived and the original. Such cases are exemplified below:

- (22) Ewe alɔ 'lower arm' alɔ-ví 'finger'
 Ewe afɔ 'foot, leg' afɔ-ví 'toe'
 Ewe ŋkú 'eye' ŋkú-ví 'pupil' (Heine *et al.* 1991)

There are numerous examples of Korean diminutives that encode 'partitive', of which some examples are as follows:

- (23) ssalaki 'rice bit' (< ssal 'rice')
 ccasulayki 'rice bit' (Hamnam dialect) (< ?)
 kkuthuleki 'tip' (< kketh 'end')
 momttwungi 'body (esp. torso)' (< mom 'body')
 momttwungali 'body (esp. torso)' (< mom 'body')
 yephtayngi 'side' (< yeph 'side')
 kkongtayngi 'tail-tip' (< kkoli 'tail')
 swunayngi 'sprout-tip' (< swun 'sprout')
 kkoktayngi 'top-end' (< kkoktayki 'top')
 kkoktali 'top-end' (< kkoktayki 'top')

2.2.11 Typical Behavior

The diminutive can also signify the 'typical behavior' sense. This type of semantic encoding resembles the type involved in the derivation of 'exactness' sense in that in both cases the semantic directionality of the diminutive is toward the core rather than toward the periphery. Such examples are well illustrated in the following from Ewe diminutive words.

- (24) Ewe amedzró 'foreigner, alien' amedzró-ví 'somebody who behaves

Ewe	amedáhe 'poor person'	amedáhe-ví	like an alien' 'a deplorable person, somebody who suffers because s/he is poor and therefore deserves pity and attention'
Ewe	ameyibɔɔ 'black person'	ameyibɔɔ-ví	'somebody who shows a typical African behavior, adheres to African values'

(Heine *et al.* 1991)

Unlike Ewe, in which diminutives frequently encode 'typical behavior', Korean does not seem to have such instances.

2.2.12 Animal Body-Parts

An interesting phenomenon in Korean diminutives is that diminutive forms often mark animal body-part terms. Usually the original term is the counterpart terms in human anatomy, but sometimes the Korean counterpart terms are not attested. The following are some of such examples.

(25) saykki	'young [N]'	(cf. ayki, aki 'child')
taykali	'head'	(cf. meli 'head')
mokaci	'neck'	(cf. mok 'neck')
myekaci	'neck'	(cf. mok 'neck')
kacwuk	'hide'	(cf. kach 'skin')
poltteyki	'cheek'	(cf. pol 'cheek')
nwunkkal	'eye'	(cf. nwun 'eye')
cwutwungi	'bill/mouth'	(cf. ip 'mouth')
cwuteyngi	'bill/mouth'	(cf. ip 'mouth')
cwutwungali	'bill/mouth'	(cf. ip 'mouth')

khocwungbayngi	'nose'	(cf. kho 'nose')
payttayki	'belly'	(cf. pay 'belly')
payttayci	'belly'	(cf. pay 'belly')
ippal	'tooth'	(cf. i 'tooth')
tungtteyki	'back'	(cf. tung 'back')
thekaci/theykaci	'jaw'	(cf. thek 'jaw')

2.2.13 Animal names

It is also an interesting phenomenon in Korean that many animal terms carry formal characteristics of the diminutive forms. However, since the original terms without such diminutive markers are often lexical gaps, it is not clear whether animal terms were directly lexicalized with the use of diminutive markers without [stem+affix] derivational process. The following are some of such examples.

(26) twayci	'pig'	(< MidK, EMK toth/tos 'pig')
thokkayngi	'rabbit'	(cf. thokki 'rabbit')
kkaykolakci	'frog'	(cf. kaykwuli 'frog')
yemsangi	'goat'	(cf. yemso 'goat') ²⁾
mikkwulaci	'mud fish'	(cf. mikkwuli 'mud fish')
mikkwulakci	'mud fish'	(cf. mikkwuli 'mud fish')
peleci	'bug'	(cf. pelley 'bug')
meychwulaki	'quail'	(cf. meychwuli 'quail')
saykayngi	'shrimp'	(cf. saywu 'shrimp')
kwukwulakci	'fresh-water catfish'	(cf. kwukwuli 'fresh-water catfish')
chayngkulamchayngi	'sting mud fish'	
ssokali	'sting catfish'	

2) Koo (1999: 136) reports that in Gyeonggi dialect (Anseong area) *yemsayngi* designates a kid while *yemso* designates a goat. However, this is very exceptional in that both of them refer to the goat regardless of its maturity elsewhere.

songsali	'minnow'
salkkhoyngi	'lynx'
ssalkaci	'lynx' (Jeonnam dialect)

3. Functions of Diminutive

Based on various meanings exemplified in the preceding section, diminutives carry various functions. Here we will discuss some of such functions, e.g. attenuative, intensifier, pejorative, and hypocorism, in turn.

