



Korean Ladder Study Note

나 / 너 / 우리

Casual Pronouns That Replace 저 and Titles

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Colloquial Banmal (Casual)	나 / 너 / 우리 Casual Pronouns That Replace 저 and Titles

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-008>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hD-QOqgSBI>

Visit [koreanladder.com](https://www.koreanladder.com) for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's my problem. I learned 저는 for "I," but then Korean friends say 나는. And I hear 너, but people warn me not to say it. So... when is it safe.

좋은 질문이에요. 너 is casual "you," but it can sound too direct or rude if the relationship is not close.

Today's focus is switching from polite or humble pronouns to casual ones in banmal: 저 becomes 나, formal "we" 저희 becomes 우리, and "you" can be 너 only in safe relationships.

Pattern name: casual pronouns in 반말. In English, think, "friendly mode," not "polite mode."

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	나 오늘 좀 바빠. —	I'm a little busy today.
Junho	그래? 너 내일은 시간 있어? —	Really? Do you have time tomorrow?



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	응, 내일은 괜찮아. —	Yeah, tomorrow is okay.
Junho	그럼 우리 내일 만나자. —	Then let's meet tomorrow.
Hana	나 오늘 좀 바빠. —	I'm a little busy today.
Junho	그래? 너 내일은 시간 있어? —	Really? Do you have time tomorrow?
Hana	응, 내일은 괜찮아. —	Yeah, tomorrow is okay.
Junho	그럼 우리 내일 만나자. —	Then let's meet tomorrow.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
저 → 나 / 저희 → 우리 / you → 너 jeo → na / jeohui → uri / you → neo	humble I → casual I / humble we → casual we / you → casual you	Today's focus is switching from polite or humble pronouns to casual ones in banmal: 저 becomes 나, formal "we" 저희 becomes 우리, and "you" can be 너 only in safe relationships.
반말 대명사 banmal daemyeongsa	casual pronouns	Pattern name: casual pronouns in 반말. In English, think, "friendly mode," not "polite mode."
저는 → 나는 jeo-neun → na-neun	I, as for me — humble to casual	So if I'm using banmal with a close friend, 저는 can become 나는.
이에요 → 이야 ieyo → iya	is, polite → is, casual	Exactly. The sentence ending also changes: 이예요 becomes 이야 when the style becomes casual.
너 neo	you, casual	Now 너. 너 is "you" in banmal, but only when the relationship allows it.
너 ❌ 선생님 / 민수 씨 ❌ neo / seonsaengnim / Minsu ssi	Avoid 너; use a title or name when needed.	맞아요. For a professor or boss, avoid 너. Use a title, a name with 씨, or restructure the sentence.
우리 uri	we, our, us	Now 우리. 우리 means "we" or "our," and it often marks an in-group feeling.
우리 엄마 / 우리 학교 / 우리 회사 uri eomma / uri hakgyo / uri hoesa	my mom / my school / our company	You will also hear 우리 엄마, 우리 학교, 우리 회사. In English, you may translate it as "my mom," "my school," or "our company," depending on context.



Grammar / Structure Notes

저 → 나 / 저희 → 우리 / you → 너

저 → 나 / 저희 → 우리 / you → 너 — humble I → casual I / humble we → casual we / you → casual you

Use in banmal with close people.

반말 대명사

반말 대명사 — casual pronouns

나, 너, 우리 are common in close relationships.

저는 → 나는

저는 → 나는 — I, as for me — humble to casual

Use 나는 in casual speech.

나는 학생이야.

나 + 는 + 학생 + 이야 + . — I'm a student.

맞아요. 저는 is polite or humble. 나는 is casual. The particle 는 stays the same, but the pronoun changes.

나는 학생이야.

나 + 는 + 학생 + 이야 + . — I'm a student.

나는 학생이야. This is natural between close friends. It means "I'm a student," in casual style.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
나는 학생이야.	na-neun haksang-ya.
너 시간 있어?	neo sigan isseo?
시간 있어?	sigan isseo?

Self-Check

- 1 Say 나 / 너 / 우리 three times: slow, natural, then inside a short sentence.
- 2 Write one original sentence that was not in the video.
- 3 Rewatch the YouTube lesson and pause when the same pattern appears.

Related / Subsequent Studies



Lesson	Why study it next	Link
고마워 / 미안 / 괜찮아 친구끼리 주고받는 반말 인사	A1 Colloquial: compare 고마워 / 미안 / 괜찮아 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-004
몰라 / 싫어 / 그만해 친구에게 짧게 거절하고 반응하기	A1 Colloquial: compare 몰라 / 싫어 / 그만해 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-006
밥 먹었어 Everyday Casual Questions Among Friends	A1 Colloquial: compare 밥 먹었어 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-002
안녕 / 잘 가 / 뭐 해 친구끼리 반말 첫걸음	A1 Colloquial: compare 안녕 / 잘 가 / 뭐 해 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-COLLOQ-BAN-001

My Notes

Your ladder to fluent Korean. This PDF, the website, and the video lessons are free for personal study.