

week

5

Korean language class in MUNI

■ The special particle 은/는

1) Particle

The special particle 은/는 [eun/neun] is a topic particle since it marks the noun as the sentence topic (e.g. what the sentence is about). The particle 은/는 is not a case particle; hence it does not indicate the grammatical function of the noun it attaches to.

-In a similar way that the subject particle has two forms 이 [i] and 가 [ga], the topic particle also has two forms : 은 (after consonants) and 는 (after vowels). Consider the following two sentences.

채경은 한국 사람이에요. [Chaegyeong-eun hanguk saramieyo] “As for Chae-Kyung, (she) is a Korean.”

메디는 프랑스 사람이에요. [Medi-neun peurangseu saramieyo] “As for Mehdi, (he) is a French.”

Notice that 채경 [chaegyeong] is marked by 은 (since it ends in a consonant), whereas 메디 [medi] is marked by 는 (since it ends in a vowel). In addition, the above two sentences are “topic-comment” structures: a sentence begins with a topic of the sentence (marked by the topic particle 은/는), followed by the predicate (e.g., an equational expression). In the first sentence above, 채경, is the topic and 한국 사람이에요 [hanguk saramieyo] is the comment. In the second sentence, 메디, is the topic, while 프랑스 사람이에요 [peurangseu saramieyo] is the comment.

Such a topic-comment structure is the most basic sentence type in Korean.

To understand its usage in more detail, let's consider the following examples:

-미카엘은 프랑스 사람이에요 [mikaereun peurangseu saramieyo] “As for Mickael, (he) is a French”

-대학생이에요 [daehaksaengieyo] “(He) is an university student”

-21살이에요. [21sarieyo] “(He) is 21 years old”

-교카이는 터키 사람이에요. [gyokaineun teoki saramieyo] “As for Gokay, (he) is a Turkish”

Notice that the first three sentences are about Mickael. Because of the fact that Mickael was noted as the topic in the first sentence, it would be redundant to raise Leah as the topic again. Consequently, the second and the third sentence omit the topic 미카엘 [Mikael]. However, as the fourth sentence is about a different person 교카이 [gyokai], the sentence begins with the new topic, 교카이.

The noun marked by 은/는 appears to be the subject of the sentence. However, 은/는 is not a subject particle and it does not mark the noun as the subject. For instance, consider the following sentence:

햄버거는 파이프 가이즈 햄버거가 맛있어요. [Haembeogeoneun paibeu gaijeu haembeogeoga masisseoyo]

“As for hamburgers, Five Guys Hamburger is tasty.”

Notice that the hamburger is the topic of the sentence (what the sentence is talking about), whereas “Five Guys Hamburger” is the subject of the predicate “tasty.”

2) Compare and Contrast

When two sentences, marked by the topic particles 은/는, are used in parallel, the particle 은/는 serves to compare and contrast the two topics of the sentences. Consider the following two examples

교카이는 터키 사람이에요. [gyokaineun teokisaramieyo.] “As for Gokay, (he) is a Turkish.”

그렇지만 메디는 프랑스 사람이에요. [geureochiman medineun peurangseu saramieyo] “However, as for Mehdi, (he) is a French.”

Notice that both Gokay and Mehdi are the topics of each sentence. Since these sentences are used in parallel, these two topics are compared and contrasted (e.g. One is a Turkish while the other person is French).

3) Switching topics

Koreans use the topic particle 은/는 when they switch the topic from one thing to another. For instance, consider the following conversation.

A: 실례합니다. 이 바지 얼마예요? [Sillyehamnida. i baji eolmayeyo?] “Excuse me, how much is this pair of pants?”

B: 네. 30,000원입니다. [ne.sammanwon imnida] “Yes. (It)is 30,000 won.”

A: 그럼, 이 치마는 얼마예요? [geureom i chimaneun eolmayeyo?]“Then, as for the skirt, how much is (it)?”

B: 네.50,000원입니다. [ne omanwonimnida.] “Yes, (it) is 50,000 won.”

A: 이 청바지는요?? [i cheongbajineunyo?] “How about this pair of jeans?”

