

Chapter 3

Phonology

3.1. Phonemic Inventory

The phonemic inventory of Sylheti consists of 35 segmental phonemes, with 30 consonants and 5 vowels.

3.1.1. Consonant

Sylheti has 29 consonants. On the basis of place or point of articulation consonants can be divided into bilabial, alveolar, palatal, retroflex, velar and glottal. In terms of manner of articulation the consonants can be further divided into stops, affricates, fricatives, nasals, lateral, trill, tap or flap and semivowels. Sylheti has sixteen stops i.e. /p, p^h, b, b^h, t, d, t^h, d^h, ṭ, ḍ, ṭ^h, ḍ^h, k, k^h, g, g^h/, one affricate /ts/, four fricatives /s, ś, h and z/, three nasals /m, n, ŋ/, three liquids /l, r and ɽ / and two semi-vowels /w and y/. Aspiration is phonemic in Sylheti. The inventory of consonant phonemes of Sylheti is illustrated in Table1:

POA→	Bilabial	Alveolar	Palatal	Retroflex	Velar	Glottal
MOA ↓	UA AS	UA AS	UA AS	UA AS	UA AS	UA AS
Voiceless	p p ^h	t t ^h		ʈ ʈ ^h	k k ^h	
Stops						
Voiced	b b ^h	d d ^h		ɖ ɖ ^h	g g ^h	
Voiceless		ts				
Affricate						
Voiced		-				
Voiceless		s	ʃ			h
Fricatives						
Voiced		z				
Nasals	m	n			ŋ	
Lateral		l				
Trill		r				
Tap				ɽ		
Semi-vowels	w		ɟ			

Table1: Consonant phonemes in Sylheti

3.1.2. Vowels

Sylheti has an inventory of five vowel phonemes i.e., /i, e, a, o, and u/. All the vowel phonemes in Sylheti are oral. Length is not phonemic in the language. The five vowel phonemes in the language are illustrated in Table 2:

	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u
Mid	e		o
Low		a	

Table 2 Vowel phonemes in Sylheti

3.2. Contrasting Pairs

3.2.1. Consonants

/p/ vs. /p^h/

<i>/pona/</i>	‘seedling of fish’
<i>/phona/</i>	‘shoulder’
<i>/por/</i>	‘other’
<i>/phor/</i>	‘butterfly’

/p/ vs /b/

<i>/pon/</i>	‘dowry’
<i>/bon/</i>	‘forest’
<i>/poinno/</i>	‘commodities’
<i>/boinno/</i>	‘wild’
<i>/porom/</i>	‘great’
<i>/borom/</i>	‘care’

/p^h vs. b^h/

<i>/p^hek^h/</i>	‘mud’
<i>/b^hek^h/</i>	‘style’
<i>/p^han/</i>	‘betel leaf’

<i>/b^han/</i>	‘pretention’
<i>/p^hut/</i>	‘son’
<i>/b^hut/</i>	‘ghost’
<i>/p^hik/</i>	‘betel leaf spit’
<i>/b^hik/</i>	‘alms’
<i>/p^huk/</i>	‘insect’
<i>/b^huk/</i>	‘hunger’

/t/ vs. /d/

<i>/tin/</i>	‘three’
<i>/din/</i>	‘day’
<i>/tiś/</i>	‘thirty’
<i>/diś/</i>	‘way’
<i>/tulal/</i>	‘cotton’
<i>/dulal/</i>	‘rice water’
<i>/tork^haril/</i>	‘cooked vegetables’
<i>/dork^haril/</i>	‘important’
<i>/tolal/</i>	‘surface’
<i>/dolal/</i>	‘hard piece of mud’

/t/ vs /t^h/

<i>/talal/</i>	‘lock’
<i>/t^halal/</i>	‘dish’
<i>/tanal/</i>	‘tired’
<i>/thanal/</i>	‘police station’
<i>/tal/</i>	‘palm’
<i>/t^hal/</i>	‘plate’

/t^h/ vs /d^h/

<i>/t^huś/</i>	‘stop’
<i>/d^huś/</i>	‘collision’
<i>/t^huʃa/</i>	‘little’
<i>/d^huʃa/</i>	‘a kind of less poisonous snake’
<i>/t^haś/</i>	‘playing card’
<i>/d^haś/</i>	‘a sound of slap’

/t/ vs /d/

<i>/tala/</i>	‘lock’
<i>/dala/</i>	‘tray of wicker work’
<i>/tall/</i>	‘not in normal sense’
<i>/dall/</i>	‘stem of tree’
<i>/tɛŋga/</i>	‘sour’
<i>/dɛŋga/</i>	‘stem amaranth’
<i>/tɛra/</i>	‘squint-eyed/ cock-eyed’
<i>/dɛra/</i>	‘lodgings/ camp’
<i>/tuba/</i>	‘picnic party locally’
<i>/duba/</i>	‘sink / dive/ plunge’

/t^h/ vs /d^h/

<i>/t^hela/</i>	‘push’
<i>/d^hela/</i>	‘piece of mud/ soil’
<i>/t^hɛŋ/</i>	‘leg’
<i>/d^hɛŋ/</i>	‘obstacle/ disturbance’
<i>/t^huka/</i>	‘knock’
<i>/d^huka/</i>	‘insert’

<i>lʰʉll</i>	‘cover’
<i>lqʰʉll</i>	‘a kind of drum’
<i>lʰogal</i>	‘cheating’
<i>lqʰogal</i>	‘tall’

/d/ vs /q/

<i>ldor/</i>	‘price’
<i>lqor/</i>	‘fear’
<i>ldola/</i>	‘hard piece of mud/ soil’
<i>lqola/</i>	‘to incline’

/k/ vs. /kʰ/

<i>/kula/</i>	‘winnowing tray’
<i>/kʰula/</i>	‘open’
<i>/kul/</i>	‘side’
<i>/kʰul/</i>	‘leaf of arecanut tree’
<i>/kun/</i>	‘corner’
<i>/kʰun/</i>	‘murder’

/k/ vs. /g/

<i>lkual</i>	‘ring well’
<i>lgual</i>	‘betel nut’
<i>lkuʈ,a/</i>	‘long bamboo used to pick something from tree’
<i>lguʈ,a/</i>	‘small tumour’
<i>lkull</i>	‘side’
<i>lgull</i>	‘round shaped’

<i>/kʰul/</i>	‘winnowing platter or tray’
<i>/gʰul/</i>	‘flood’
<i>/kʰun/</i>	‘corner’
<i>/gʰun/</i>	‘sin’

/kʰ/ vs /gʰ/

<i>/kʰam/</i>	‘work’
<i>/gʰam/</i>	‘sweat’
<i>/kʰat/</i>	‘small stool made of wood’
<i>/gʰat/</i>	‘wharf/ quay’
<i>/kʰat,il/</i>	‘pure’
<i>/gʰat,il/</i>	‘centre’
<i>/kʰat,al/</i>	‘serve’
<i>/gʰat,al/</i>	‘a gate made of bamboo’
<i>/kʰoɾil/</i>	‘paisa’
<i>/gʰoɾil/</i>	‘watch’

/ts/ vs /s/

<i>/tsal/</i>	‘roof’
<i>/sall/</i>	‘bark of tree’
<i>/tsat/</i>	‘paddy field’
<i>/sat/</i>	‘ceiling’
<i>/tsola/</i>	‘to go’
<i>/solal/</i>	‘bag made of cloth’
<i>/tsoll/</i>	‘practice’
<i>/soll/</i>	‘pair’
<i>/tsuɾil/</i>	‘bracelet’

