LIST: PREPRONOMIAL PREFIXES – SOUND RULES AND ALLOMORPHS

Section reviewed and approved by JW Webster, should not be changed.

Parentheses indicate parts that may be dropped based on whether prefix attaches to a vowel or consonant.
Tilde (~) indicates that allomorph is a matter of speaker preference, some speakers may not use it.[†]
An "x" is a stand-in for whatever syllable comes next—usually to indicate the prefix causes tone-shifting.

[1]   **/ y(i^2)- /**   Irrealis. Conditional.   ~ yi^2 + hi^2 = hyi^2
~ yi^2 + wi^2 = yu^2 (When pronounced together quickly, produces /yu/ sound.)

/ j(i^2)- /   Specifizer. Relativizer.

[2]   **/ w(i^2)- /**   Translocative. "Away."   ~ wi^2 + hi^2 = hwi^2

[3]   **/ n(i^2)- /**   Generalizer.   ~ ni^2 + hi^2 = hni^2

/ i^{22}(y)x^{33} /   Particularizer.

[4]   **/ d(e^{33})- /**   Real Distributive.   de^{33} + da^2(y) = do^{33}da^2(y)
de^{33} + x^{22} = de^{22}x^{33} (High tone shifts right if next syllable is long and not high.)
de^{33} + [e/i] = de^{33} (Tone shift doesn't happen when connected to /e/ or /i/.)

/ d(i^{22})- /   Unreal Distributive.   di^{22} + [a/i] = di^{22}
~ di^{22} + [e/o/u/v] = /j/
~ di^{22} + [e/o/u/v] = di^{22}y
~ di^{22} + hi^2(^{2}y) = ti^2(^{2}y)
di^{22} + di^2? = do^{22}di^2?

[†] Many allomorphic forms of the prepronomials prefixes have traditionally been presented in a way that suggests the allomorphs are mandatory for listener comprehension, but this is not necessarily the case. Whether to use a given allomorph is often a matter of speaker preference—and, as long as pronunciation is otherwise correct in terms of vowel length and tone, listeners will usually understand you regardless of whether you use them.

LIST: PREPRONOMIAL PREFIXES – SOUND RULES AND ALLOMORPHS (Cont.)

[4]   **/ ga²(y)- /**   Animate Distributive $ga^2(y) + /a/ = gv^2$
$ga^2(y) + /i/ = ge^2$

[5]   **/ d(a²y)- /**   Real Towards. $da^2 + /a/ = dv^2$
$da^2 + [e/i/o/u/v] = da^2y$
$\sim da^2 + hi^2(^2y) = ti^2(^2y)$

     / di²(?)- /   Unreal Towards. $di^2? + [a/i] = di^{22}$
     ~ / di²²(y)- / $\sim di^2(y) + [e/o/u/v] = /j/$
     `` ` `` $\sim di^2(?) + hi^2(^2y) = ti^2(^2y)$

[6]   **/ v²²(?) /**   Again.
     ~ / i²²(?) /
     ~ / pron.³ / [†]

[7]   **/ ga²²(y) /**   Since, Can, "Known To."   (has special "Fused" Pronomial forms to denote ability on INF Stems)

     / e²²(?) /   Distant Imperative (IMM).   "Come and do."
                                                       Only seen on IMM Commands. Pre-vowel form only seen in 3rd Pers.

JW Says: *Almost all* the allomorphic forms (i.e., "sound-changed forms") are basically optional. He says he grew up around fluent speakers who never used allomorphic forms at all—at least not beyond distinct "pre-vowel" and "pre-consonant" forms. Learn and study in whatever way makes it easiest for you to start speaking as soon as possible—you probably don't need to (or shouldn't) feel the need to memorize every allomorphic rule for every Prepronomial right away. However, you *do* need to learn how to use and recognize the allomorphic forms eventually if you want to communicate fully and effectively. This is because many allomorphic forms have become almost ubiquitous among modern Cherokee speakers, especially second language learners.

[†] i.e., "Again" Prefix sometimes takes form of short high tone replacing pronomial tone, with nothing else to indicate its presence. Caution: JW says this form is an allomorphic matter of speaker preference. But it is likely a "worst" option for most learners because it alters the lexical tones of pronomial prefixes. Moreover, this "tone-only" form will probably be much harder for the average second-language learner to hear, recognize, and pronounce.