Let us assume that speaker A is a customer and speaker B is a salesman in the above conversation. Notice that speaker A uses the topic particle 은/는 when she changes the topic from one item to another (e.g. asking for the price of a skirt, and then jeans.)

4) Interplay between the subject and the topic particles

When asking a question in Korean, the question word (e.g. 무엇 [mueot] “what,” 누구 [nugu] “who” is usually marked by the subject particle 이/가 [i/ga]. However, when answering the question, the question word is often marked by the topic particle 은/는. Consider the following examples:

Elma: 전공이 뭐예요? [jeongongi mwoyeyo?] “What is (your) major?”

Nina: 전공은 한국어예요 [jeongongeun hangugeoyeyo]“ As for (my) major, (it) is Korean.”

In Elma’s question, the particle 이/가 is used since 전공 [jeongong] “major” is the subject of the question. However, when responding to this question, the question, Nina answers 전공은 한국어예요 [jeongongeun hangugeoyeyo]. “As for (my) major, (it) is Korean,” instead of 전공이 한국어예요 [jeongongi hangugeoyeyo] “The major is Korean.” Notice that 전공 is marked by the topic particle 은/는, not the subject particle 이/가.

When Elma asks the question, 전공 is the subject of the sentence and it is not the topic of the conversation yet. In other words, the word 전공 is new information which was just brought up in the conversation. However, after Elma's question, 전공 becomes the topic. As a result, Nina replies with 전공은 [jeongongeun] rather than 전공이 [jeongongi]. This may sound confusing but, it should become clear with more examples. Consider the following examples:

Su: 이름이 뭐예요? [ireumi mwoyeyo?] "What is (your) name?"

Mehdi: 제 이름은 메디예요. [je ireumeun mediyeoyo] "As for my name, (it) is Mehdi."

Su: 고향이 어디예요? [gohyangi eodiyeyo?] "Where is (your) hometown?"

Mehdi: 제 고향은 파리에요. [je gohyangeun pariyeyo] "As for my hometown, (it) is Paris."

5) Appearing at the beginning of the sentence

You can make any element of the sentence the topic by adding the topic particle to it and placing it at the beginning of the sentence, except the verb/adjective that appears at the end of the sentence. For example, consider the following the sentences:

베нок은 오전 10 시에 엘마하고 도서관에서 한국어를 공부해요. [benogeun ojeon 10sie elmahago doseogwaneseo hangugeoreul gongbuhaeyo.]

"As for Vinok, (he) studies Korean with Elma at the library at 10:00 a.m."

오전 10 시에는 베нок이 엘마하고 도서관에서 한국어를 공부해요. [ojeon 10sieneun benogi elmahago doseogwaneseo hangugeoreul gongbuhaeyo.]

"At 10:00 a.m, Vinok studies Korean with Elma at the library."

엘마하고는 베нок이 오전 10 시에 도서관에서 한국어를 공부해요. [elmahagoneun benogi ojeon 10sie doseogwaneseo hangugeoreul gongbuhaeyo.]

"With Elma, Vinok studies Korean at the library at 10:00 a.m."

도서관에서는 베нок이 오전 10 시에 엘마하고 한국어를 공부해요. [doseogwaneseoneun benogi ojeon 10sie elmahago hangugeoreul gongbuhaeyo.]

"At the library, Vinok studies Korean with Elma at 10:00 a.m."

As a SOV language, In Korean the most important sentential elements (e.g. predicates) tend to appear at the end of the sentence. The less important or least unknown information tend to appear toward the beginning of the sentence. Notice in the above sentences that the 은/는 -marked elements (topics) appear at the beginning of the sentence. The topic of the sentence in Korean tends to be contextually understood element, and thus it can be often easily omitted during conversation.

This contrasts with the subject marked by the particle 이/가. The subject particle 이/가 is used to mark a subject (which happens to be new information or has not been mentioned previously in the context). For instance, this explains why most interrogative words such as 누구 [nugu] 'who,' 무엇 [mueot] 'what,' 언제 [eonje] "when" and 어느 [eoneu] "which," are used with particle 이/가, as in 누구(가), and 무엇이 [mueosi], but not with the topic particle 은/는:

어느 식당 음식은 맛있어요? "Which restaurant food is delicious?" (X)

어느 식당 음식이 맛있어요? [eoneu sikdang eumsigi masisseoyo?]