/suri/ 'knife'

/s/ vs /s̺/

/sap^h/ 'clear'

/s̺ap^h/ 'snake'

/asa/ 'collection of seasonal fruits'

/aśa/ 'hope'

/bas/ 'foetus'

/baś/ 'bamboo'

/mas/ 'fish'

/maś/ 'month'

/soy/ 'six'

/soy/ 'habit'

/s/ vs. /z/

/sat/ 'ceiling'

/zat/ 'community'

/sola/ 'bag made of cloth'

/zola/ 'burn'

/sal/ 'bark'

/zall/ 'net'

/masil/ 'fly'

/mazi/ 'boat sailor'

/mosa/ 'collection of food items'

/mozal/ 'tasty'

/ts/ vs. /z/

/tsuʃil/ 'bracelet'

/zuʃil/ 'basket'

<i>/tsuk/</i>	‘sentiment
<i>/zuk/</i>	‘leech’
<i>/tsula/</i>	‘oven’
<i>/zula/</i>	‘a type of bag made from cloth’
<i>/tsala/</i>	‘thatched roof of a house’
<i>/zala/</i>	‘disturbance/ pain’
<i>/tsull/</i>	‘hair’
<i>/zull/</i>	‘curry water’

/s/ vs. /h/

<i>/solal/</i>	‘bag made of cloth/ testicles’
<i>/holal/</i>	‘piece of cloth or rope used to climb tree’
<i>/sayal/</i>	‘lady’s under garment’
<i>/hayal/</i>	‘shame’
<i>/soral/</i>	‘necklace’
<i>/horal/</i>	‘lid of rice or curry pot / displace’
<i>/salil/</i>	‘residual of something after burning’
<i>/halil/</i>	‘sister in law’
<i>/sall/</i>	‘bark/ skin’
<i>/hall/</i>	‘condition’

/m/ vs. /n/

<i>/mas/</i>	‘fish’
<i>/nas/</i>	‘dance’
<i>/mośal/</i>	‘mosquito’
<i>/nośal/</i>	‘groom’

<i>lmalal</i>	‘garland’
<i>lnalal</i>	‘drain’
<i>lmal</i>	‘mother’
<i>lnal</i>	‘not’
<i>lmall</i>	‘goods’
<i>lnall</i>	‘straight’

/m/ vs. /b/

<i>lmoil</i>	‘maternal aunty’
<i>lboil</i>	‘book’
<i>lmoul</i>	‘honey’
<i>lboul</i>	‘wife’
<i>lmelal</i>	‘fair’
<i>lbelal</i>	‘time’
<i>lmall</i>	‘goods’
<i>lball</i>	‘hair of the penis or vagina’
<i>lmalal</i>	‘garland’
<i>lbalal</i>	‘wristlet’

/m/ vs. /ŋ/

<i>lamarl</i>	‘mine’
<i>lanɣarl</i>	‘charcoal’
<i>lɕemal</i>	‘jar’
<i>lɕeŋgal</i>	‘sour’
<i>lamil</i>	‘I’
<i>lanɣil</i>	‘bark of tender bamboo’
<i>lbaml</i>	‘left’

lbaŋl 'long piece of bamboo used to carry sth
from one place to another'

ltsaml 'a kind of wood'

ltsaŋl 'high platform'

/n/ vs. /ŋ/

lronl 'fight'

lroŋl 'colour'

lranl 'leg'

lraŋl 'polythene'

lbanl 'tie'

lbaŋl 'long piece of bamboo used to carry
something from one place to another'

ltsanl 'moon'

ltsaŋl 'high platform'

lganl 'song'

lgaŋl 'river'

/l/ vs. /r/

lp^hall 'crowd of people or animal'

lp^harl 'side of a pond or river'

lbalil 'sand'

lbaril 'turn'

ltall 'palm fruit'

ltarl 'wire'

lbell 'wood apple'

lberl 'fence'

<i>/belal</i>	‘time’
<i>/beral</i>	‘obstacles/ disturbances’

/r/ vs /ɽ/

<i>/beral</i>	‘disturbance/ obstacle’
<i>/beɽal</i>	‘fence’
<i>/g^har/</i>	‘ruin/ finish’
<i>/g^haɽ/</i>	‘shoulder’
<i>/mar/</i>	‘beat’
<i>/maɽ/</i>	‘gruel/ starch’
<i>/muri/</i>	‘puffed rice’
<i>/muɽi/</i>	‘side’
<i>/bari/</i>	‘turn’
<i>/baɽi/</i>	‘house’

/w/ vs. /y/

<i>/hawal</i>	‘air’
<i>/haya/</i>	‘shame’
<i>/p^hawal</i>	‘quarter’
<i>/p^haya/</i>	‘leg of a table, chair or cot’

3.2.2. Vowels

/i/ vs. /u/

<i>/iɽ/</i>	‘brick’
<i>/uɽ/</i>	‘camel’
<i>/p^hik/</i>	‘spittle/ cuckoo’
<i>/p^huk/</i>	‘insect’
<i>/biɽ/</i>	‘poultry faeces’

<i>/buʈ/</i>	‘pea’
<i>/p^hiʔa/</i>	‘soil made oven’
<i>/p^huʔa/</i>	‘burnt things’
<i>/kil/</i>	‘fist’
<i>/kul/</i>	‘side’

/o/ vs. /u/

<i>/p^holl/</i>	‘fruit’
<i>/p^hull/</i>	‘flower’
<i>/mola/</i>	‘knead’
<i>/mula/</i>	‘radish’
<i>/g^hor/</i>	‘house’
<i>/g^hur/</i>	‘too much/ very much’
<i>/gonal/</i>	‘to count’
<i>/gunal/</i>	‘sin’
<i>/p^hon/</i>	‘dowry’
<i>/p^hun/</i>	‘vagina’

/a/ vs. /o/

<i>/malal/</i>	‘garland’
<i>/mola/</i>	‘knead’
<i>/k^halal/</i>	‘black’
<i>/k^holal/</i>	‘banana’
<i>/p^han/</i>	‘betel leaf’
<i>/p^hon/</i>	‘dowry’
<i>/ball/</i>	‘hair of the penis or vagina’
<i>/boll/</i>	‘energy/strength’

<i>/halal/</i>	‘brother in law’
<i>/holal/</i>	‘piece of cloth or rope used to climb tree’

/e/ vs. /o/

<i>/belal/</i>	‘time’
<i>/bolal/</i>	‘dung fly’
<i>/telal/</i>	‘oily’
<i>/tolal/</i>	‘surface/ tola’
<i>/melal/</i>	‘fair’
<i>/molal/</i>	‘knead’
<i>/eʁal/</i>	‘courtyard’
<i>/oʁal/</i>	‘fool’
<i>/p^het/</i>	‘belly’
<i>/p^hot/</i>	‘pot’

/e/ vs. /i/

<i>/sep^h/</i>	‘spit’
<i>/sip^h/</i>	‘spoon’
<i>/bell/</i>	‘wood apple’
<i>/bill/</i>	‘marshy land/ swamp’
<i>/tell/</i>	‘oil’
<i>/till/</i>	‘sesamum/ sesame/ mole’
<i>/p^het/</i>	‘belly’
<i>/p^hit/</i>	‘back side of the body’
<i>/beʁal/</i>	‘fence’
<i>/biʁal/</i>	‘big louse’

