



Korean Ladder Study Note

감사해요

Statement vs Soft-Question Pitch on Polite Fragments

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Pronunciation Intonation	감사해요 Statement vs Soft-Question Pitch on Polite Fragments

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-INT-005>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltnda7p5qzo>

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's my fear. I say 감사해요, but my voice goes up at the end. Am I accidentally asking, "Thank you?"

네, 그럴 수 있어요. 말끝 억양이 올라가면, 짧은 표현이 질문처럼 들릴 수 있어요. Yes, if the final pitch rises, a short phrase can sound like a question.

In English, we also use pitch. But in Korean polite fragments like 감사해요, 맞아요, 따뜻해요, the ending pitch is especially easy to hear.

오늘은 짧은 해요체 표현의 말끝 억양을 연습할 거예요. In Korean, the final pitch helps listeners hear whether it is a statement or a question.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	따뜻해요? —	Is it warm?



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	네, 따뜻해요. —	Yes, it's warm.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
감사해요 / 맞아요 / 따뜻해요 gamsahaeyo / majayo / ttatteutaeyo	Thank you / That's right / It's warm	In English, we also use pitch. But in Korean polite fragments like 감사해요, 맞아요, 따뜻해요, the ending pitch is especially easy to hear.
해요체 + 말끝 억양 haeyoche + mal-kkeut eogyang	Polite style plus ending intonation	오늘은 짧은 해요체 표현의 말끝 억양을 연습할 거예요. In Korean, the final pitch helps listeners hear whether it is a statement or a question.
내려요 ↘ / 올려요 ↗ naeryeoyo / ollyeoyo	go down / go up	The pattern is simple: 말끝 억양을 내려요 for a statement. 말끝 억양을 올려요 for a soft question or check.
의도는 억양으로 들려요 uidoneun eogyangeuro deullyeoyo	Your intention is heard through intonation.	이건 문법보다 소리에 가까워요. This is less about grammar and more about how your listener hears your intention.
감사해요 ↘ gamsahaeyo	Statement vs Soft-Question Pitch on Polite Fragments	먼저 자연스러운 감사예요. 감사해요. The pitch gently falls. It sounds finished.
감사해요 ↗ gamsahaeyo?	Statement vs Soft-Question Pitch on Polite Fragments	Now listen to the same words with a rising ending. 감사해요? That sounds like a question or a surprised echo, not the normal finished thank-you.
같은 말, 다른 억양 gateun mal, dareun eogyang	Same words, different intonation	좋아요. The words did not change. The 말끝 억양 changed.
말끝 억양이 내려가요 mal-kkeut eogyangi naeryeogayo	The ending pitch goes down.	Exactly. 말끝 억양이 내려가면, it sounds like a statement or an answer. In English: you are finishing the thought.



Grammar / Structure Notes

감사해요 / 맞아요 / 따뜻해요

감사해요 / 맞아요 / 따뜻해요 — Thank you / That's right / It's warm

Short 해요체 phrases often rely on final intonation.

해요체 + 말끝 억양

해요체 + 말끝 억양 — Polite style plus ending intonation

Statement or question can depend on the final pitch.

내려요 ↘ / 올려요 ↗

내려요 ↘ / 올려요 ↗ — go down / go up

Use your voice, not just punctuation.

의도는 억양으로 들려요

의도는 억양으로 들려요 — Your intention is heard through intonation.

이건 문법보다 소리에 가까워요. This is less about grammar and more about how your listener hears your intention.

같은 말, 다른 억양

같은 말, 다른 억양 — Same words, different intonation

좋아요. The words did not change. The 말끝 억양 changed.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
감사해요.	gamsahaeyo
감사해요?	gamsahaeyo?
맞아요.	majayo
맞아요?	majayo?
따뜻해요? / 네, 따뜻해요.	ttatteutaeyo? / ne, ttatteutaeyo.
해요 ↘	haeyo
부드럽게 올려요	budeureopge ollyeoyo
친절하게 + 말끝은 아래로	chinjeolhage + mal-kkeudeun araero

Self-Check

1 Say 감사해요 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
가요 끝을 올리면 질문이 돼요	A1 Pronunciation: compare 가요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-INT-001
공일공에 삼사공팔 전화번호와 숫자를 끊어 읽는 리듬	A1 Pronunciation: compare 공일공에 삼사공팔 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-INT-003
네 Stretching or Cutting Agreement and Refusal	A1 Pronunciation: compare 네 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-INT-004
엄마 The Rising Pitch of Calling Out to Someone	A1 Pronunciation: compare 엄마 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-INT-002

My Notes

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