] 1“Which restaurant food?”(O)

누구는 슬로베니아 사람이에요? “Who is a Slovenian?” (X)

누가 슬로베니아 사람이에요? [nuga seullobenia saramieyo?] “Who is a Slovenian?” (O)

■ Conversation

메디: 안녕. 이름이 뭐야? 너(는)⁽¹⁾ 어느 나라에서 왔어?

[annyeong? ireumi mwoya?neo eoneu naraeseo wasseo?]

수영: 나는 수영이야. 나(는) 한국 사람이야.

[naneun suyeongiya. na hanguk saramiya]

메디: 아⁽²⁾ 진짜? 난 (/나는) 파리에서 왔어. 내 이름은⁽³⁾ 메디야.

[a jinjja? nan parieseo wasseo nae ireumeun mediya]

수영: 너 혹시 전에 브루노(에)⁽⁴⁾ 와본 적 있어?

[neo hoksi jeone beurunoga wabon jeok isseo?]

메디: 아니. 나(는) 중앙유럽은 처음이야.

[ani na jungangyureobeun cheoemiya.]

수영: 나도. 너(는) 제일 좋아하는 체코 맥주가 뭐야?

[nado. neo jeil joahaneun cheko maekjuga mwoya?]

메디: 필즈너 우르켈. 이따 맥주랑 슈마지니 먹으러 갈래? 체코음식은 Lokal 이 맛있대.

[piljeuneo ureukel. itta maekjurang syumajini meogeureo gallae? chekoemsigeun Lokal i masitdae.]

수영: 그래. 너 브루노 시티 투어 했어? 솔직히 말해서⁽⁵⁾ 브루노가 프라하 보다 더⁽⁶⁾예쁜 도시인 것 같아⁽⁷⁾

[geurae. neo beurunoga siti tueo haesseo? soljiki malhaeseo beurunoga peuraha boda deo yeppeun dosiin geot gata]

메디: 너 프라하 가 봤어?

[neo peuraha ga bwasseo?]

[Ani]

(1) 너(는) : 너 is marked by 는 since it ends in vowel.

It is ‘너는’ in literary style (official) but people usually omit ‘는’ for colloquial style.

(2) In colloquial language, people mostly put ‘아’ before say ‘진짜 (really?)?’.

It doesn't have any meaning but if you add ‘아’ , it will make you sound more natural.

(3) 내 이름은(my name is): 이름 is marked by 은 since it ends in a consonant.

수영: 아니.

Mehdi: Hello. What's your name? Where are you from?

Suyeong: I am su yeong. I am from korea.

Mehdi: Really? I am from paris. My name is Mehdi.

Suyeong: Have you ever been in Brno before?

Mehdi: No, it's my first time visiting central Europe.

Suyeong: Same here. What's your favorite Czech beer?

Mehdi: Pilsner Urquell. Do you want to go to eat Smažený and beer later on? As for Czech food, Lokal is tasty.

Suyeong: Okay. Did you do Brno city tour? To be honest, I find Brno more pretty than Prague.

Mehdi: Have you ever been Prague?

Suyeong: No.

- (4) 브루노에: The Time/Place Particle, 에, is used for any words related to time and place.
To sound more natural, you can omit ‘에’ when you are having a daily conversation.
- (5) 솔직히 말해서: used when telling someone what you really think, especially when it may be something that they do not want to hear. People make frequent use of ‘솔직히 말해서’ in a colloquialism.
- (6) 보다 더: comparative. In Korean, you can make a specific comparison by attaching the particle ~보다 to the thing that is being compared to. You can use 더 in sentences when not making any specific comparison.
- (7) ~같아: It is colloquial sentence-closing ending. People use ‘-같아’ when they are talking about their personal opinion.