3.1 Attenuative

Attenuative function refers to the weakening of the semantic or illocutionary force by means of affixing diminutive markers. In light of the fact that diminutives often encode approximation, imitation, marginality and weakness/insignificance, this type of diminutive function is frequently an essential part of diminutive semantics and a productive morphological derivation as shown in the following examples.

- (27) a. tristón [triste+Dim] triste
 'a bit sad / somewhat sad' 'sad'
- b. delgadón [delgado+Dim] delgado
 'a bit thin / not very thin' 'thin'
- c. aguadón [aguado+Dim] aguado
 'somewhat watered-down' 'watered-down'
- d. bonitilla, bonilla [bonita+Dim] bonita
 'pretty, but not very pretty' 'pretty'

The attenuative function can be extended to the pragmatics of discourse to express politeness or deference, a tendency well-attested in the history of the language (González Olle 1962, Nájuez 1973, Mendoza 1998 *inter alia*). For example Matsumoto (1985) and Sifianou (1992), (both as cited in Jurafsky 1988: 431) present the following examples of the use of *chotto*, a

Japanese discourse diminutive largely tantamount to Korean *com*, and of Greek diminutive marker to weaken the illocutionary force of an imperative.

- (28) Japanese: Chotto shizuka ni shite kudasai
'Please *chotto* be quiet.'
Greek: δoste mu psaraki tote
give me fish-Dim then
'Could you give me some fish then?'

Likewise, the following examples from Spanish illustrate the cases where the diminutive encodes speaker's attitude to attenuate what is regarded as a too strong sense (Mendoza 1998, adapted).

- (29) a. (Where is the university?) Está lejecillos. [lejos+Dim]
'It's a bit far. / It's not very far.'
b. (How was he?) Estaba gordillo. [gordo+Dim]
'He was a little fat (but not too fat).'

Among other many languages, Awtuw shows a case where personal pronouns take the diminutive suffix when the speaker wants to elicit sympathy for the referent of the suffixed pronoun as in the following example (as cited in Jurafsky 1996: 558).

- (30) wan-yəm im kokot d-ik-al e
1Sg-Dim night all FA-set-until.dawn P
'Poor me had to sit up all night.'

3.2 Intensifier

An interesting phenomenon associated with the diminutive is that, quite contrary to the previously discussed attenuative function, it can also augment the semantics of the original. This rather contradicting, puzzling

phenomenon is based on the diminutive semantic function of adding exactness sense to the original. Jurafsky (1996: 559) argues that the exactness sense is based on an implicit scale of deictic extent, e.g. if a deictic word denoting 'here' is affixed with a diminutive, it will mean something like 'right here'. However, there are examples that do not support this claim. For example, in the following examples adapted from Mendoza (1998), (a) might be explained with its deictic association, but (b) seems to be not so.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| (31) a. (Where's the university?) | Está cerquita. [cerca+Dim]
'It is very/really near.' |
| b. (How much is it?) | Está baratito. [barato+Dim]
'It is very/really cheap.' |

The exactness sense is also derived if the diminutive suffix is attached to such words as *corto* 'short', *angosto* 'narrow', etc.

3.3 Pejorative

Pejoration, or regarding the object with disdain or disrespect, is often inseparable from the core diminutive semantics. Its creation seems to be associated with various diminutive senses such as offspring, small, female gender, imitation, marginality, and weakness/insignificance, and with the interaction among them.

In the light of Korean examples, many diminutive forms used to designate animal body-part terms, despite their frequent comparative superior size to humans, are closely related to the creation of the pejorative forms. For example, if a diminutive form is used for an animal the term does not carry any pejorative sense, but it does if it is attributed to human body-part terms. For this reason animal body-part terms are often used in verbal abuse directed to humans, as shown in the following examples.

