Vowel contraction and deletion with personal prefixes

- The Karuk language doesn't like two different vowels right next to each other. What happens instead?

Adding prefixes to beginning of words that start with consonants: no vowel changes

1. *nanì* + *chishiih* = *nanìchishiih*  'my dog'
2. *nì* + *máahva* = *nìmáahva*  'I visit (him/her)'
3. *mu* + *chishiih* = *muchishiih*  'his/her dog'
4. *nu* + *máahva* = *nymáahva*  'I visit you'
5. *na* + *máahva* = *nàmaahva*  'he/she visits me'
6. *na* + *xúriha* = *naxúriha*  'I'm hungry'

Adding prefixes to beginning of words that start with vowels: vowel is deleted

7. *nanì* + *ìshpuk* = *nanìshpuk*  'my money'
8. *nì* + *ìmuustih* = *nìmuustih*  'I'm looking at (it)'
9. *nanì* + *àpsiih* = *nanìpsiih*  'my leg'
10. *nì* + *astùukha* = *nìshtuukha*  'I sweat'
11. *mu* + *ìshpuk* = *mìspuk*  'his/her money'
12. *nu* + *ìmuustih* = *nìmuustih*  'I'm looking at you'
13. *mu* + *àpsiih* = *mùpsiih*  'his/her leg'
14. *u* + *astùukha* = *ìstuukha*  'he/she sweats'

Adding prefixes to beginning of words that start with vowels: vowels are contracted

15. *na* + *ìmuustih* = *néemuustih*  'you're looking at me'
16. *na* + *ìkvùrish* = *néekvùrish*  'I'm tired'

Guidelines to remember

- If prefix ends in *i* or *u*, delete the vowel on the word you're attaching the prefix to
  
  \[
  \begin{align*}
  i + i &= i \\
  u + i &= u \\
  i + u &= i \\
  u + u &= u \\
  i + a &= i \\
  u + a &= u
  \end{align*}
  \]

- If prefix ends in *a*, the two vowels contract into one long vowel
  
  \[
  \begin{align*}
  a + i &= ee \\
  a + u &= oo \\
  a + a &= aa
  \end{align*}
  \]
Practice A

1. nani + t̂aat = ___________________________ 'my mother'
2. mi + yukúkuh = ___________________________ 'your shoe'
3. nani + ishvaak = ___________________________ 'my chin'
4. mu + ishvaak = ___________________________ 'his/her chin'
5. mi + ithvuy = ___________________________ 'your name'
6. nani + átraax = ___________________________ 'my arm'
7. mu + átraax = ___________________________ 'his/her arm'
8. mi + axvâah = ___________________________ 'your head'
9. ni + ikríish = ___________________________ 'I sit'
10. u + ikríish = ___________________________ 'he/she sits'
11. mi + astúukha = ___________________________ 'you sweat'
12. ni + ikrùuntih = ___________________________ 'I'm waiting (for him/her)'
13. nu + ikrùuntih = ___________________________ 'I'm waiting for you'
14. na + ikrùuntih = ___________________________ 'you're waiting for me'
15. na + ixvíipha = ___________________________ 'I'm angry'
Answer key A

1. \(nani + táat = \) nanítaat 'my mother'
2. \(mi + yukúkuh = \) miyukúkuh 'your shoe'
3. \(nani + ishvaak = \) naníshvaak 'my chin'
4. \(mu + ishvaak = \) múshvaak 'his/her chin'
5. \(mi + ithvuy = \) mithvuy 'your name'
6. \(nani + átraax = \) nanitraax 'my arm'
7. \(mu + átraax = \) mútraax 'his/her arm'
8. \(mi + axvâah = \) mixvâah 'your head'
9. \(ni + ikrîish = \) nikrîish 'I sit'
10. \(u + ikrîish = \) ukrîish 'he/she sits'
11. \(mi + astúukha = \) mistuukha 'you sweat'
12. \(ni + ikrûuntih = \) nikrûuntih 'I'm waiting (for him/her)'
13. \(nu + ikrûuntih = \) nukrûuntih 'I'm waiting for you'
14. \(na + ikrûuntih = \) neekrûuntih 'you're waiting for me'
15. \(na + ixvíipha = \) néexviipha 'I'm angry'

- Note: Compounds in which two vowels come together work exactly the same as the prefixes shown here. \(ta=\) and \(pa=\) work similarly but have some complications so are not included here.
Words that don't contract

Some words that start with a vowel don't contract or lose their vowel when a prefix that ends with a vowel is attached. Why not?