/a/ vs. /u/

<i>/am/</i>	‘mango’
<i>/um/</i>	‘heat’
<i>/g^ham/</i>	‘sweat’
<i>/g^hum/</i>	‘sleep’
<i>/mal/</i>	‘goods’
<i>/mul/</i>	‘main/ basic’
<i>/tal/</i>	‘lock’
<i>/tul/</i>	‘cotton’
<i>/p^hal/</i>	‘jump’
<i>/p^hul/</i>	‘flower’

/a/ vs /i/

<i>/g^ha/</i>	‘sore’
<i>/g^hi/</i>	‘clarified butter’
<i>/dan/</i>	‘contribute’
<i>/din/</i>	‘day’
<i>/d₁am/</i>	‘big sized mat made of bamboo’
<i>/d₁im/</i>	‘egg’
<i>/halal/</i>	‘brother in law’
<i>/halil/</i>	‘sister in law’
<i>/dadal/</i>	‘grandfather’
<i>/dadil/</i>	‘grandmother’

/e/ vs. /a/

<i>/tell/</i>	‘oil’
<i>/tall/</i>	‘palm’

<i>/p^hell/</i>	‘penis’
<i>/p^hall/</i>	‘crowd’
<i>/bell/</i>	‘wood apple’
<i>/ball/</i>	‘hair of the penis or vagina’
<i>/melal/</i>	‘fair’
<i>/malal/</i>	‘garland’
<i>/telal/</i>	‘oily’
<i>/talal/</i>	‘lock’

3.3. Distribution of phonemes

3.3.1. Consonants

Almost all the consonantal phonemes occur in all three positions of the word except retroflex stop sounds /ɖ, and ɖ^h/, velar nasal /ŋ/ and alveolar tap /ɽ/. The /ɖ, / occurs in word initial and medial positions but /ɖ^h/ occurs only in word initial position. The velar nasal /ŋ/ and alveolar tap /ɽ/ occur in word medial and final position. Table 3 illustrates the distribution of consonants in different position of words in Sylheti.

Phonemes	Initial	Medial	Final
p	✓	✓	✓
b	✓	✓	✓
p ^h	✓	✓	✓
b ^h	✓	✓	✓
t	✓	✓	✓
d	✓	✓	✓
t ^h	✓	✓	✓
d ^h	✓	✓	✓

t	✓	✓	✓
d	✓	✓	x
t ^h	✓	✓	✓
d ^h	✓	x	x
k	✓	✓	✓
k ^h	✓	✓	✓
g	✓	✓	✓
g ^h	✓	✓	✓
ts	✓	✓	✓
s	✓	✓	✓
ś	✓	✓	✓
z	✓	✓	✓
h	✓	✓	✓
m	✓	✓	✓
n	✓	✓	✓
ŋ	x	✓	✓
l	✓	✓	✓
r	✓	✓	✓
ɽ	x	✓	✓
w	✓	✓	✓
y	✓	✓	✓

Table 3: Distribution of consonants

The distributions of consonantal phonemes in Sylheti are shown below.

/p/

initial

<i>/priyo/</i>	‘favourite/ dear’
<i>/pran/</i>	‘life’
<i>/proko/</i>	‘clear / evident’
<i>/prokrito/</i>	‘real, true’
<i>/protsur/</i>	‘abundant’
<i>/protsar/</i>	‘publicity’
<i>/pronam/</i>	‘prostration / salutation’

medial

<i>/apran/</i>	‘to the best of one’s power’
<i>/apluto/</i>	‘inundated / overwhelmed’
<i>/biplob/</i>	‘revolution’
<i>/boiplobik/</i>	‘revolutionary’
<i>/t^happo/</i>	‘slap’

final

<i>/d^hop/</i>	‘word denoting the sound made by the fall of a heavy body’
<i>/d^hap/</i>	‘word denoting the sound of fire extinguishing’
<i>/d^hopd^hop/</i>	‘word denoting the sensation caused by something clear or bright’

/p^h/

initial

<i>/p^han/</i>	‘betel leaf’
<i>/p^hir/</i>	‘saint’

<i>/p^hell/</i>	‘penis’
<i>/p^hadl/</i>	‘fart’
<i>/p^horil/</i>	‘nymph’
<i>/p^har/</i>	‘side of a pond or river’
<i>/p^huɾil/</i>	‘girl’
<i>/p^hakkil/</i>	‘bird’

medial

<i>/ap^hon/</i>	‘own’
<i>/atap^hol/</i>	‘custard apple’
<i>/bip^hod/</i>	‘danger’
<i>/k^hap^hoɾ/</i>	‘cloth’
<i>/k^hap^hon/</i>	‘coffin/ shroud’
<i>/kap^hir/</i>	‘infidel/ pagan’
<i>/gup^hor/</i>	‘cow dung’
<i>/top^hon/</i>	‘lungi’

final

<i>/borop^h/</i>	‘ice’
<i>/tap^h/</i>	‘fever’
<i>/sap^h/</i>	‘clear’
<i>/bap^h/</i>	‘father’
<i>/k^hap^h/</i>	‘adjust/long piece of bamboo used to make fence’
<i>/d^hap^h/</i>	‘step’
<i>/lap^h/</i>	‘jump’
<i>/s^hap^h/</i>	‘snake’

/b/

initial

<i>/bet/</i>	‘cane’
<i>/bon/</i>	‘wood/forest’
<i>/bell/</i>	‘wood apple’ or ‘marmelos fruit’
<i>/bar/</i>	‘outside’
<i>/boʔal/</i>	‘fritter’
<i>/baʃil/</i>	‘whistle’
<i>/benal/</i>	‘speedy’
<i>/baś/</i>	‘bamboo’

medial

<i>/abra/</i>	‘dumb’
<i>/abru/</i>	‘screened’
<i>/abbal/</i>	‘father’
<i>/ablus/</i>	‘uncultured’
<i>/abar/</i>	‘again’
<i>/lambal/</i>	‘long’
<i>/latambal/</i>	‘tired’

final

<i>/lab/</i>	‘profit’
<i>/dab/</i>	‘check’
<i>/qab/</i>	‘tender coconut’
<i>/k^hab/</i>	‘plate’
<i>/ʔ,ab/</i>	‘imagine/ idea’

/b^h/

initial

/b^hat/ ‘boiled rice’

/b^hut/ ‘ghost’

/b^han/ ‘pretention’

/b^halal/ ‘good’

/b^haŋga/ ‘broken’

/b^heɾa/ ‘sheep’

/b^haɾa/ ‘fare’

medial

/ab^haś/ ‘clue/ hints’

/ob^hoy/ ‘courage/ fearlessness’

/ob^hab/ ‘need/ want’

/ob^hodrol/ ‘impolite’

/ob^haga/ ‘unlucky’

final

/lab^h/ ‘profit’

/lub^h/ ‘greed’

/śulob^h/ ‘cheap’

/t/

initial

/tin/ ‘three’

/tiś/ ‘thirty’

/tulal/ ‘cotton’

/tor/ ‘your’

/top^hon/ ‘lungi’

/tork^haril/ ‘cooked vegetables’

/tawal/ ‘fry pan’

ltall 'palm

ltola 'surface'

medial

latap^holl 'custard apple'

lmatal 'drunkard'

lp^hatla 'thin'

lmatul 'shaddock pomelo'

lmatil 'i/we talk'

lmatra 'limit/ quantity'

lmatrol 'only'

lmostan 'rowdy leader of a locality'

lmotigoti 'tendency/ intentions and activities'

lmotlob 'intention/ purpose/ meaning'

final

lat 'hand'

lk^hat 'sector'

lbat 'rheumatism'

lb^hat 'boiled rice'

lbait 'vomit'

lmat 'say/speak'

lk^hait 'inclined/ leaned/ tilted'

lrait 'night'

lp^hat 'plate'

lp^hait 'shaped/straight'