(32) Term	denotation in animals	abusive designation for humans
saykki	young [N]	person
taykali	head	head
nwunkkal	eye/eyeball	eye
cwutwungi	mouth/bill	mouth
myekaci	neck	neck

The pejoration phenomena are widely attested cross-linguistically. Jurafsky (1988: 311) even notes that the link between the central diminutive and contempt is a standard metaphorical one, perhaps a universal one. Let us look at some of such examples in Spanish, Portuguese, and elsewhere.

(33)				
Spanish	animalejo	'wretched little animal'	animal	'animal'
Spanish	discursoje	'wretched little speech'	discurso	'speech'
Spanish	librejo	'mediocre little book'	libro	'book'
Spanish	autorzuelo	'third-rate author'	autor	'author'
Spanish	mujerzuela	'disreputable woman'	mujer	'woman'
Portuguese	comidinha barata	'wretched meal'	comida	'food'
Portuguese	doutorzinho	'mediocre/bad doctor'	doutor	'doctor'
Cantonese	mo ₅ nui ₂	'dance hostess'	nui ₅	'woman'
Cantonese	sek ₆ nui ₂	'frigid woman'	nui ₅	'woman'
Nez Perce	?icki:cu?mix	'Coeur d'Alene (der)'	?iskí:cu?mix	'Coeur d'Alene'

(Mendoza 1998, Alonso 1937, Jurafsky 1988)

3.4 Hypocorism

As diminutive forms encode offspring, smallness, female gender, and weakness/insignificance, they often lend themselves to hypocoristic usage, i.e. a way of expressing affection, intimacy, appreciation, and familiarity to others, as well as showing sympathy and compassion (Mendoza 1998). For example, a Spanish sentence *¿Estás enfermíto* [enfermo+Dim]? 'Are you

sick?' does not mean that the speaker thinks that the addressee is not really sick or that he is just a little bit sick, rather the speaker wants to show sympathy and concern (Mendoza 1998: 48-49).

It is widely known that in many languages affectionate terms of address often involve diminutives. For example, English hypocoristic *-ie* and *-y* are often use in names such as *Johnnie*, *Betsy*, *Susie*, *Franky*, *Bobby*, etc. and in kinship terms such as *Daddy*, *Mommy*, *Sonny*, *Auntie*, *Granny*, etc. Spanish speakers also say *Papacito* [papa+Dim], *Mamacita* [mama+Dim], *hijito* [hijo+Dim], etc. Likewise, Russian *sistritsa* ('sister', affectionate), Afrikaans *oorgrootjies* ('great-grandparents', affectionate), Hungarian *apika* ('father' affectionate), Nahuatl *Pedroh-pil* (Pedro, affectionate), and numerous others are a handful of examples of such use.

For this reason, diminutives are frequently used for expressing politeness as shown in the following examples in Spanish and Portuguese.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| (34) Spanish | Espere un momentito/minutito, por favor.
'Just a moment/minute, please.' |
| Spanish | ¿Alguna otra cosita?
'Anything else for you?' |
| Spanish | Hazme un favorcito.
'Do me a favor.' |
| Spanish | Quisiera hablarle de un asuntillo.
'I would like to talk to you about something.' |
| Portuguese | Espere um momentinho/minutinho.
'Just a moment/minute.' |
| Portuguese | Alguma outra coisinha?
'Anything else for you?' |

(Mendoza 1998, Seung-duk Lee p.c.)

Not only politeness or affection but also admiration can be expressed by means of diminutives. This function is typically displayed in exclamations as shown in the following examples.

- (35) Spanish Mira qué carrito tiene!

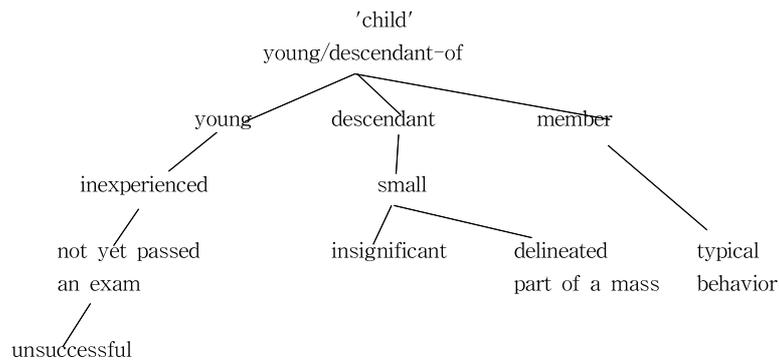
'What a nice car she has!'
 Spanish Qué joyitas trae!
 'Talk about some jewelry!' (Mendoza 1998: 50)