- All words that start with vowels are pronounced with a glottal stop at the beginning when nothing comes before them
- Some of these words keep the glottal stop when prefixes are added

Adding prefixes to beginning of words that keep a glottal stop: no vowel changes

1. \( \text{nani} + \text{ákah} = \text{nani'}\text{ákah} \) 'my father'
2. \( \text{ni} + \text{ish} = \text{ni'}\text{ish} \) 'I am drinking'
3. \( \text{ni} + \text{uum} = \text{ni'}\text{uum} \) 'I arrived (there)'
4. \( \text{mu} + \text{ákah} = \text{nani'}\text{ákah} \) 'his/her father'
5. \( u + \text{ish} = u'\text{ish} \) 'he's drinking'
6. \( u + \text{uum} = u'\text{uum} \) 'he/she arrived (there)'
7. \( \text{na} + \text{áathva} = \text{ná'aathva} \) 'I'm scared'

Some more words that keep the glottal stop

- áhoo 'go, walk, arrive'
- áhup 'stick, wood'
- áama 'salmon'
- áv 'eat'
- ávan 'husband'
- áxaska 'be thin, get thin'
- áy 'be afraid of'
- ípaha 'tree'

Words that keep the glottal stop are not written any differently. How can you tell if a word that starts with a vowel keeps the glottal stop or not?

- See how an elder pronounces it
- Check in William Bright's *Karok Language* for how the word was pronounced in the past
# Practice B

Note: In this practice set, there are both words that keep the glottal stop and words that don't.

1. \( ni + áy = \) ___________________________  'I'm afraid (of it)'
2. \( nu + ikrîish = \) ________________________  'we sit'
3. \( ni + áhoo = \) ___________________________  'I arrived'
4. \( nani + ithvuy = \) ________________________  'my name'
5. \( nani + axvâah = \) _________________________  'my head'
6. \( mu + áama = \) ___________________________  'his/her salmon'
7. \( mi + ishvaak = \) __________________________  'your chin'
8. \( mu + ipaha = \) ___________________________  'his/her tree'
9. \( mi + áhup = \) ___________________________  'your wood'
10. \( mi + átraax = \) ___________________________  'your arm'
11. \( nu + astúukha = \) _________________________  'we sweat'
12. \( nu + áv = \) _____________________________  'we eat'
13. \( na + áxaska = \) ___________________________  'I'm getting thin'
14. \( na + ikrûuntih = \) ________________________  'he/she is waiting for me'
15. \( u + áathva = \) ____________________________  'he/she is scared'
Answer key B

1. \(ni + áy = ni'áy\)  
   'I'm afraid (of it)'

2. \(nu + ikriish = nukriish\)  
   'we sit'

3. \(ni + áhoo = ni'áhoo\)  
   'I arrived'

4. \(nani + ithvuy = nanithvuy\)  
   'my name'

5. \(nani + axvâah = nanixvâah\)  
   'my head'

6. \(mu + áama = mú'aama\)  
   'his/her salmon'

7. \(mi + ishvaak = mishvaak\)  
   'your chin'

8. \(mu + ípaha = mu'ípaha\)  
   'his/her tree'

9. \(mi + áhup = mi'áhup\)  
   'your wood'

10. \(mi + átraax = mitraax\)  
    'your arm'

11. \(nu + astúukha = nústuukha\)  
    'we sweat'

12. \(nu + áv = nu'áv\)  
    'we eat'

13. \(na + áxaska = na'áxaska\)  
    'I'm getting thin'

14. \(na + ikruuntih = neekruuntih\)  
    'he/she is waiting for me'

15. \(u + áathva = u'áathva\)  
    'he/she is scared'