



Korean Ladder Study Note

하소서체

The Supplicative Speech Level in Prayer and Sageuk

Level	Topic	Focus
C1 · Advanced TOPIK 5	Honorifics Speech Levels	하소서체 The Supplicative Speech Level in Prayer and Sageuk

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-LVL-004>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8SyjxphFJU>

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Okay, real confusion. I'm watching a sageuk, a minister drops to his knees, and he says 아뢰옵나이다. It sounds gorgeous — but is that just fancy 하십시오체?

좋은 질문이에요. 그건 하십시오체가 아니에요. That line is 하소서체 — a higher, older style used when you beg a king, or pray.

일상 대화에서는 거의 안 써요. You almost never speak this at a cafe or office. You read it, you recognize it, you feel the weight.

오늘의 말투는 하소서체예요. Today's pattern is called 하소서체 — the supplicative speech level.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	폐하, 아뢰옵나이다. —	Your Majesty, I humbly speak.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	무엇을 아뢰느냐. —	What do you report? (king to subject — lower style on purpose)
Hana	가뭄이 심하오니, 백성을 도우소서. —	The drought is severe; please aid the people.
Hana	폐하, 아뢰옵나이다. —	subject → king: highest upward style
Junho	무엇을 아뢰느냐. —	king → subject: blunt downward style
Hana	백성을 도우소서. —	plea ending 소서 toward the throne

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
하소서체 hasoseoche	the highest traditional speech level — prayer, throne, ceremony	오늘의 말투는 하소서체예요. Today's pattern is called 하소서체 — the supplicative speech level.
해요체 < 하십시오체 < 하소서체 haeyoche < hasipsioche < hasoseoche	casual-polite < formal polite < archaic supplicative	높이를 기억하세요. Remember the height. 해요체보다 하십시오체가 높고, 그 위에 하소서체가 있어요. In English: 하소서체 sits above 하십시오체.
도와주십시오 → 도와주옵소서 dowajusipsio → dowajuopsoseo	modern formal please-help → archaic humble please-help	So when I already know 도와주십시오, 하소서체 is... 도와주옵소서 — even more bowed?
간청의 말투 gancheong-ui maltu	a pleading, upward style	정확해요. 왕께, 혹은 신께 간청할 때 쓰는 말투예요. Yes — the style you use when pleading to a king, or in prayer.
아뢰옵나이다 aroe-op-naida	I humbly report / I humbly speak (to a superior)	먼저 아뢰는 말을 들어요. First, the reporting form. 아뢰옵나이다 — I humbly speak to you.
비옵나이다 bi-op-naida	I humbly beg / I earnestly request	비옵나이다도 같은 계열이에요. 비옵나이다 means I humbly beg, or I humbly request — you hear it in prayers and old pleas.
하옵소서 ha-op-soseo	please do (it), I humbly ask	이제 청하는 말. Now the asking form. 하옵소서 — please do so, I beg you.
도우소서 dou-soseo	please help / please aid (us)	도우소서는 사극과 기도에서 정말 자주 나와요. 도우소서 — please help us. In English, aid us, I beg you.



Grammar / Structure Notes

하소서체

하소서체 — the highest traditional speech level — prayer, throne, ceremony

supplicative = you plead upward

해요체 < 하십시오체 < 하소서체

해요체 < 하십시오체 < 하소서체 — casual-polite < formal polite < archaic supplicative

today's rung is the top step

도와주십시오 → 도와주옵소서

도와주십시오 → 도와주옵소서 — modern formal please-help → archaic humble please-help

same honorific help, older throne/prayer clothes

간청의 말투

간청의 말투 — a pleading, upward style

palace · prayer · ceremony

아뢰옵나이다

아뢰 + 옴 + 나이다 — I humbly report / I humbly speak (to a superior)

먼저 아뢰는 말을 들어요. First, the reporting form. 아뢰옵나이다 — I humbly speak to you.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
도우소서	dou-so-seo
비옵나이다	bi-op-na-i-da

Self-Check

- 1 Say 하소서체 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
하계체 The Familiar Speech Level Elders Use	C1 Honorifics: compare 하계체 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-LVL-001
하시죠 / 하시지요 The Deferential Way to Suggest and Invite	C1 Honorifics: compare 하시죠 / 하시지요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-LVL-003
하오체 The Archaic Equal-Formal Style in Signs and Dramas	C1 Honorifics: compare 하오체 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-HON-LVL-002
감사합니다 / 죄송합니다 Formal Thanks and Apologies	A1 Honorifics: compare 감사합니다 / 죄송합니다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-HON-LVL-002

My Notes

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