



Korean Ladder Study Note

끊어 읽기

Where to Pause So a Long Sentence Stays Clear

Level	Topic	Focus
C1 · Advanced TOPIK 5	Pronunciation Intonation	끊어 읽기 Where to Pause So a Long Sentence Stays Clear

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-PRON-INT-002>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FipAokILPT4>

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

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Okay, real question. When my Korean sentence gets long, I just run out of air and pause wherever. Is that wrong?

Same. Sometimes I pause and Hana looks confused — like I accidentally changed the meaning.

네. And it is not random. In Korean, pausing follows meaning — a pause tells the listener 누가 뭘 했는지, who did what.

핵심은 하나예요. 뜻 단위로 끊어 읽기. In English, pause by meaning-chunks, not by counting words.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	저는 어제 시장에서 산 과일을 // 냉장고에 넣었어요. —	I put the fruit I bought at the market yesterday into the fridge.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	아, 어제 시장에서 산 과일이에요? // 어떤 과일을 샀어요? —	Oh, the fruit you bought yesterday? What fruit did you buy?
Hana	사과하고 배를 // 샀어요. —	I bought apples and pears.
Junho	그럼 그 과일로 // 뭘 만들 거예요? —	Then what will you make with that fruit?

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
뜻 단위로 끊어 읽기 tteut danwiro kkeuneo ilkki	Pause by meaning-units (chunks), not by word count	핵심은 하나예요. 뜻 단위로 끊어 읽기. In English, pause by meaning-chunks, not by counting words.
덩어리는 붙여서, 사이에서 쉬어요 deongeorineun butyeoseo, saieseo swieoyo	Glue a chunk together; rest between chunks	한 덩어리는 붙여서, 덩어리 사이에서 쉬어요. Keep a chunk together, and breathe between chunks.
쉼 = 들리는 쉼표 swim = deullineun swimpyo	A pause is a comma you can hear	So the pause is basically a comma my listener can hear.
제가 어제 산 책이 정말 재미있어요 jega eoje san chaegi jeongmal jaemiisseoyo	The book I bought yesterday is really fun	들어보세요. 제가 어제 산 책이 // 정말 재미있어요. The pause lands after the whole subject chunk.
[제가 어제 산 책이] // 정말 재미있어요 —	The whole subject stays together, then you pause	제가 어제 산 책이 is one chunk. The modifier 제가 어제 산 wraps around 책. Do not cut inside it.
사과, 바나나, 포도를 샀어요 sagwa, banana, podoreul sasseoyo	I bought apples, bananas, and grapes	목록은 항목 사이에서 살짝 쉬어요. 사과, 바나나, 포도를 // 샀어요.
친구가 온다고 // 말했어요 chinguga ondago // malhaesseoyo	'A friend is coming,' she said — pause after the quote	인용은 이렇게. 친구가 온다고 // 말했어요. Keep the quote 온다고 glued, then pause before the reporting verb.
목록: 항목 사이 / 인용: -고 뒤 —	Lists pause between items; quotes pause after -고	Oh — so a list pauses between items, and a quote stays glued until the reporting verb.



Grammar / Structure Notes

뜻 단위로 끊어 읽기

뜻 단위로 끊어 읽기 — Pause by meaning-units (chunks), not by word count

One chunk = one breath group.

덩어리는 붙여서, 사이에서 쉬어요

덩어리는 붙여서, 사이에서 쉬어요 — Glue a chunk together; rest between chunks

한 덩어리는 붙여서, 덩어리 사이에서 쉬어요. Keep a chunk together, and breathe between chunks.

쉼 = 들리는 쉼표

쉼 = 들리는 쉼표 — A pause is a comma you can hear

So the pause is basically a comma my listener can hear.

제가 어제 산 책이 정말 재미있어요

제가 + 어제 + 산 + 책이 + 정말 + 재미있어요 — The book I bought yesterday is really fun

들어보세요. 제가 어제 산 책이 // 정말 재미있어요. The pause lands after the whole subject chunk.

[제가 어제 산 책이] // 정말 재미있어요

[제가 어제 산 책이] // 정말 재미있어요 — The whole subject stays together, then you pause

제가 어제 산 책이 is one chunk. The modifier 제가 어제 산 wraps around 책. Do not cut inside it.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
제가어제산책이 // 정말재미있어요	jega eoje san chaegi // jeongmal jaemiisseoyo
제가 어제 산 // 책이 정말 재미있어요	jega eoje san // chaegi jeongmal jaemiisseoyo
산 책이 → 붙여서 → // → 정말	san chaegi butyeoseo, geudaeum swim
제가 어제 산 책이 // 정말 재미있어요	jega eoje san chaegi // jeongmal jaemiisseoyo
완벽해요	wanbyeokaeyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 끊어 읽기 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
화용적 억양 Sarcasm, Doubt, and Emphasis in Tone	C1 Pronunciation: compare 화용적 억양 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-C1-PRON-INT-001
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
나열의 억양 Rising Pitch When You List Things	A2 Pronunciation: compare 나열의 억양 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-PRON-INT-002
부탁과 제안의 억양 Softening Requests with Pitch	A2 Pronunciation: compare 부탁과 제안의 억양 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-PRON-INT-001

My Notes

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