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## Inventory of Anal Vowel Phonemes

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### Abstract

This paper attempts to highlight the inventory of Anal vowel phonemes. Anal belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family. The speakers of Anal language are also known as Anal. They live mostly in the Chandel district of Manipur. It is popularly believed that they could have come from Mongolia and they migrated to upper Burma in Kabaw Valley in the trans-Chindwin basin. The Anal society is a patriarchal society but it is not definitely a male-dominated one. The whole society is divided into two moieties (*Mosum* and *Mulchal*) which are further divided into lineage. The two moieties are exogamous groups.

There are six vowel phonemes in Anal, i.e.; i, e, ə, a, u and o. The vowel phonemes - /i, u, ə, and a/ can occur initially, medially and finally. Examples are - /i/ :- (initial - /ica/ 'eating', /in/ 'house'), (medial - /t<sup>h</sup>inj/ 'tree', /ripal/ 'flower'), (final - /ci/ 'go', /ni/ 'I'), etc. The initial phonemes /e/ and /o/ can occur in rare.

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Inventory of Anal Vowel Phonemes

**Key words:** vowel phonemes, description, occurrence, initial, medial and final.

**Vowel Phonemes**

‘Vowels are speech sounds made by shaping the oral cavity while allowing free passage of air from the lungs.’ (Sloat, et al. 1978)

Anal has six vowel phonemes: /i, e, ə, a, u and o /. These vowel phonemes are classified according to the position of tongue, namely, whether the tongue is retracted or extended, the height of the tongue, and the shape of the lips as given below:

Place of Articulation	Front		Central		Back	
	Rounded	Unrounded	Rounded	Unrounded	Rounded	Unrounded
High		i			u	
Mid		e		ə	o	
Low				a		

Table: Six vowel phonemes of Anal

Articulatory descriptions of these six vowel phonemes are given as:

/i/	high, front, unrounded vowel
/e/	mid, front, unrounded vowel
/ə/	mid, central, unrounded vowel
/o/	mid, back, rounded vowel
/u/	high, back, rounded vowel
/a/	low, back, unrounded vowel

The above vowel phonemes can be established on the basis of the following minimal pairs:

	Anal	Gloss
i/e	/ni/	‘days’
	/ne/	‘eat’
e/o	/pe/	‘give’
	/po/	‘belly’
ə/o	/səm/	‘hair’
	/som/	‘ten’
e/ə	/pet <sup>h</sup> ro/	‘mimic’
	/pət <sup>h</sup> ro/	‘necklace/chain’
u/o	/ʃuŋ/	‘go’
	/ʃoŋ/	‘monkey’
ə/a	/camə/	‘hundred’
	/cama/	‘don’t eat’
i/u	/təri/	‘eight’
	/təru/	‘six’

### Occurrence of Vowel Phonemes

All the six vowel phonemes /i, u, ə, e, o and a/ can occur initially, medially and finally. But the occurrence of initial phonemes /o/ is found in rare number. The occurrence of six vowels can be discussed as in the following examples.

### Occurrence of Phoneme /i/

#### Initial occurrence of phoneme /i/

	Anal	Gloss
/i/	/ik <sup>h</sup> a/	‘bitter’
	/ine/	‘drinking’
	/ica/	‘eating’
	/iro/	‘standing’
	/in/	‘house’
	/iyam/	‘live’

### Medial occurrence of phoneme /i/

	Anal	Gloss
/i/	/cim/	‘jock’
	/ripal/	‘flower’
	/hrin/	‘new’
	/ət <sup>h</sup> impa/	‘doctor’
	/t <sup>h</sup> i ə /	‘tree’
	/k <sup>h</sup> inu/	‘first daughter’

### Final occurrence of phoneme /i/

	Anal	Gloss
/i/	/ənipi/	‘spring’
	/ci/	‘go’
	/əni/	‘march’
	/ni/	‘I’
	/daki/	‘why’
	/liri/	‘book’

### Occurrence of Phoneme /e/

#### Initial occurrence of phoneme /e/

	Anal	Gloss
/e/	/enum/	‘keep away’
	/enu:m/	‘to make’