/t^h/

initial

<i>lt^holil</i>	‘bag’
<i>lt^huśl</i>	‘stop’
<i>lt^hurəl</i>	‘little’
<i>lt^haśl</i>	‘playing card’
<i>lt^hamal</i>	‘stop’
<i>lt^hukl</i>	‘spit’
<i>lt^hak^hl</i>	‘reck’
<i>lt^happorʔl</i>	‘slap’
<i>lt^hall</i>	‘plate’

medial

<i>lat^hal</i>	‘big spoon’
<i>imat^hal</i>	‘head’
<i>lk^hat^hal</i>	‘quilt made of piecemeal cloth/ rag/ patched cloth’

final

<i>llat^hl</i>	‘kick’
<i>lnat^hl</i>	‘lord/ master’
<i>lp^hot^hl</i>	‘way’
<i>lrot^hl</i>	‘chariot’
<i>lonat^hl</i>	‘orphan’

/d/

initial

<i>deśl</i>	‘country’
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<i>ldewal</i>	‘give’
<i>ldabal</i>	‘chess’
<i>ldinl</i>	‘day’
<i>ldiśl</i>	‘way’
<i>ldork^haril</i>	‘important’
<i>ldawal</i>	‘to cut paddy’
<i>ldek^hal</i>	‘to see’
<i>ldolal</i>	‘hard piece of mud/ soil’
<i>ldoil</i>	‘curd’

medial

<i>ladorl</i>	‘affection’
<i>ladal</i>	‘ginger’
<i>ladorśol</i>	‘ideal’
<i>land^hairl</i>	‘dark’
<i>landazl</i>	‘guess’
<i>lbodnaml</i>	‘bad name’
<i>lbandorl</i>	‘monkey’
<i>lbandak^hobil</i>	‘cabbage’

final

<i>lbadl</i>	‘bad’
<i>lp^hadl</i>	‘fart’
<i>lladl</i>	‘dung/ animal excreta’
<i>lmodl</i>	‘wine’
<i>lk^hadl</i>	‘pit’
<i>ltsandl</i>	‘moon’

	<i>/gond/</i>	‘odour’
/d^h/	initial	
	<i>/d^han/</i>	‘paddy’
	<i>/d^hon/</i>	‘wealth’
	<i>/d^honil/</i>	‘rich’
	<i>/d^honuk/</i>	‘bow’
	<i>/d^honial/</i>	‘coriander’
	<i>/d^horal/</i>	‘to catch/residual burnt portion of boiled rice in the pot’
	<i>/d^horon/</i>	‘manner’
	medial	
	<i>/ad^ha/</i>	‘half’
<i>/bad^ha/</i>	‘obstacles’	
<i>/od^hom/</i>	‘low’	
<i>/od^hik/</i>	‘more’	
<i>/od^hikar/</i>	‘right’	
<i>/od^hinayok/</i>	‘captain’	
<i>/od^hibeʂon/</i>	‘meeting/ session’	
final		
<i>/op^horad^h/</i>	‘crime’	
<i>/bud^h/</i>	‘sense of understanding’	
<i>/gotirud^h/</i>	‘arrest of motion’	
<i>/birud^h/</i>	‘conflict’	
<i>/oborud^h/</i>	‘blockade’	

/t/

initial

<i>l̥t,alal</i>	‘lock’
<i>l̥t,ḁt,kal</i>	‘fresh’
<i>l̥t,ek^hal</i>	‘money’
<i>l̥t,ukril</i>	‘basket made of bamboo’
<i>l̥t,ukral</i>	‘part/ piece’
<i>l̥t,ukal</i>	‘slip’
<i>l̥t,up^hil</i>	‘cap’
<i>l̥t,unial</i>	‘a kind of small fish’

medial

<i>l̥bḁt,al</i>	‘box’
<i>l̥be̥t,al</i>	‘male’
<i>l̥be̥t,il</i>	‘female’
<i>l̥so̥t,al</i>	‘bamboo stick’
<i>l̥mu̥t,al</i>	‘big/ healthy/ bulky’
<i>l̥ku̥t,al</i>	‘long bamboo used to pick something from tree’
<i>l̥gu̥t,al</i>	‘pox’

final

<i>l̥bḁt,l̥</i>	‘share’
<i>l̥g^hḁt,l̥</i>	‘wharf/ quay’
<i>l̥k^hḁt,l̥</i>	‘small wooden stool / cot’
<i>l̥p^hḁt,l̥</i>	‘jute’
<i>l̥sḁt,l̥</i>	‘adulterated’
<i>l̥tsḁt,l̥</i>	‘a kind of road side fast food’

/t,ʰ/

initial

<i>/t,ʰelal/</i>	‘push’
<i>/t,ʰog/</i>	‘swindler/ cheat’
<i>/t,ʰeŋ/</i>	‘leg’
<i>/t,ʰikal/</i>	‘contract’
<i>/t,ʰik/</i>	‘right/ true’

medial

<i>/at,ʰal/</i>	‘gum/ glue’
<i>/boit,ʰal/</i>	‘oar’
<i>/kʰat,ʰoll/</i>	‘jack fruit’
<i>/gʰat,al/</i>	‘gate made of bamboo’

final

<i>/mat,ʰ/</i>	‘field’
<i>/kʰat,ʰ/</i>	‘wood’

/d,ʰ/

initial

<i>/d,all/</i>	‘stem’
<i>/d,aill/</i>	‘lentil’
<i>/d,akʰnal/</i>	‘wing’
<i>/d,or/</i>	‘fear’
<i>/d,oril/</i>	‘a kind of bamboo made instrument used to catch fish’

medial

<i>/ad,d,al/</i>	‘platform/ stand’
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<i>/band,al/</i>	‘big’
<i>/end,al/</i>	‘egg’
<i>/gond,ar/</i>	‘rhinoceros’
<i>/gund,al/</i>	‘hooligan, ruffian’

/d,^h/

initial

<i>/d,^hal/</i>	‘pour out’
<i>/d,^heul/</i>	‘wave’
<i>/d,^hon/</i>	‘manner/ behavior/ conduct’
<i>/d,^hil/</i>	‘loose’
<i>/d,^hekil/</i>	‘husking pedal’
<i>/d,^hukal/</i>	‘enter/ penetrate’

/k/

initial

<i>/kuml/</i>	‘yolk / yellow portion of egg’
<i>/kuwal/</i>	‘ring well’
<i>/kuʔil/</i>	‘small’
<i>/kuʔal/</i>	‘long bamboo used to pick something from tree’
<i>/kil/</i>	‘fist’
<i>/kuʔil/</i>	‘twenty’
<i>/kull/</i>	‘side’
<i>/kulal/</i>	‘winnowing platter or tray’

medial

<i>/kukur/</i>	‘dog’
<i>/mekur/</i>	‘cat’

