

# How To Be Impolite

Pragmatics

Comparing Politeness in German and Korean

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# Politeness

Politeness is a social and cultural construct that involves demonstrating respect, consideration, and courteous behavior towards others.

- Social Harmony
- Respect
- Effective Communication
- Conflict Avoidance

In both the German and Korean languages, the choice of informal or formal address is a crucial aspect of politeness.

# Levels

German: 2

Korean: 7

# Korean Speech Levels

Speech level	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative	Propositive
Deferential	-습니다 -ㅂ니다	-습니까 -ㅂ니까	-(으)십시오	-(으)십시오
Polite	-어요/-아요	-어요/-아요	-어요/-아요	-어요/-아요
Blunt	-(으)오	-(으)오		
Familiar	-네	-냐/-는가	-게	-세
Intimate	-어/-아	-어/-아	-어/-아	-어/-아
Plain	-(느)ㄴ다	-(으)ㄴ/-냐	-어라/-아라	-자

# How are you?

존댓말 (Formal Politeness):

- 어떻게 지내십니까? / 어떻게 지내세요?

해요체 (Polite But Less Formal):

- 어떻게 지내요?

반말 (Informal/Casual):

- 어떻게 지내?

# Saying “You” in German

In German there are two ways to say you:

- “Du” (informal)
- “Sie” (formal)

Example: Can you do this?

- Kannst du dies machen?
- Können sie dies machen?

# Saying “You” in Korean

- It's easy, just “당신”



# ~~Saying “You” in Korean~~

~~—It’s easy, just “당신”~~

This is wrong!

# How to say “You” in Korean?

More complex

- Just don't, omit the “you”
- Use titles instead (선생님, 사장님)
- Use 언니, 오빠, 누나 or 형 (older friend)
- 그쪽 (stranger momentarily)
- Name + 씨
- 당신 (spouse, start a fight, songs/speeches)
- 너 (most impolite)

# German

“Sie” (Formal):

- In professional settings, such as at the workplace or business meetings.
- When addressing superiors, supervisors, or employers.
- When interacting with elderly individuals.
- In official or formal correspondence, including letters and emails.

Use “Du” (informal) everywhere else.

# Korean

"존댓말":

- When speaking to elders or individuals of higher social status.
- In professional and workplace settings when addressing superiors or clients.
- During formal events, ceremonies, and official interactions.
- In public and customer service interactions, like in stores or restaurants.
- When showing respect to strangers or individuals you've just met.

"하오체": ...

"반말":

- Among close friends and peers of the same age or social status.
- In relaxed, casual, and private settings like at home or with close acquaintances.
- When talking to family members or siblings.
- When addressing children or younger individuals.
- In situations where there is mutual agreement to use "반말" due to a close relationship.

# Example situation in Germany

- High school teacher
- Stranger outside
- Uni prof.

# Sources

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