

How to Pronounce Korean

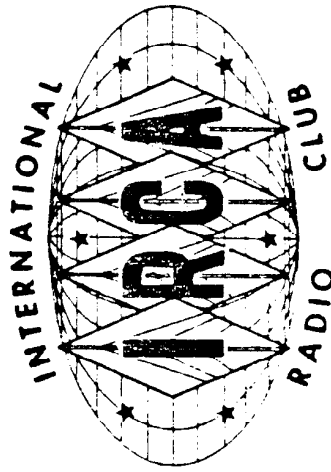
There are probably many times that a Transpacific station is received with talk and them time pips and calls aren't very clear, but if the language was known it might help in IDing the station. After looking at past IRCA Foreign Logs, I found articles written about Japanese and Chinese, but not Korean, stations, so there might be some need for Korean language aids. Korean is most easily recognized by the verb endings. Korean, like Japanese and unlike Chinese, usually ends every sentence with the verb. Without going into a great detail as to the meanings, the most common endings sound like hamnida, ...seumnida, ...shimnida, ...gamnida, ...imnida, etc. For questions, instead of "...da" for the syllable "...ga" is used. The above is the high level of speech, most common encountered on radio. Other levels of speech may be used occasionally.

For references in pronouncing the names found in the WRTVH and the Foreign Log, the following is offered:

- First of all, no system of Romanization of Korean is perfect and only approximate the English sound.
- i - sounds like long e sound in east
- o - sounds like "we" sound in where
- eo - without adjacent vowels sounds like o in cone
- a - sounds like a in father
- eu - no real English equivalent, but is somewhat similar to each other and is similar to e in error
- u - sounds like oo in moon
- k or g - are actually the same sound (don't confuse ng and g). Doesn't really sound like either k or g, but is somewhere in between
- j - is somewhere between English j and ch
- ch - is aspirated English ch
- p - is between English p and b
- b - is aspirated English p

Caution: there are other systems of Korean Romanization and this one is meant only for use in the WRTVH, Foreign Log, and my articles. The other letters sound similar to their English equivalents.

----- Bill Harms



How to Pronounce Chinese

The following is a table of the Chinese phonetic alphabet showing pronunciation with approximate English equivalents. The first letters are those in Pinyin, the system presently used to convert Chinese into English. The letters in parentheses are the equivalent letters in the older Wade-Giles system.

- (a) - a vowel as in far
- b (p) - a consonant, as in "be"
- c (ts) - a consonant, as "ts" in "its"
- ch (ch) - a consonant, as "ch" in "church", strongly aspirated
- d (t) - a consonant, as in "do"
- e (e) - a vowel, as "er" in "her", the "re" being silent; but "ie", a diphthong, as in "yes", and "ei", a diphthong, as in "way"
- f (f) - a consonant, as in "foot"
- g (k) - a consonant, as in "go"
- h (h) - a consonant, as in "her", strongly aspirated
- i (i) - a vowel, two pronunciations; 1) as in "eat", 2) as in "sir" in syllables beginning with the consonants c, ch, r, s, sh, z, and zh.
- j (ch) - a consonant as in "jeep"
- k (k) - a consonant, as in "kind", strongly aspirated
- l (l) - a consonant as in "land"
- m (m) - a consonant, as in "me"
- n (n) - a consonant, as in "no"
- o (o) - a vowel, as "aw" in "law"
- p (p) - a consonant as in "par", strongly aspirated
- q (ch) - a consonant as "ch" in check
- r (j) - a consonant pronounced as "r" but not rolled, or like "z" in "azure"
- s (s,ss,sz) - a consonant, as in elster; and "sh" (sh) a consonant, as as "sh" in "shore"
- t (t) - a consonant, as in "top", strongly aspirated
- u (u) - a vowel, as in "too", also as in the French "u" in "tu" or the German unaltered "u" in "Munchen"
- v (v) - is used only to pronounce foreign and national minority words and local dialects
- w (w) - used as a semi-vowel in syllables beginning with "u" when not preceded by consonants, pronounced as in "want"
- x (hs) - a consonant as "sh" in "she"
- y - used as a semi-vowel in syllables beginning with "i" or "u" when not preceded by consonants, pronounced as in yet.
- z (ts,tz) - a consonant, as in zero; and "zh", a consonant, as "j" in "jump".

Source: Radio Peking

How to Pronounce Spanish

The following is a listing of the letters of the Spanish alphabet and their pronunciations. These letters are sometimes aired as a station's call letters at station identification time:

Letter	Pronunciation	Notes
A	ah	
B	beh	
C	seh	
D	deh	
E	eh	
F	EH-feh	
G	geh	
H	AH-cheh	
I	ee	
J	HO-tah	
K	cah	
L	EL-leh	
M	EH-meh	
N	EH-neh	
O	oh	
P	peh	
Q	coo	
R	EH-reh	
S	EH-seh	
T	teh	
U	oo	
V	beh	
W	doh-bleh-oo	
X	EH-kees	
Y	Yeh, or EH-gre-eh-geh	
Z	SEH-teh	

Phonetic Pronunciation (i.e. when used in words)
 Pronounced as in English are the letters: B, C, D, F, M, N, P, T, X
 A - always "ah"
 E - always "eh"
 G - as g in "go", before A, L, O, R, U
 H - like h in "hour" or "honor"
 I - always "ee"
 J - like j in "jose"
 L - as L in "value"
 LL - as y in "yard"
 O - always "oh"