4. Metaphor-Metonymy in Diminutive Grammaticalization

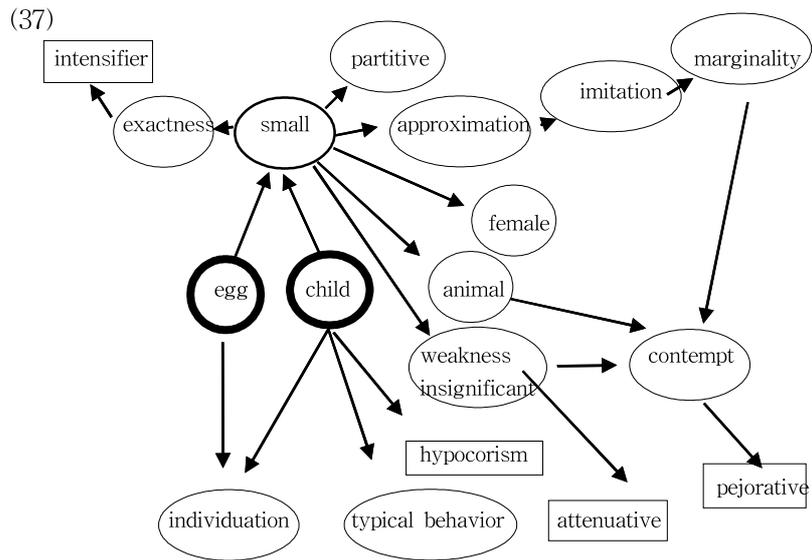
As we discussed briefly above, considering Korean examples and elsewhere, the diminutives seem to have two origins: 'egg' and 'child'. From these core senses many other senses are hypothesized to have been derived. Now we turn to metaphorical and metonymical processes involved in the grammaticalization of these diminutive senses.

Heine *et al.* (1991: 87) hypothesized a semantic network based on the conceptual expansion in the development of Ewe noun *vi'* with its core sense of 'child' as in the following.

(36)



However, taking into consideration the fact that Korean has two basic diminutive markers, *-aki* and *-al*, we shall revise the semantic network as a semantic radial category (Lakoff 1987) as in (37).



4.1 Metaphor

Now we shall turn to a discussion of metaphor as a grammaticalization mechanism. It has been noted that there is a directionality in the metaphorical transfer, such as [Person > Object > Activity > Space > Time > Quality] (Heine *et al.* 1991). However, the metaphors employed in the development seem to be operative in more fine-grained domains.

4.1.1 child>small

This can be a part of world knowledge that an offspring is small in size. However, there are instances that the offspring is physically bigger than its parent. Frequently, offspring-parent relation is not determined on a physical basis but on a more genetic or biological basis. Therefore, we can regard this as an instance of application of a metaphor where the

conceptual metaphor, Genealogy is Size, brings forth a concept that mandates the genealogical parenthood is bigger than the offspring.

4.1.2 small>approximation

This is an instance of applying a metaphor Quality is Size. Therefore, the extent of resemblance in quality is mapped on a fidelity scale, where the greater resemblance is considered bigger. Therefore, the concept 'small' yields 'not entirely identical'. The generation of 'imitation' sense from the 'approximation' is a natural consequence.

4.1.3 child>typical behavior

This semantic change is a consequence of applying a metaphor that child-parent relationship is regarded as constituting a group identification thus a child is thought to have a group-specific behavior. Therefore, a set of identifiable behavioral characteristics are attributed to a family as if a family is behaviorally homogeneous.

4.1.4 egg>individuation

An egg in its core meaning refers to a reproductive cell of an animal as an egg from a hen or a duck. In the development of semantic network in diminutives exhibit an extension pattern across domains from animals to others such as inanimates. In application of the extension, the general shape seems to play a role in that they tend to imply roundness of the derived noun, such as *ssalal* 'rice grain', *papal* 'steamed rice grain', *khongal* 'bean grain', *nwunkkal* 'eye ball', etc. In case of *payal* 'intestines' the derivation seems to be based on the fact that eggs are usually in the abdomen of animals.