<i>llukluki/</i>	‘plum’
<i>ltukri/</i>	‘small basket made of bamboo’
<i>ltukral</i>	‘piece’
<i>ltoktokal</i>	‘bright red’
<i>llukkal</i>	‘flambeau’
<i>ltikal</i>	‘endure/ vaccine’
<i>lnikal</i>	‘marriage’

final

<i>lbuk/</i>	‘chest’
<i>lb^huk/</i>	‘hunger’
<i>lduk/</i>	‘sorrow’
<i>lsuk/</i>	‘happiness’
<i>lmuk/</i>	‘mouth’
<i>lp^huk/</i>	‘insect’
<i>lzuk/</i>	‘leech’

/k^h/

initial

<i>lk^ham/</i>	‘work’
<i>lk^han/</i>	‘ear’
<i>lk^hanil</i>	‘food’
<i>lk^halil</i>	‘blank’
<i>lk^halal</i>	‘black’
<i>lk^hobis/</i>	‘notorious’
<i>lk^hobor/</i>	‘news’
<i>lk^has/</i>	‘special’

medial

<i>lak^hral</i>	‘centre’
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<i>/dek^hal</i>	‘see’
<i>/dek^hral</i>	‘witness’
<i>/lek^hal</i>	‘write’
<i>/bek^hal</i>	‘bend’
<i>/bok^hal</i>	‘scold’
<i>/bok^hril</i>	‘goat’
<i>/mok^hoil</i>	‘corn’
<i>/nok^holl</i>	‘duplicate/ fake’

final

<i>/bak^h/</i>	‘tunning’
<i>/p^hak^h/</i>	‘gap’
<i>/rak^h/</i>	‘thin’
<i>/lak^h/</i>	‘fit/deserving’
<i>/nak^h/</i>	‘nose’
<i>/tak^h/</i>	‘surprise/ amaze’

/g/

initial

<i>/gundʒal</i>	‘hooligan, ruffian’
<i>/guwal</i>	‘betel nut’
<i>/guʃil</i>	‘pox’
<i>/guʃil</i>	‘base’
<i>/gull</i>	‘round shaped’
<i>/gula/</i>	‘flood’
<i>/gunal</i>	‘sin’
<i>/gullil</i>	‘tablet’

medial

<i>/agun/</i>	‘fire’
<i>/p^hagal/</i>	‘rope’
<i>/p^hagoll/</i>	‘mad’
<i>/sagoll/</i>	‘goat’
<i>/aŋgull/</i>	‘finger’
<i>/aŋgur/</i>	‘grapes’
<i>/b^haŋgal/</i>	‘break’
<i>/roŋgin/</i>	‘colouring’

final

<i>/alog/</i>	‘separate’
<i>/agl/</i>	‘front/ top portion’
<i>/dag/</i>	‘stain’
<i>/k^hagl/</i>	‘funnel’
<i>/t^hog/</i>	‘thug’
<i>/rag/</i>	‘anger’
<i>/lag/</i>	‘connected/ joined’

/g^h/**initial**

<i>/g^hal/</i>	‘sore’
<i>/g^haɾ/</i>	‘shoulder’
<i>/g^haɾual/</i>	‘big frog’
<i>/g^honol/</i>	‘thick/ dense’
<i>/g^hoɽonal/</i>	‘incident’
<i>/g^hoŋtal/</i>	‘hour/ bell’
<i>/g^hor/</i>	‘house’
<i>/g^hoɾil/</i>	‘watch’

	<i>/g^haml/</i>	‘sweat’
	medial	
	<i>/ag^hat/</i>	‘shock/ injury’
	<i>/ag^haʈ/</i>	‘bad place’
	final	
	<i>/bag^h/</i>	‘tiger’
	<i>/mag^h/</i>	‘a Bengali season’
	<i>/meg^h/</i>	‘rain’
<i>/ts/</i>	initial	
	<i>/tsal/</i>	‘roof’
	<i>/tsoll/</i>	‘pracice’
	<i>/tsuʈil/</i>	‘cultivation’
	<i>/tsur/</i>	‘thief’
	<i>/tsuril/</i>	‘thieft’
	medial	
	<i>/p^hetsal/</i>	‘owl’
	<i>/p^hotsal/</i>	‘rotten’
	<i>/atsar/</i>	‘pickle’
	<i>/atsal/</i>	‘collection of seasonal fruits’
	<i>/motsal/</i>	‘collection of food items’
	final	
	<i>/p^hats/</i>	‘owl’
	<i>/bats/</i>	‘foetus’
	<i>/mats/</i>	‘fish’
	<i>/rats/</i>	‘innocent’

<i>/s/</i>	initial	
	<i>/solal/</i>	‘bag made of cloth/ testicles’
	<i>/soʕil/</i>	‘bunch’
	<i>/sayal/</i>	‘lady’s under garment’
	<i>/soral/</i>	‘necklace’
	<i>/salil/</i>	‘residual of sth after burning’
	<i>/sur/</i>	‘antenna’
	<i>/sall/</i>	‘bark/skin’

medial

	<i>/k^hasal/</i>	‘cage’
	<i>/gosal/</i>	‘thorn’
	<i>/p^hesal/</i>	‘owl’
	<i>/p^hesal/</i>	‘dent’
	<i>/p^hosal/</i>	‘cleaning after going toilet’
	<i>/bisi/</i>	‘seed’

final

	<i>/gas/</i>	‘tree’
	<i>/k^has/</i>	‘special’

<i>/š/</i>	initial	
	<i>/šahoš/</i>	‘courage’
	<i>/šar/</i>	‘fertilizer’
	<i>/šaph/</i>	‘snake’
	<i>/šat/</i>	‘seven’
	<i>/šagor/</i>	‘sea’

medial*laʃil* ‘eighty’*laʃal* ‘hope’*lbaʃil* ‘whistle’**final***lbaʃl* ‘bamboo’*lghaʃl* ‘grass’*lmaʃl* ‘month’*lt^haʃl* ‘card’*llaʃl* ‘dead body’**/h/****initial***lhawal* ‘air’*lhayal* ‘shame’*lhoral* ‘lid of rice or curry pot / displace’*lholal* ‘piece of cloth or rope used to climb tree’*lhoʃil* ‘mother in law’*lhalil* ‘sister in law’*lhurl* ‘beautiful woman of heaven’*lhall* ‘condition/ pimple’*lhokunl* ‘vulture’**medial***lbohutl* ‘many’*lbaharl* ‘variety’

<i>/bahadur/</i>	‘hero’
<i>/bahaduril/</i>	‘heroism’
<i>/behaya/</i>	‘shameless’
<i>/muhurto/</i>	‘moment’
<i>/mohap^huruś/</i>	‘great man’
<i>/mohan/</i>	‘great’
<i>/sop^hal/</i>	‘clear’
<i>/rup^hal/</i>	‘silver’

final

<i>/ruh/</i>	‘soul’
<i>/ahl/</i>	‘expression of agonies’
<i>/ehl/</i>	‘alas!’
<i>/d^hih/</i>	‘chasing goat’

/m/

initial

<i>/moil/</i>	‘maternal aunty’
<i>/moul/</i>	‘honey’
<i>/melal/</i>	‘fair’
<i>/mall/</i>	‘goods’
<i>/malal/</i>	‘garland’
<i>/map^h/</i>	‘pardon’
<i>/molal/</i>	‘smashing’, tobacco
<i>/man/</i>	‘honour/respect’
<i>/mats/</i>	‘fish’
<i>/mar/</i>	‘beat’

medial

<i>/ami/</i>	‘i’
<i>/amma/</i>	‘mother’
<i>/k^haman/</i>	‘cannon’
<i>/daman/</i>	‘groom’
<i>/saman/</i>	‘goods’
<i>/mama/</i>	‘maternal uncle’
<i>/mamai/</i>	‘wife of maternal uncle’
<i>/k^hamar/</i>	‘blacksmith’
<i>/dami/</i>	‘valuable’
<i>/nami/</i>	‘renowned’

final

<i>/dom/</i>	‘breath/life’
<i>/dam/</i>	‘price’
<i>/k^ham/</i>	‘work’
<i>/k^hom/</i>	‘less’
<i>/nam/</i>	‘name’
<i>/gom/</i>	‘glue’
<i>/g^ham/</i>	‘sweat’
<i>/k^ham/</i>	‘envelope’

