



Korean Ladder Study Note

-(으)ㄴ / 는 / (으)ㄹ 것 같다

Expressing Guesses and Impressions

Level	Topic	Focus
B2 · Upper-Intermediate TOPIK 4	Grammar Modifiers & Clauses	-(으)ㄴ / 는 / (으)ㄹ 것 같다 Expressing Guesses and Impressions

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B2-GRAM-MOD-001>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=er7g6yOFi8k>

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Here's my problem. I want to say 'I think it's going to rain,' but softly — like I'm not one hundred percent sure.

Same. Every time I guess, I just say 비가 와요 — 'it rains.' But that sounds so certain. Where's the 'maybe'?

그럴 때 한국어로 '것 같다'를 써요. In English, 것 같다 means 'it seems' or 'I think' — it softens your sentence into a guess.

이 표현은 매일 써요. 확신이 없을 때, 부드럽게 말할 때. It makes you sound natural and polite, not like a robot stating facts.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	밖에 비가 오는 것 같아요. —	It seems to be raining outside.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	네, 그런데 곧 그칠 것 같아요. —	Yes, but it'll probably stop soon.
Junho	이 카페가 참 좋은 것 같아요. —	This cafe seems really nice.
Hana	저도 그렇게 생각해요. 커피도 맛있는 것 같아요. —	I think so too. The coffee seems delicious, too.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
것 같다 geot gatda	it seems / I think	그럴 때 한국어로 '것 같다'를 써요. In English, 것 같다 means 'it seems' or 'I think' — it softens your sentence into a guess.
것 같아요 geot gatayo	it seems (polite)	이 표현은 매일 써요. 확신이 없을 때, 부드럽게 말할 때. It makes you sound natural and polite, not like a robot stating facts.
[수식어] + 것 같다 —	[modifier] + it seems	핵심은 앞에 오는 말이에요. Before 것, you attach a modifier — and it changes with tense, and with verb versus adjective.
내일 비가 올 것 같아요 naeil biga ol geot gatayo	It'll probably rain tomorrow	미래를 추측할 때 이렇게 말해요. 내일 비가 올 것 같아요. In English — 'It'll probably rain tomorrow.' 올 shows the future guess.
비가 오는 것 같아요 biga oneun geot gatayo	It seems to be raining	지금 일어나는 일은 오느처럼 말해요. 비가 오는 것 같아요. 'It seems to be raining right now.' For a verb happening now, the modifier is 오는.
비가 온 것 같아요 biga on geot gatayo	It seems to have rained	이미 끝난 일은 온처럼 말해요. 비가 온 것 같아요. 'It seems to have rained.' The verb becomes 온 for a past guess.
예쁜 것 같아요 yeppeun geot gatayo	It seems pretty	형용사는 달라요. 지금이라도 예쁘처럼 끝나요. 이 꽃이 예쁜 것 같아요 — 'This flower seems pretty.' 예쁘다 is an adjective, so we say 예쁜, never 예쁘는.
좋을 것 같아요 jooul geot gatayo	It'll probably be nice	형용사 미래는 좋을처럼요. 이 카페 좋을 것 같아요 — 'This cafe will probably be nice.' 좋다 is an adjective, so 좋을 것 같아요.



Grammar / Structure Notes

것 같다

것 같다 — it seems / I think

Softens a statement into a guess

것 같아요

것 같아요 — it seems (polite)

An everyday softener

[수식어] + 것 같다

[수식어] + 것 같다 — [modifier] + it seems

The word before 것 does the work

내일 비가 올 것 같아요

내일 + 비 + 가 + 올 + 것 + 같아요 — It'll probably rain tomorrow

미래를 추측할 때 이렇게 말해요. 내일 비가 올 것 같아요. In English — 'It'll probably rain tomorrow.' 올 shows the future guess.

비가 오는 것 같아요

비 + 가 + 오는 + 것 + 같아요 — It seems to be raining

지금 일어나는 일은 오는처럼 말해요. 비가 오는 것 같아요. 'It seems to be raining right now.' For a verb happening now, the modifier is 오는.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
비가 오는 것 같아요	biga oneun geot gatayo
것 같아요	geot gatayo
예쁜 것 같아요	yeppeun geot gatayo

Self-Check

- 1 Say -(으)ㄴ / 는 / (으)ㄹ 것 같다 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
-던 / -았던 / -었던 Retrospective Modifiers for Past Memory	C1 Grammar: compare -던 / -았던 / -었던 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-GRAM-MOD-001
관형형 Turning Verbs into Modifiers	B1 Grammar: compare 관형형 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-GRAM-MOD-001
(으)ㄹ 거예요 The Korean Future Tense and Plans	A2 Grammar: compare (으)ㄹ 거예요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-GRAM-TNS-002
-(으)ㄹ까요? / -(으)ㅂ시다 Suggesting and Proposing Together	A1 Grammar: compare -(으)ㄹ까요? / -(으)ㅂ시다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-GRAM-END-003

My Notes

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