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Unit 1

Lesson 6

<p>Nouns: 신발 = shoe 남방 = shirt 질문 = question 문제 = question/problem 나이 = age 화장실 = bathroom, restroom 부장님 = boss 분위기 = the atmosphere of something 차 = tea 바지 = pants 교실 = classroom 급식 = food at school 교감선생님 = vice principal 교장선생님 = principal 풀 = glue 수도 = capital city 병 = bottle 병 = disease, sickness 생선 = fish 야채 = vegetable 언덕 = hill 선물 = present 기타 = guitar 종이 = paper 우유 = milk 손목 = wrist 시계 = clock 손목시계 = wristwatch 영화 = movie</p>	<p>Verbs: 노력하다 = to try 앉다 = to sit 만지다 = to touch 자다 = to sleep 보다 = to see 기다리다 = to wait 청소하다 = to clean 약속하다 = to promise 듣다 = to hear 들어보다 = to listen 그만하다 = to stop 운동하다 = to exercise</p> <p>Adjectives: 놀라다 = to be surprised 빠르다 = to be fast 느리다 = to be slow 착하다 = to be nice</p> <p>Adverbs and Other Words: 곧 = soon 항상 = always 주 = week 아래 = bottom</p>
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Conjugating with Honorifics

In Lesson 5, you learned how to conjugate verbs and adjectives into the past, present and future forms. You also learned that those conjugations are hardly ever used in speech and are most often used when writing a book, test, article or diary. In this lesson, you will learn the basic word conjugations that are more commonly used in speech.

What are Honorifics in Korean?

To this point, you haven't learned anything about Honorifics. In Korean, depending on who you are speaking to, you must use different conjugations of the same word. The different conjugations imply respect and politeness to the person you are speaking to. Depending on that person's age and seniority, you must speak differently to that person.

The reason this is so hard for English speakers to understand is that we have nothing like this in English. We can make some sentences sound polite by adding ‘please’ and ‘thank you,’ but you can only use those words in a limited amount of sentences. For example, if somebody asked you “where did you go yesterday?” You could respond:

I went to school yesterday.

In English, regardless of whether you were speaking to your girlfriend’s grandfather or your best friend, that sentence would look and sound exactly the same. In Korean, you *must* use a higher respect form when speaking to somebody older or higher in position.

I started learning Korean a few months before I moved to Korea. I was not studying very hard or often, so my Korean was extremely basic. When I arrived at the airport in Seoul, was driven directly to my school and introduced to my principal immediately. My principal said “I am happy you are working at my school,” to which I replied:

나도 (the lower respect form of saying “me too”)

Instead of being impressed that I at least knew some words in Korean, the look on his face was as if somebody had just kidnapped his daughter.

Never, *never* underestimate the importance of honorific endings in Korean.

Keep in mind that all these conjugations with different honorific endings have exactly the same meaning. You will learn how to conjugate using honorifics in the following ways:

1) Informal low respect

When talking with friends, people you are close with, younger people and family.

2) Informal high respect

Used in most situations, even in formal situations despite being called “informal.” This is usually the way most people speak when they are trying to show respect.

3) Formal high respect

This is a very high respect form that is used when addressing people who deserve a lot of respect from you. It is hard to describe perfectly, but honestly, the difference between ‘Informal high respect’ and ‘Formal high respect’ is not very big. As long as you speak in either of these two ways, you will not offend anyone.

The names of each form of speech might be different in every source, but I have chosen the words above to describe each form. In addition, you learned the "Plain form" in the previous lesson.

Before you start! Remember the rule you learned in Lesson 5: When adding something to a word stem, if the last vowel in the stem is ㅏ or ㅑ, you must add ㅓ plus whatever you are adding. If the last vowel is anything other than ㅏ or ㅑ, you must add ㅕ plus whatever you are adding. If the syllable of the stem is ㅈㅅ, you add ㅈㅅㅕ which can be shortened to ㅈㅅ.

Also, in the previous lesson, you learned that if a stem of a word ends in a vowel, “~았/었다” gets merged to the actual stem itself when conjugating into the past tense.