/n/**initial**

<i>/nam/</i>	‘name’
<i>/nouka/</i>	‘boat’
<i>/nouk/</i>	‘nail’
<i>/nak^h/</i>	‘nose’

<i>lnogail</i>	‘python’
<i>lnamal</i>	‘to get down’
<i>lnanal</i>	‘maternal grandfather’
<i>lnasl</i>	‘dance’
<i>lnośal</i>	‘groom’
<i>lnalal</i>	‘drain’
<i>lnatil</i>	‘grandson’

medial

<i>lnanal</i>	‘maternal grandfather’
<i>lk^hanal</i>	‘hole’
<i>lmanal</i>	‘abide by’
<i>lmonal</i>	‘small child’
<i>lp^honal</i>	‘shoulder’
<i>lp^henal</i>	‘foam’
<i>ldenal</i>	‘debt/ dues’
<i>lkinal</i>	‘purchased’

final

<i>lp^hanl</i>	‘betel leaf’
<i>lp^hunl</i>	‘vagina’
<i>lk^hanl</i>	‘ear’
<i>ld^hanl</i>	‘paddy’
<i>ldanl</i>	‘gift’
<i>ld^honl</i>	‘wealth’
<i>lmanl</i>	‘respect’
<i>lmonl</i>	‘mind’

	<i>/hokun/</i>	‘vulture’
	<i>/dukan/</i>	‘shop’
/ŋ/	medial	
	<i>/aŋgull/</i>	‘finger’
	<i>/aŋgur/</i>	‘grapes’
	<i>/b^haŋgal/</i>	‘break’
	<i>/tsuŋgal/</i>	‘hollow pipe made of bamboo’
	<i>/roŋgin/</i>	‘colouring’
	<i>/teŋgal/</i>	‘sour’
	<i>/taŋgil/</i>	‘hatchet/ axe’
	final	
	<i>/raŋ/</i>	‘polythene’
	<i>/beŋ/</i>	‘frog’
	<i>/tseŋ/</i>	‘a kind of small fish’
	<i>/t^heŋ/</i>	‘leg’
	<i>/k^heŋ/</i>	‘germination’
	<i>/hiŋ/</i>	‘horn/ a small type of fish’
	<i>/baŋ/</i>	‘carrier made of bamboo piece’
	<i>/tsaŋ/</i>	‘high wooden platform’
/l/	initial	
	<i>/lal/</i>	‘red’
	<i>/laul/</i>	‘gourd’
	<i>/lab^h/</i>	‘profit’
	<i>/lewɾal/</i>	‘prick’

lɛŋʈal 'naked'

lɛnʈuʈʌl 'tail'

llup^hl 'bread'

llub^hl 'greed'

medial

lmalal 'garland'

lmelal 'fair'

lnalal 'drain'

lgolal 'throat'

lk^halal 'black'

lk^holal 'banana'

lsolal 'bag made of cloth'

lholal 'piece of cloth or rope used to climb tree'

lhalal 'brother in law'

lhalil 'sister in law'

final

lball 'hair of the penis or vagina'

lbell 'wood apple' or 'marmelos fruit'

lhall 'condition/ pimple'

lgall 'cheek'

lmall 'goods'

ltell 'oil'

lp^hell 'penis'

lsall 'bark, especially of tree'

<i>/k^hal/</i>	‘canal/ skin’
<i>/p^hal/</i>	‘crowd of people or animal’

/r/

initial

<i>/rag/</i>	‘anger’
<i>/rak^h/</i>	‘ill healthy’
<i>/rats/</i>	‘simple/ innocent’
<i>/rait/</i>	‘night’
<i>/razal</i>	‘king’
<i>/ranil</i>	‘queen’
<i>/ruwal</i>	‘paddy seedling’
<i>/ruk/</i>	‘wood’

medial

<i>/aram/</i>	‘comfort’
<i>/haram/</i>	‘forbidden/ impure’
<i>/beral</i>	‘obstacle/ disturbance’
<i>/heran/</i>	‘tired’
<i>/gorom/</i>	‘hot’
<i>/goroll</i>	‘poison’
<i>/norom/</i>	‘soft’
<i>/neral</i>	‘green hay’
<i>/teral</i>	‘star’
<i>/luri/</i>	‘flat bean’

final

<i>/abar/</i>	‘again’
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<i>/atsar/</i>	‘pickle’
<i>/ber/</i>	‘silkworm’
<i>/bar/</i>	‘outside’
<i>/ḍor/</i>	‘fear’
<i>/g^hor/</i>	‘house’
<i>/tar/</i>	‘wire’
<i>/tir/</i>	‘arrow’
<i>/zir/</i>	‘earth worm’

/ɾ/

medial

<i>/aɾual/</i>	‘fool’
<i>/moɾal/</i>	‘ill healthy man’
<i>/moɾil/</i>	‘ill healthy woman’
<i>/leɾal/</i>	‘prick’
<i>/kumɾal/</i>	‘pumpkin’
<i>/boɾal/</i>	‘fritter’
<i>/boɾol/</i>	‘big’

final

<i>/maɾ/</i>	‘starch’
<i>/laɾ/</i>	‘shaped stool’
<i>/leɾ/</i>	‘semen’
<i>/p^haɾ/</i>	‘hill’
<i>/tsaɾ/</i>	‘ruins of glass etc’

/w/

initial

<i>/wadal/</i>	‘promise’
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<i>/wap^huś/</i>	‘return/ refund’
<i>/wakibohall/</i>	‘well informed/ experienced’
<i>/wak/</i>	‘sound of vomiting/ retching’
<i>/waris/</i>	‘heir/ heiress’
<i>/wastel/</i>	‘for the sake of ’

medial

<i>/hawal/</i>	‘air’
<i>/k^hawal/</i>	‘eating’
<i>/tsawal/</i>	‘looking at’
<i>/gawal/</i>	‘singing’
<i>/p^hawal/</i>	‘getting’
<i>/sewal/</i>	‘shadow’
<i>/sawall/</i>	‘kid’
<i>/nawal/</i>	‘bathing’

/y/

initial

<i>/yal/</i>	‘word denoting surprise/ shock’
<i>/yad/</i>	‘memory/ remembrance’
<i>/yar/</i>	‘intimate/ companion/ friend’
<i>/yarkil/</i>	‘jocular/ frivolity’
<i>/yan/</i>	‘foundation’

medial

<i>/aynal/</i>	‘mirror’
<i>/ayul/</i>	‘longevity/ life span’
<i>/boyoś/</i>	‘age’

<i>lboylal</i>	‘harmful’
<i>ldoyal</i>	‘mercy’
<i>ldoyalul</i>	‘merciful’
<i>lgoynal</i>	‘ornaments’
<i>lhayal</i>	‘shame’
<i>lmoynal</i>	‘a kind of talkative bird’
<i>lmoylal</i>	‘dirt’
<i>lmayal</i>	‘affection’

3.3.2. Vowels

In Sylheti all the vowels can occur in all three positions as shown below.