#### Medial occurrence of phoneme /e/

	Anal	Gloss
/e/	/əmehe/	‘this’
	/mem/	‘wealth’
	/cewe/	‘husk’
	/p <sup>h</sup> olpeni/	‘Wednesday’
	/inseŋ/	‘pure’
	/sem/	‘make’

### Final occurrence of phoneme /e/

	Anal	Gloss
/e/	/əmele/	‘that’
	/əbe/	‘beans’
	/pe/	‘give’
	/se/	‘bow’
	/ək <sup>h</sup> e/	‘one’
	/mek <sup>h</sup> e/	‘half’

### Occurrence of Phoneme /o/

#### Initial occurrence of phoneme /o/

	Anal	Gloss
/o/	/oŋma/	‘negative’
	/oŋtibe/	‘climb’

#### Medial occurrence of phoneme /o/

	Anal	Gloss
/o/	/əwoca/	‘teacher’
	/dotti/	‘land’
	/əwon/	‘February’
	/som/	‘ten’
	/roŋ/	‘tall’
	/don/	‘animal’

#### Final occurrence of phoneme /o/

	Anal	Gloss
/o/	/indo/	‘white’
	/brəjo/	‘red ant’
	/ək <sup>h</sup> o/	‘which’
	/it <sup>h</sup> ro/	‘born’
	/ado/	‘want’
	/piruto/	‘thief’

## Occurrence of Phoneme /u/

### Initial occurrence of phoneme /u/

	Anal	Gloss
/u/	/upu/	'box'
	/unsa/	'love'

### Medial occurrence of phoneme /u/

	Anal	Gloss
/u/	/ət <sup>h</sup> um/	'three'
	/buce/	'rice'
	/piruto/	'thief'
	/budil/	'cloth'
	/datuŋ/	'how'
	/kolum/	'summer'

### Final occurrence of phoneme /u/

	Anal	Gloss
/u/	/təku/	'village'
	/pəsu/	'mouse'
	/əku/	'who'
	/təru/	'six'
	/təku/	'nine'
	/nu/	'mother'

## Occurrence of Phoneme /ə/

### Initial occurrence of phoneme /ə/

	Anal	Gloss
/ə/	/ən/	'curry'
	/əbe/	'bean/pulses'
	/əlu/	'potato'
	/əya/	'how many'

	/əma/	‘he/she’
	/əmhi/	‘name’

#### Medial occurrence of phoneme /ə/

	Anal	Gloss
/ə/	/pəsa/	‘bed bug’
	/cəmhə/	‘cow’
	/pəha/	‘bird’
	/səl/	‘arrow’
	/cətrəŋ/	‘paddy’
	/pəli/	‘four’

#### Final occurrence of phoneme /ə/

	Anal	Gloss
/ə/	/hə/	‘fish’
	/arhrə/	‘pluck’
	/t <sup>h</sup> rə/	‘beautiful’
	/sakə/	‘hot’
	/hmit <sup>h</sup> rə/	‘tear’
	/k <sup>h</sup> asə/	‘ant’

#### Occurrence of Phoneme /a/

##### Initial occurrence of phoneme /a/

	Anal	Gloss
/a/	/anu/	‘mother’
	/ado/	‘want’
	/arhrə/	‘pluck’

##### Medial occurrence of phoneme /a/

	Anal	Gloss
/a/	/k <sup>h</sup> asə/	‘ant’
	/saka/	‘hot’
	/pəsu/	‘mouse’

/cap <sup>h</sup> e/	‘buffalo’
/ripal/	‘flower’
/ijam/	‘live’

### Final occurrence of phoneme /a/

	Anal	Gloss
/a/	/əma/	‘he’
	/pəŋa/	‘five’
	/pəsa/	‘bed bug’
	/pəha/	‘bird’
	/ət <sup>h</sup> a/	‘again’
	/əya/	‘how many’

### Conclusion

In the above analysis, it is found that Anal has 6 (six) vowel phonemes. They are: /i, e, ə, a, u and o/. All the six vowel phonemes can occur initially, medially and finally. But the initial occurrence of phoneme /e/ and /o/ is found in rare numbers.

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