



Korean Ladder Study Note



The 'Yae' and 'Ye' Glide Vowels

Level	Topic	Focus
A1 · Beginner TOPIK 1	Pronunciation Vowels	ㅟ The 'Yae' and 'Ye' Glide Vowels

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-010>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tY4OehJF-k>

Visit [koreanladder.com](https://www.koreanladder.com) for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Okay, real question — I hear 애기 and 예, and they both sound like 'ye' to me. Am I missing a secret mouth shape?

그 질문 정말 좋아요. That question is perfect — your ears are hearing modern Korean correctly.

오늘 볼 모음은 애하고 예예요. Today's vowels are ㅟ and ㅟ — in Korean we call them 애 and 예.

쉽게 말하면, 애는 ㅟ 앞에 이 소리가 붙은 모음이에요. In English, ㅟ is y-glide plus ㅟ.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	준호 씨, 잠깐 얘기 있어요. —	Junho, I have something to tell you.
Junho	예, 말씀하세요. —	Yes — go ahead.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Hana	이 카페 정말 예쁘죠? —	This cafe is really pretty, right?
Junho	예, 정말 예뻐요. 저 먼저 가볼게요. 안녕히 계세요. —	Yes, it's really pretty. I'll head out first — please stay well.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
ㅏ · ㅑ yae · ye	the y-glide pair of ㅏ and ㅑ	오늘 볼 모음은 애하고 예예요. Today's vowels are ㅏ and ㅑ — in Korean we call them 애 and 예.
ㅏ = y-glide + ㅏ yae	y-glide of 애	쉽게 말하면, 애는 ㅏ 앞에 이 소리가 붙은 모음이에요. In English, ㅏ is y-glide plus ㅏ.
ㅑ = y-glide + ㅑ ye	y-glide of 예	그리고 예는 ㅑ 앞에 이 소리가 붙은 모음이에요. And ㅑ is y-glide plus ㅑ.
애 ≈ 예 yae ≈ ye	one merged sound in Seoul speech	이게 왜 중요할까요. In modern Seoul speech, 애 and 예 usually sound the same — just like 애 and 예 merged.
소리는 하나, 철자는 단어마다 sori-neun hana, cheolja-neun daneo-mada	one sound; spelling differs by word	그래서 귀는 편하게 듣고, 눈은 정확하게 보세요. So relax your ears — then train your eyes for each word's spelling.
애 yae	The 'Yae' and 'Ye' Glide Vowels	먼저 애만 들어 보세요. First hear just 애 — a soft 'ye' starting with a little y-glide.
예 ye	The 'Yae' and 'Ye' Glide Vowels	이제 예예요. Now 예 — in careful reading it also starts with that same light y into 'e'.
애 · 예 yae · ye	The 'Yae' and 'Ye' Glide Vowels	나란히 들어 보세요. Side by side: 애, 예. In natural speech, they land in the same place.



Grammar / Structure Notes

ㅙ · ㅞ

ㅙ · ㅞ — the y-glide pair of ㅐ and ㅔ

Say the names ㅙ and ㅞ out loud — never force English 'yae/ye' spellings in speech.

ㅙ = y-glide + ㅐ

ㅙ = y-glide + ㅐ — y-glide of ㅐ

Sound model only: y-glide + ㅐ. We'll look at letter shape later.

ㅞ = y-glide + ㅔ

ㅞ = y-glide + ㅔ — y-glide of ㅔ

Sound model only: y-glide + ㅔ. Shape comes later.

ㅙ ≈ ㅞ

ㅙ ≈ ㅞ — one merged sound in Seoul speech

Don't force two different pronunciations.

소리는 하나, 철자는 단어마다

소리는 하나, 철자는 단어마다 — one sound; spelling differs by word

Sound merges. Spelling stays.

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
ㅙ	yae
ㅞ	ye
ㅙ, ㅞ	yae · ye
ㅙ = ㅞ (소리)	yae = ye (sori)
ㅙ기	yaegi
계세요	gyeseyo

Self-Check

- 1 Say ㅙ three times: slow, natural, then inside a short sentence.
- 2 Write one original sentence that was not in the video.
- 3 Rewatch the YouTube lesson and pause when the same pattern appears.



Related / Subsequent Studies

Lesson	Why study it next	Link
ㅏ The Two Open Vowels Beginners Blur	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅏ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-006
ㅗ The Vowels That Now Sound the Same	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅗ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-002
ㅑ / ㅓ / ㅕ / ㅗ The 'Y' Glide Vowels	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅑ / ㅓ / ㅕ / ㅗ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-004
ㅓ The Vowels English Speakers Mix Up	A1 Pronunciation: compare ㅓ with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-PRON-VOW-001

My Notes

Your ladder to fluent Korean. This PDF, the website, and the video lessons are free for personal study.