4.1.5 weakness>attenuative

The development of 'attenuative' sense from 'weakness' is based on a

metaphor that physical strength is mapped to the illocutionary force of an utterance. Therefore, when diminutive forms are used in a sentence as a discourse marker, the illocutionary force of the utterance becomes weak. This is largely in concordance with Traugott's (1988) tendencies of semantic change, i.e. External/Internal situation > Textual/Metalinguistic situation.

4.1.6 small>exactness

The development of the 'exactness' sense from the 'small' sense utilizes a metaphorical notion that physically smaller size is mapped to the centrifugal dimension where the centrality is plotted on the center and all extended senses are plotted in proportion to their semantic closeness to the central meaning. Therefore, in this mapping plan decrease in size is tantamount to getting closer to the core, i.e. exactness.

4.1.7 exactness>intensifier

This semantic change involves use of a metaphor that semantic affinity is a force and its force is again metaphorically projected to the illocutionary force dimension. Therefore, exactness obtained from the diminutive boosts the intensifying force in a discourse.

4.1.8 small>female

Even though females are generally smaller in size than males, the semantic change from 'small' to 'female' is not based on strictly physical basis, because smaller males are not metaphorically referred to as females. Therefore, in this case the physical size dimension is thought to have been metaphorically projected to a gender dimension, which has the prejudice that femininity is the weaker sex.

4.1.9 small>animal

Similar to the small>female metaphorical transfer, the small>animal metaphor involves domain change from physical size to an anthropocentric dimension where humans occupy the central or higher position and the animals occupy more peripheral or lower position. Therefore, despite the fact that animals often physically bigger than humans, the former are given a lower status than the latter.

4.1.10 small>partitive

This semantic change shows that the original semantics of smallness, though largely attributable to an object's physically smaller shape due to its being an offspring, is transferred to a dimension where smallness is attributed to its being a part of the original. Therefore, with this semantic change, the diminutive denotes a part of a larger whole.

4.2 Metonymy

Now we turn to a discussion of metonymy in grammaticalization of the diminutive. Metonymy has been thought of as one of the leading grammaticalization mechanisms, e.g. Traugott & Heine (1991). However, in its extended sense, metonymy does not only refer to the physical contiguity of the original and the derived, but also more discourse-pragmatic contiguity. It is in this discourse-pragmatic sense that pragmatic inference (cf. Heine *et al.* 1991) plays a significant role in grammaticalization. From this extended perspective of metonymy we turn to a discussion of metonymy in the grammaticalization of the diminutives.

4.2.1 imitation>marginality

It is a part of human nature to consider the act of imitation less prestigious than the imitated object. Therefore, the term 'imitation' is often interpreted as 'spuriousness'. This is clearly based on the following inference pattern.

- (38) a: A is an imitation of B.
b: A is not as good as B.
c: A is a marginal member of category B.
d: A is marginal.

4.2.2 weakness>contempt

In a semantic development of weakness>contempt, a pragmatic inference is operative. The 'weakness' sense, originally derived from an object's being small in physical dimension, is given the speaker's evaluative judgment as to its usefulness. Since weak objects are often low in usefulness dimension, 'weakness' directly brings forth 'undesirability' sense which in turn brings forth 'contempt' sense, and ultimately 'pejorative' function evolves. It can be shown as the following pattern.

- (39) a: A is small.
b: A is weak.
c: A is useless.
d: A is undesirable.
e: A is contemptible.

5. Conclusion

This paper explored the grammaticalization phenomena in the evolution of the senses associated with the diminutives. Supplying the diminutive forms data in Korean, with special reference to their formal characteristics it is hypothesized that the origins of the diminutives are twofold, i.e. EGG and CHILD. And all other senses are considered as having been derived from the original senses through metaphor and metonymy.

There are outstanding issues as to the origins of the diminutive forms in Korean since the origins of many forms with diminutive/pejorative senses that strongly suggest relationship with *-al* and *-aki* have not been established yet. This should await further research.

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130-791 서울시 동대문구 이문동 270
 한국외국어대학교 영어학부
 전화번호: 02-961-4797
 전자우편: srhee@hufs.ac.kr Fax: 02-959-4581