



Korean Ladder Study Note

우리 부모님께서

Speaking About Your Own Family with Honorifics

Level	Topic	Focus
B1 · Intermediate TOPIK 3	Honorifics Subject Honorifics	우리 부모님께서 Speaking About Your Own Family with Honorifics

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-004>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sl1stW0rk>

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here is my confusion. In English, if I say 'my father has honorably arrived,' it sounds distant and strange. So why does Korean raise my own dad when I talk to someone else?

좋은 질문이에요. Korean does not start from 'my family should sound humble.' It starts from age, role, and the listener.

오늘의 문법 이름은 주체 높임이에요. In English, subject honorifics. You raise the person doing the action.

핵심 도구는 두 가지예요. The subject marker 께서, and the verb piece 으시 or 시.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	하나 씨, 할머니께서 어디 계세요? —	Hana, where is your grandmother?



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	할머니께서는 지금 방에서 주무세요. —	My grandmother is sleeping in the room now.
Junho	아버지께서는요? —	And your father?
Hana	아버지께서는 거실에서 신문을 읽으세요. —	My father is reading the newspaper in the living room.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
주체 높임 juche nopim	subject honorifics — raising the doer	오늘의 문법 이름은 주체 높임이에요. In English, subject honorifics. You raise the person doing the action.
께서 + -(으)시- -kkeseo + -(eu)si-	honorific subject marker + honorific verb marker	핵심 도구는 두 가지예요. The subject marker께서, and the verb piece 으시 or 시.
이/가 →께서 i/ga → kkeseo	plain subject marker → honorific subject marker	먼저 조사예요. 아버지가 can become 아버지께서. Same subject role, higher respect.
아버지께서 오셨어요 abeoji-kkeseo osyeosseoyo	Father came. (honorific)	그리고 동사예요. 오다 becomes 오시다, and in past polite speech, 오셨어요.
께서 오셨어요 kkeseo osyeosseoyo	honorific subject marker + honorific verb	So께서 marks who did it, and 오셨어요 carries the respectful verb shape. Two layers.
우리 아버지께서 오셨어요 uri abeoji-kkeseo osyeosseoyo	My father came. (literally, our father)	맞아요. Now add 우리. 우리 아버지께서 오셨어요 is a very normal way to say my father came.
우리 어머니 uri eomeoni	my mother / our mother	우리 means our, but for family it often means my. 우리 어머니, 우리 아버지, 우리 할머니 all sound warm and natural.
우리 어머니께서 요리하세요 uri eomeoni-kkeseo yorihaseyo	My mother is cooking. (honorific)	다른 예문도 볼게요. 우리 어머니께서 요리하세요. My mother is cooking.



Grammar / Structure Notes

주체 높임

주체 높임 — subject honorifics — raising the doer

The subject is the person being honored.

께서 + -(으)시-

께서 + -(으)시- — honorific subject marker + honorific verb marker

께서 replaces 이/가; -시- appears inside the verb.

이/가 →께서

이/가 →께서 — plain subject marker → honorific subject marker

Use it for someone you are elevating.

아버지께서 오셨어요

아버지 +께서 + 오셨 + 어요 — Father came. (honorific)

그리고 동사예요. 오다 becomes 오시다, and in past polite speech, 오셨어요.

께서 오셨어요

께서 + 오셨 + 어요 — honorific subject marker + honorific verb

So께서 marks who did it, and 오셨어요 carries the respectful verb shape. Two layers.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
우리 아버지께서 오셨어요	uri abeoji-kkeseo osyeosseoyo
오셨어요	osyeosseoyo
완벽해요	wanbyeokhaeyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 우리 부모님께서 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
-(으)시- Adding the Honorific Infix to Any Verb	B1 Honorifics: compare -(으)시- with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-002
계시다 / 드시다 / 주무시다 / 연세 / 진지 Special Honorific Words	B1 Honorifics: compare 계시다 / 드시다 / 주무시다 / 연세 / 진지 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-001
편찮으시다 / 돌아가시다 Honorific Verbs for Illness and Passing	B1 Honorifics: compare 편찮으시다 / 돌아가시다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-HON-SUB-003
Korean Honorifics 세요 and 께서	A2 Honorifics: compare Korean Honorifics with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-HON-SUB-001

My Notes

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