

Learn Korean Ep. 47: "I think"

Let's go over two ways to express *thinking* in Korean.

Plain Form + 고 생각하다

Take the Plain Form of a verb (watch "Learn Korean Ep. 17" for a review of this) and attach 고, then the verb 생각하다, which means "to think."

This form is a literal translation of "think," but can be used in any situation.

It is not the most casual way of expressing thoughts, but will grammatically always be correct. Therefore it is the most versatile.

저는 한국말이 어렵다고 생각해요.

"I think that Korean is difficult."

선생님이 좋은 사람이라고 생각해요.

"I think that the teacher is a good person."

철수가 미국에 갔다고 생각해요.

"I think that Cheolsoo went to America."

Verb stem + 은/ㄴ 것 같다

Take the verb stem and conjugate it as you would conjugate an adjective – this will vary depending on some types of descriptive verbs. For most verbs, this is the verb stem with **은** added if it ends in a consonant, or **ㄴ** added if it ends in a vowel.

This second way is more common for conversation and sounds a bit more natural. However, this one does not literally translate as "think" – instead it translates to "it seems" or "it is like." But for speaking purposes, this is the most common and most useful way of expressing an opinion.

제 친구가 이미 **나간 거 같아요.**

"I think my friend already left."

거 is a shortened form of 것, and **나가다** means "to leave."

오늘도 많이 **추운 거 같아요.**

"I think today is really cold too."

그분이 한국 사람**인 것 같았어요.**

"I thought he's Korean."

Advanced Notes

I'd recommend only reading these advanced notes if you are at an intermediate level or higher.

The second method, v.s. + 은/ㄴ 것 같다, can also be used with future tense verbs.

할 것 같아요.

"I think I will do it."

더울 거 같아.

"I think it will be hot."

Verb stem + 은/ㄴ/을/ㄹ 줄 알다

Take the verb stem and conjugate it to any tense you'd like (for present tense, add 은 or ㄴ to the verb stem, and for future tense, 을 or ㄹ). Then attach 줄, and finally conjugate the verb 알다 ("to know").

This form is common in conversation, but is recommended for intermediate speakers of Korean as it is more difficult to construct. This also means "I think," though literally it actually translates as "I *know* that." As such, it can be used to mean either "think that" or "know that," which one it is will depend entirely on context, but in context will not be confusing.

한국 사람인 줄 알았어요!

"I thought you were Korean!"

내일 올 줄 알았는데...

"I thought he'd come tomorrow..."

그렇게 할 줄 알았어!

"I knew you'd do that!"

Conclusion

If you have any questions, feel free to send me a message through my web site or on YouTube. Good luck in your studies!