/i/

initial

<i>liʈ/</i>	‘brick’
<i>liɕɕot/</i>	‘prestige/ honour’
<i>lilal</i>	‘this way’
<i>limandar/</i>	‘trustful/ sincere’
<i>liʈal</i>	‘pelt’
<i>litor/</i>	‘low/ vile/ mean’
<i>litostotol</i>	‘hesitate’
<i>liti/</i>	‘end’
<i>littadil</i>	‘et cetera’
<i>linsap^h/</i>	‘justice’

medial

<i>lp^hik/</i>	‘spittle/ cuckoo’
<i>liʈ^h/</i>	‘poultry faeces’

<i>/buʈ,ɪ/</i>	‘pea’
<i>/busɪ/</i>	‘breast
<i>/pʰiʈa/</i>	‘soil made oven’
<i>/kɪ/</i>	‘fist’
<i>/mitsa/</i>	‘false’
<i>/tsɪn/</i>	‘acquaintance/ intimacy’
<i>/pʰiʈa/</i>	‘a kind of homemade cake’
<i>/gɪla/</i>	‘to swallow’

final

<i>/baʈ,ɪ/</i>	‘bowl’
<i>/beʈɪ/</i>	‘woman’
<i>/bisɪ/</i>	‘seed’
<i>/boɪ/</i>	‘book’
<i>/tsaʈɪ/</i>	‘flat mat made of bamboo canes
<i>/damɪ/</i>	‘valuable’
<i>/kʰalɪ/</i>	‘blank’
<i>/maʈɪ/</i>	‘soil’
<i>/moɪ/</i>	‘ladder’
<i>/pʰurɪ/</i>	‘a kind of wheaten cake’

/e/

initial

<i>/e/</i>	‘this’
<i>/ekʰ/</i>	‘one’
<i>/ekʰséʃ/</i>	‘extreme’
<i>/ekkaʈʈa/</i>	‘united’
<i>/elatsɪ/</i>	‘cardamon’

<i>lelak^hal</i>	‘area’
<i>leɾal</i>	‘courtyard’
<i>legarol</i>	‘eleven’
<i>lek^honl</i>	‘now’
<i>lek^hlal</i>	‘alone’

medial

<i>lbelal</i>	‘time’
<i>lp^hetsal</i>	‘owl’
<i>ltselal</i>	‘disciple’
<i>ltelal</i>	‘oily’
<i>lmelal</i>	‘fair’
<i>lsep^hl</i>	‘spit’
<i>lbell</i>	‘wood apple’
<i>ltell</i>	‘oil’
<i>lp^hetl</i>	‘belly’
<i>lbeɾal</i>	‘fence’

final

<i>ldel</i>	‘give’
<i>lhel</i>	‘he’
<i>lk^hel</i>	‘who’
<i>lbarel</i>	‘in outside’
<i>lp^harel</i>	‘can’
<i>ltarel</i>	‘him’
<i>lbaɾel</i>	‘increases’
<i>lselel</i>	‘boy’

/a/

initial

<i>lablus/</i>	‘uncultured’
<i>labral</i>	‘dumb’
<i>latsar/</i>	‘pickle’
<i>lagun/</i>	‘fire’
<i>laguan/</i>	‘early’
<i>lalol</i>	‘light’
<i>lam/</i>	‘mango’
<i>lamil</i>	‘i’
<i>langur/</i>	‘grapes’
<i>latap^holl</i>	‘custard apple’

medial

<i>lball</i>	‘hair of the penis or vagina’
<i>lgall</i>	‘cheek’
<i>lmall</i>	‘goods’
<i>ltalal</i>	‘lock’
<i>ldan/</i>	‘contribute’
<i>lnam/</i>	‘name’
<i>ltsatsal</i>	‘uncle’
<i>ltsatsil</i>	‘aunt’
<i>ltall</i>	‘palm’
<i>lp^hall</i>	‘crowd’

final

<i>lbalal</i>	‘wristlet’
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<i>lbek^hal</i>	‘bent’
<i>lbelal</i>	‘time’
<i>lbolal</i>	‘dung fly’
<i>leʔal</i>	‘courtyard’
<i>lp^hotsal</i>	‘rotten’
<i>lp^hesal</i>	‘dent’
<i>lg^hal</i>	‘sore’
<i>ltelal</i>	‘oily’
<i>ltolal</i>	‘surface/ tola’

/o/

initial

<i>lob^habl</i>	‘deficiency/ scarcity’
<i>lod^hikar/</i>	‘right’
<i>lolonkar/</i>	‘ornaments’
<i>loloid/</i>	‘turmeric’
<i>loinnay/</i>	‘injustice’
<i>lokkor/</i>	‘letter’
<i>lomor/</i>	‘immortal’
<i>lonat^h/</i>	‘orphan’
<i>lop^horad^h/</i>	‘crime’
<i>loʔal</i>	‘fool’

medial

<i>lbolal</i>	‘dung fly’
<i>lp^hotsal</i>	‘rotten’
<i>lokkor/</i>	‘letter’
<i>ltsolal</i>	‘move’

<i>ltolal</i>	‘surface/ ground’
<i>lmolal</i>	‘knead’
<i>lp^hot^hl</i>	‘way’
<i>lp^honal</i>	‘shoulder’
<i>lbok^hal</i>	‘to scold’
<i>lomorl</i>	‘immortal’

final

<i>legarol</i>	‘eleven’
<i>lbarol</i>	‘twelve’
<i>lterol</i>	‘thirteen’
<i>lk^hol</i>	‘tell’
<i>lboɽol</i>	‘big’
<i>ldoɽol</i>	‘firm’
<i>ldarol</i>	‘nearby’
<i>lp^harol</i>	‘pigeon’
<i>lp^holol</i>	‘bamboo made instrument used to catch fish’
<i>lp^halol</i>	‘top portion of bamboo with heavy stems’

/u/

initial

<i>lulal</i>	‘male cat’
<i>lulil</i>	‘female cat’
<i>ludzonl</i>	‘weight’
<i>lukill</i>	‘lawyer’
<i>luml</i>	‘heat’

<i>lup^hás/</i>	‘hungry’
<i>luri/</i>	‘flat bean’
<i>luʈ/</i>	‘camel’
<i>luśar/</i>	‘pillow cover’
<i>lutsal</i>	‘high/ tall’

medial

<i>lg^huml/</i>	‘sleep’
<i>lɟum/</i>	‘shifting cultivation’
<i>lmul/</i>	‘main/ basic’
<i>ltulal</i>	‘cotton’
<i>lmuts/</i>	‘moustache’
<i>lp^hull/</i>	‘flower’
<i>lbuʈ/</i>	‘pea’
<i>lbusil</i>	‘breast’
<i>lp^hural</i>	‘complete’
<i>lp^huril</i>	‘a kind of wheaten cake’

final

<i>lalul</i>	‘potato’
<i>lboul</i>	‘wife’
<i>lbaul</i>	‘a kind of big sized fish’
<i>lgaul</i>	‘village’
<i>lgorul</i>	‘cow’
<i>lɟaul</i>	‘smashed boiled rice’
<i>lkhotsul</i>	‘erum’
<i>llebul</i>	‘lemon’

<i>/moul</i>	‘honey’
<i>/roul</i>	‘ruhi fish’