In this lesson, two of the conjugations you will learn will require the addition of ~아/어. When adding ~아/어 to the stem of a word, the same rule applies from previous lesson. That is, if ~아/어 gets added to a stem that ends in a vowel, ~아/어 will be merged to the stem itself. For example:

가다 + ~아/어 = 가 (가 + 아)
오다 + ~아/어 = 와 (오 + 아)
배우다 + ~아/어 = 배워 (배우 + 어)
끼다 + ~아/어 = 끼 (끼 + 어)
나서다 + ~아/어 = 나서 (나서 + 어)
켜다 + ~아/어 = 켜 (켜 + 어)
하다 + ~아/어 = 해 (하 + 여)

Conversely, if a stem ends in a consonant, ~아/어 is attached to the stem, but not merged to it. For example:

먹다 + ~아/어 = 먹어 (먹 + 어)
앉다 + ~아/어 = 앉아 (앉 + 아)

There are *many* situations when you will have to add ~아/어 (or other vowels) to stems. Conjugating is just one of these situations. Always keep this rule in mind, as you will see it throughout this lesson, and throughout your studies. Okay, let's look at some conjugations.

Verbs

Present Tense

You learned in Lesson 5 how to conjugate verbs to the present tense by adding ~는다 to the stem of the word. To review:

먹다 = to eat (not conjugated)
나는 먹는다 = I eat (conjugated – present tense)

배우다 = to learn (not conjugated)
나는 배운다 = I learn (conjugated – present tense)

There are three more conjugations in the present tense that you should be aware of.

1) *Informal low respect*

All you need to do is add ~어/아/여 to the stem of the verb:

나는 항상 저녁에 음식을 먹어 = I always eat food in the evening (먹 + 어)

나는 너의 선생님을 항상 봐 = I always see my teacher (보 + 아)

나는 항상 아침에 운동해 = I always exercise in the morning (운동하 + 여)

In Lesson 1, you were introduced to the function of ~에 as a particle which identifies a location or a time in which something occurs in a sentence. Since then, you have seen many cases of ~에 being used to indicate a place, but you have yet to see any examples of it being used to indicate a time. This is just a quick reminder that ~에 is (in addition to other things) attached to the part of sentence to indicate a time.

Also notice in the examples above that “항상” (always) is placed in two different places within a sentence. Adverbs are usually able to be placed wherever the speaker desires. The usage and placement of adverbs is discussed in Lesson 8

2) *Informal high respect*

This is done the exact same way as ‘Informal low respect’ but you also add ‘~요’ to the end of the word. Adding ~요 to the end of anything in Korean makes it more respectful:

저는 항상 저녁에 음식을 먹어요 = I always eat food in the evening (먹 + 어요)

저는 저의 선생님을 항상 봐요 = I always see my teacher (보 + 아요)

저는 항상 아침에 운동해요 = I always exercise in the morning (운동하 + 여요)

3) *Formal high respect*

This is done very similar to the conjugation you learned in Lesson 5 – that is, adding ㄴ/는다 to the stem of the word. To conjugate using the Formal high respect honorific ending, you add ~버니다/습니다 to the end of the word stem. If a word stem ends in a vowel, you add ~버 to the last syllable and 니다 follows. If a word stem ends in a consonant, you add ~습니다 to the word stem.

저는 항상 저녁에 음식을 먹습니다 = I always eat food in the evening (먹 + 습니다)

저는 저의 선생님을 봅니다 = I always see my teacher (보 + 버니다)

저는 항상 아침에 운동합니다 = I always exercise in the morning (운동하 + 버니다)

Past Tense

You learned in Lesson 5 how to conjugate verbs to the past tense by adding **었다/았다/였다** to the stem of the word. To review:

먹다 = to eat (not conjugated)

나는 먹었다 = I ate (conjugated – past tense)

배우다 = to learn (not conjugated)

나는 배웠다 = I learned (conjugated – past tense)

The three new conjugations should be very simple for you now:

1) Informal low respect

Instead of adding **었다/았다/였다** to a word stem, remove **다** and add **어** after **였/았/였**:

나는 먹었어 = I ate (먹 + 았어)

나는 들어봤어 = I listened (들어보 + 았어)

나는 운동했어 = I exercised (운동하 + 았어)

2) Informal high respect

Just add **요** to the end of the Informal low respect conjugations:

저는 먹었어요 = I ate (먹 + 았어요)

저는 들어봤어요 = I listened (들어보 + 았어요)

저는 운동했어요 = I exercised (운동하 + 았어요)

3) Formal high respect

After adding **였/았/였** instead of adding **다** add **습니다**:

저는 먹었습니다 = I ate (먹 + 았습니다)

저는 들어봤습니다 = I listened (들어보 + 았습니다)

저는 운동했습니다 = I exercised (운동하 + 았습니다)

Future Tense

You learned in Lesson 5 how to conjugate verbs to the future tense by adding **겠다** to the stem of the word. To review:

먹다 = to eat (not conjugated)

나는 먹겠다 = I will eat (conjugated – future tense)

배우다 = to learn (not conjugated)

나는 배우겠다 = I will learn (conjugated – future tense)

The three new conjugations should be very simple for you now:

1) *Informal low respect*

Instead of adding 겠다 to a word stem, remove 다 and add 어 after 겠:

나는 먹겠어 = I will eat (먹 + 겠어)

나는 배우겠어 = I will learn (배우 + 겠어)

2) *Informal high respect*

Just add 요 to the end of the Informal low respect conjugations:

저는 먹겠어요 = I will eat (먹 + 겠어요)

저는 배우겠어요 = I will learn (배우 + 겠어요)

3) *Formal high respect*

After 겠 instead of adding 다 add 습니다:

저는 먹겠습니다 = I will eat (먹 + 겠습니다)

저는 배우겠습니다 = I will learn (배우 + 겠습니다)

Try looking at all the verb conjugations you know together in one table. This table will include the conjugation you learned in Lesson 5, which I call the “plain form” or “diary form.”

먹다	Past	Present	Future
Informal low	먹었어	먹어	먹겠어
Informal high	먹었어요	먹어요	먹겠어요
Plain form	먹었다	먹는다	먹겠다
Formal high	먹었습니다	먹습니다	먹겠습니다

자다	Past	Present	Future
Informal low	잤어	자	자겠어
Informal high	잤어요	자요	자겠어요
Plain form	잤다	잔다	자겠다
Formal high	잤습니다	잡니다	자겠습니다

이해하다	Past	Present	Future
Informal low	이해했어	이해해	이해하겠어
Informal high	이해했어요	이해해요	이해하겠어요
Plain form	이해했다	이해한다	이해하겠다
Formal high	이해했습니다	이해합니다	이해하겠습니다

Adjectives

Thankfully, adjectives are conjugated the exact same way as verbs when conjugating with these three honorific endings. The major difference in conjugating adjectives and verbs is when conjugating in the most basic form (which we did in Lesson 5). To conjugate adjectives with ‘Informal low respect,’ Informal high respect’ and Formal high respect,’ follow the same rules as verbs:

비싸다	Past	Present	Future
Informal low	비쌌어	비싸	비싸겠어
Informal high	비쌌어요	비싸요	비싸겠어요
Plain form	비쌌다	비싸다	비싸겠다
Formal high	비쌌습니다	비쌉니다	비싸겠습니다

길다	Past	Present	Future
Informal low	길었어	길어	길겠어
Informal high	길었어요	길어요	길겠어요
Plain form	길었다	길다	길겠다
Formal high	길었습니다	깁니다 *	길겠습니다

*Irregular conjugation. You will learn about irregulars in the next lesson.

착하다	Past	Present	Future
Informal low	착했어	착해	착하겠어
Informal high	착했어요	착해요	착하겠어요
Plain form	착했다	착하다	착하겠다
Formal high	착했습니다	착합니다	착하겠습니다