THE ARMENIAN SOUNDS SYSTEM & VOCALIC ALTERNATION

(p.14) The preposition ի + acc./abl./loc. will show as յ= when followed by a word beginning with a vowel: իքաղաքը, (to the city) but յաստեղացն (from the stars); note, however, that both will happily occur together, as well: ի յունունենու (from God). Furthermore, ի often combines with ուն without any significant change in meaning: ուն իքաղաքը = իքաղաքը

(p.15) Word-finally and before vowel, հի is indeed pronounced as suggested by Thomson, i.e. /iv/; in other cases, e.g. before consonant, the more common pronunciation is /yu/; for example in հիմաստութիւն (wisdom) /imastутyun/ - this is reflected in Modern Eastern Armenian spelling, too: հիմաստություն.

(p.15) The triphthong հւյի should of course be pronounced /iyay/.

(p.16) Vocalic alternation
- vocalic alternation is the result of a shift in the stress pattern; no change happens if this pattern does not change
- with few exceptions (cf. p.15), Armenian has a constant stress on the final full syllable of a word
  o ի > Օ / ո (ո is used to preserve polysyllabic structure) if it occurs
    ▪ word-internally before consonant
    ▪ word-initially before more than one consonant (not consistent for ո)
  o alternation is avoided to preserve full syllables, i.e. full vowel + consonant, or weak vowel (ո) + more than one consonant
    ▪ thus, հիւսի, հիւսիուն, and not *հիւսու
  o alternation is further avoided when the accent shifts to a formerly weak syllable
    ▪ thus, հիւսի, հիւսիուն, and հիւսի
  o finally, alternation as such only operates in inflectional, not in derivational formations
    - հ > հի, ու > ու, եւ > և, ու > ու, and տու > դու are as explained by Thomson
    - since you need not compose in Grabar, it is sufficient to be aware of these alternations, and have in mind the common rules listed above;

(p.18) Rhotic alternation
- the common rule is that ո changes to է before է; there are, however, etymological and analogical է as well
- where the form in է was particularly prominent, է may have been analogically adopted in places where ո is expected.