■ Vocabulary

계절 [Gyejeol] season	한국 [Hanguk] Korea	소설 [soseol] novel
꽃 [Kkot] flower	노르웨이 [Noreuwei] Norway	역사 [yeoksa] History
여름 [Yeoreum] summer	아일랜드 [Aillaendeu] Ireland	영화 [yeonghwa] Movie
봄 [Bom] spring	케냐 [Kenya] Kenya	운동 [undong] Sport
과목 [Gwamok] subject/course	이탈리아 [Itallia] Italy	음식 [unsik] food
프랑스 [Peurangseu] France	스페인 [Seupein] Spain	자동차 [jadongcha] Car
러시아 [Reosia] Russia	슬로베니아 [Seullobenia] Slovenia	백합 [baekap] Lily
멕시코 [Meksiko] Mexico	일본 [Ilbon] Japan	영문학 [yeongmunhak]: English Literature
미국 [Miguk] America/USA	호주 [Hoju] Australia	작가 [jakga] author
보스니아 [boseunia] Bosnia	영국 [yeongguk] England	책 [chaek] Book
체코 [cheko] Czech	색 [saek] color	

■ Exercise

Exercise A

Complete the sentence using the topic particle and translate the sentence, as shown in the example

Example: 엘마 /보스니아 사람

=엘마는 보스니아 사람이에요. “As for Elma, (she) is a Bosnian.”

1. 메디/ 프랑스 사람
2. 니나/ 슬로베니아 사람

3. 베녹/영국 사람
4. 에리카/노르웨이 사람
5. 채경/ 한국 사람
6. 교카이/터키 사람
7. 파오/ 멕시코 사람
8. 리카르도/ 이탈리아 사람
9. 애슐리/ 케냐 사람
10. 라우라/스페인 사람

Exercise B

Complete the sentence using the topic particle and translate the sentence, as shown in the example:

Example: 음식/ 초밥

=음식은 초밥을 좋아해요 “As for food, (i) like sushi.”

1. 음악/ 힙합
2. 영화/로맨스
3. 운동/축구
4. 책/영문학
5. 꽃/백합
6. 과목/역사
7. 계절/여름
8. 색/파랑색
9. 자동차/BMW
10. 작가/헤르만 헤세

Exercise C

Translate the following sentence into Korean.

Example : As for Nina, (she) is in Slovenia.

=니나는 슬로베니아에 있어요

1. As for Gokay, (he) is in Turkey :
2. As for food, (i) like Sushi:
3. As for Coffee, SkØg is tasty:
4. At the library, Su studies German with Gaspard:
5. Which cafe coffee is tasty?:
6. I am from Paris:
7. My major is English literature:

8. As for Mehdi, (he)is French. However, as for Yuki, (she) is a Japanese:
9. What's your name?:
10. As for flower, (i) love lily:

Exercise D

Choose the right particle for each sentence.

Example : 집 (이/가/은/는) 어디예요? "Where is your home?"

=집'이' 어디예요?

1. 메디(이/가/은/는) 석사 학위 학생이에요. "Mehdi is a master's degree student."
2. 미카엘(이/가/은/는) 프랑스 사람이에요. "Mickael is a French."
3. 채경(이/가/은/는) 명품 잔을 좋아해요. "Chae Kyung loves designer label cups."
4. 제 이름(이/가/은/는) 에리카예요. "As for my name, (it) is Erika."
5. 제 고향(이/가/은/는) 서울이에요. "As for my hometown, (it) is Seoul."
6. 자동차(이/가/은/는) 아우디(이/가/은/는) 좋아요. "As for cars, Audi is good."
7. 어디(이/가/은/는) 마사리크 대학이에요? " Where is Masaryk University?"
8. 혜인(이/가/은/는) 건물주예요. "Hye-in is a landlady."
9. 고카이(이/가/은/는) 터키 사람이에요 "Gokay is a Turkish."
10. 니나(이/가/은/는) 20 살이에요. "Nina is 20 years old."

■ Sentence Drill Practice

Topic: Traveling

1. 신촌역에 어떻게 가요?
[sinchonyeoge eotteoke gayo?]

How can I get to 'Sinchon' station?

➔ (Location) 에 어떻게 가요?

2. 나비고는 어디서 사나요?
[nabigoneun eodiseo sanayo?]

Where to buy 'Navigo'?

➔ (things that you want to buy) 은/는 어디서 사나요?

3. 저는 파리에서 2 주동안 머무를 거예요.
[jeoneun parieseo 2judongan meomureul geoyeyo.]

I am going to stay in Paris for two weeks

➔ 저는 (name of the place) 에서 (length of stay) 동안/간 머무를 거예요.

4. 나 영어(를) 조금 할 줄 알아
[na yeongeo jogeum hal jul ara]
I can speak English little bit.

→ 나 (things that you can do/ Language, computer. Etc.) 조금 할 줄 알아

5. 크루아상이랑 요거트 주세요
[keuruasangirang yogoteu juseyo]

Croissant and Yogurt please.

→ (things that you want to order) 주세요.

6. 여기가 암스테르담에서 가장 유명한 레스토랑이야.
[yeogiga amseutereudameseo gajang yumyeonghan reseutorangiya]

This is the most popular Restaurant in Amsterdam.

→ 여기가 (the name of the city) 에서 가장 유명한 레스토랑이야.

7. 여권 챙겼어?
[yeogwon chaenggyeosseo?]

Did you bring the passport?

→ (Things that you need while traveling) 챙겼어?

8. 솔직히, 영국음식은 기대했던 것보다 별로였어.
[soljiki, yeonggugeumsigeun gidaehaetdeon geotboda byeolloyeosseo.]

To be honest, British food was worse than I expected.

→ 솔직히, (name of the country)음식은 기대했던 것보다 별로였어.

9. 돈만 있었으면 파리에서 한달은 더 있었을텐데.
[donman isseosseumyeon parieseo handareun deo isseosseultende.]

If I had enough money, I would stay in paris for one more month.

→ (Usually, time or money) 만 있었으면 파리에서 한달은 더 있었을텐데

10. 세상에. 유럽에서 지갑을 카페 테이블에 올려놓고 화장실에 가다니. 너 미쳤구나.
[sesange. yureobeseo jigabeul kape teibeure ollyeonoko hwajangsire gadani. neo michyeotguna.]

Oh my god. You left your wallet on the café table in Europe and went to the toilet? You are insane.

→ 세(Place)에서 (action) 을 하다니. 너 미쳤구나

■ Answer

Exercise A

1. 메디는 프랑스 사람이예요.
2. 니나는 슬로베니아 사람이예요.

3. 벤투는 영국 사람이예요.
4. 에리카는 노르웨이 사람이예요.
5. 채경은 한국 사람이예요.
6. 교카이는 터키 사람이예요.
7. 파오는 멕시코 사람이예요.
8. 리카르도는 이탈리아 사람이예요.
9. 애슐리는 케냐 사람이예요.
10. 라우라는 스페인 사람이예요.

Exercise B

1. 음악은 힙합을 좋아해요.
2. 영화는 로맨스(영화)를 좋아해요.
3. 운동은 축구를 좋아해요.
4. 책은 영문학을 좋아해요.
5. 꽃은 백합을 좋아해요.
6. 과목은 역사를 좋아해요.
7. 계절은 여름을 좋아해요.
8. 색은 파랑색을 좋아해요.
9. 자동차는 BMW 를 좋아해요.
10. 작가는 헤르만헤세를 좋아해요.

Exercise C

1. 교카이는 터키에 있어요.
2. 음식은 스시를 좋아해요.
3. 커피는 스코그가 맛있어요.
4. 도서관에서는 수가 가스파와 독일어를 공부해요.
5. 어떤 카페가 맛있어?
6. 나는 파리에서 왔어.
7. 나의 전공은 영문학 이에요.
8. 메디는 프랑스 사람이다. 하지만 유키는 일본 사람이다.
9. 이름이 뭐예요?
10. 꽃은 백합을 좋아해요.

Exercise D

1. 는
2. 은
3. 은
4. 은
5. 은
6. 는/가
7. 가
8. 은

9. 는

10. 는