3.4. Diphthongs

There are twelve diphthongs in Sylheti. These are /oi, ui, ai, au, eo, ia, ua, ao, ou, eu, ei, uo/. Almost all diphthongs occur in all three positions. The occurrence of Diphthong in all three positions of words is one of the typological features of Sylheti. The distribution of diphthongs is summarized in the following sections:

3.4.1. Distribution of diphthongs

/oi/	initial	
	<i>/oinnayl</i>	‘injustice’
	<i>/oinnol</i>	‘other’
	<i>/oibol</i>	‘stop’
	medial	
	<i>/moizil</i>	‘maternal aunt’
	<i>/boiʈokl</i>	‘sitting/ session’
	<i>/boiʈal</i>	‘oar’
	<i>/boinl</i>	‘sister’
	final	
	<i>/boil</i>	‘book’
	<i>/moil</i>	‘maternal aunt’
	<i>/mokoil</i>	‘pop corn’
/ui/	initial	
	<i>/uizzol</i>	‘silent’

medial

<i>/buisal/</i>	‘earthquake’
<i>/tuin/</i>	‘you’
<i>/kuiar/</i>	‘sugarcane’
<i>/duill/</i>	‘dust particles’

final

<i>/duil/</i>	‘two’
<i>/habuil/</i>	‘all’
<i>/ruil/</i>	‘cotton’

/ai/**initial**

<i>/aibl/</i>	‘fault’
<i>/aidz/</i>	‘today’
<i>/aik/</i>	‘knot/node of a bamboo’
<i>/ain/</i>	‘law’
<i>/aill/</i>	‘paddy land divider’

medial

<i>/bait/</i>	‘vomiting’
<i>/gail/</i>	‘slang’
<i>/kait/</i>	‘tilted/ inclined/ leaned’
<i>/gaid/</i>	‘dirt’
<i>/pait/</i>	‘straight’
<i>/rait/</i>	‘night’

final

<i>/hail/</i>	‘husband (in bad sense)’
<i>/lail/</i>	‘a kind of leaf vegetable’
<i>/mail/</i>	‘mother’
<i>/nail/</i>	‘not there’
<i>/rail/</i>	‘little’
<i>/tail/</i>	‘she’

/au/**initial**

<i>/aua/</i>	‘not intelligent’
<i>/auka/</i>	‘disturber’
<i>/aula/</i>	‘indifferent’
<i>/auʔa/</i>	‘bamboo fence’

medial

<i>/baul/</i>	‘wandering minstrel’
<i>/bauʔa/</i>	‘foreigner’
<i>/bauli/</i>	‘instrument used to displace hot pot from oven’
<i>/k^haua/</i>	‘crow’

final

<i>/gaul/</i>	‘village’
<i>/zaul/</i>	‘porridge’
<i>/bau/</i>	‘a kind of big fish’
<i>/lau/</i>	‘gourd’

/eo/

initial

leolal

‘indian gooseberry’

leotl

‘cold season’

medial

lk^heolal

‘sharp top part of a thin bamboo used to pick something from tree’

lleoꝛal

‘prick’

final

lkeol

‘somebody’

lneol

‘you take’

/ia/

initial

liäl

‘word used to express shock/ surprise’

lianl

‘laying foundation’

liarl

‘friend’

liadl

‘memorise’

medial

lbianl

‘morning’

lbiall

‘evening’

lk^hiall

‘desire’

lhiall

‘fox’

final

lbial

‘marriage’

	<i>/t͡sial/</i>	‘parakeet’
	<i>/sial/</i>	‘crusher’
/ua/	initial	
	<i>/lua/</i>	‘sound of vomiting’
	<i>/luaʃil/</i>	‘help/ rescue a person in distress’

medial

<i>/buail/</i>	‘elder sister’
<i>/duail/</i>	‘medicine’
<i>/duall/</i>	‘drain’
<i>/gual/</i>	‘wallago’
<i>/zuan/</i>	‘young’

final

<i>/laual/</i>	‘not intelligent’
<i>/bual/</i>	‘fake’
<i>/zual/</i>	‘gambling’
<i>/gaual/</i>	‘rural’
<i>/gual/</i>	‘areca nut’
<i>/kaual/</i>	‘crow’
<i>/kual/</i>	‘ring well’
<i>/kotsual/</i>	‘green’
<i>/pual/</i>	‘son/ boy’

/ao/ initial

<i>/aol/</i>	‘come’
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	<i>/aolad/</i>	‘offspring’
	medial	
	<i>/baotʃal/</i>	‘outdated’
	final	
	<i>/naol/</i>	‘boat’
	<i>/paol/</i>	‘leg’
/ou/	initial	
	<i>/oul/</i>	‘this’
	<i>/oukl/</i>	‘let happen’
	medial	
	<i>/mouzal/</i>	‘a unit of place bigger than a village’
	<i>/moukal/</i>	‘chance’
	<i>/noukal/</i>	‘boat’
	<i>/noukl/</i>	‘nail’
	final	
	<i>/boul/</i>	‘wife’
	<i>/moul/</i>	‘honey’
	<i>/roul/</i>	‘ruhi fish’
	<i>/loul/</i>	‘blood’
/eu/	initial	
	<i>/eukriyal/</i>	‘obstinate’

medial

<i>/deuliyal/</i>	‘bankrupt’
<i>/meukril/</i>	‘female cat’
<i>/neulil/</i>	‘mongoose’
<i>/peukl/</i>	‘disturbance/ obstacle’

final

<i>/d^heu/</i>	‘wave’
<i>/teul/</i>	‘then/ after that’

/ei/

initial

<i>/eial/</i>	‘hurray’
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medial

<i>/beill/</i>	‘time’
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final

<i>/deil/</i>	‘i/ we give’
<i>/neil/</i>	‘i/ we take’

/uo/

initial

<i>/uol/</i>	‘i mean’
<i>/uoil/</i>	‘expression of teasing’

medial

<i>/suorl/</i>	‘pig’
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/kuoɽ/ 'a place where cattles are detained'

final

/zuol/ 'I mean'

/tsuol/ 'please lick'

3.5. Consonant clusters

Generally, no consonant clusters are found in Sylheti. Surprisingly a very few consonant clusters are noticed in the variety due to deletion of unstressed vowels such as

kl-	<i>/eklal/</i>	<	<i>/ekalal/</i>	'alone'
kr-	<i>/bokril/</i>	<	<i>/bokoril/</i>	'goat'
gr	<i>./gram/</i>	<	<i>/geram/</i>	'village'
gl-	<i>/aglal/</i>	<	<i>/agalal/</i>	'separate'
tr-	<i>/matrol/</i>	<	<i>/matorol/</i>	'only'
-pr-	<i>/apranl/</i>	<	<i>/aporanl/</i>	'to the best of one's power'

3.6. Consonant sequences

Sylheti has more number of consonant sequences than consonant clusters. It is worth mentioning here that consonant sequences occur across syllabic boundary. The first members of the consonant sequences in Sylheti are stop, nasal, liquid and fricative and the second members are stop, fricative, nasal and liquid as illustrated in the following examples:

Stop + Stop

-kb-	<i>/ekbarl/</i>	'once'
-kp-	<i>/ekphall/</i>	'a crowd'
-kt-	<i>/ekʈal/</i>	'one number'

-bb- *labbal* 'father'

-kk- *lbakkil* 'credit'

-kk- *lpakkil* 'bird'

Stop + Fricative

-ks- *leksaral* 'often'

Stop + Nasal

-km- *ltokmal* 'seal'

-kn- *lsiknal* 'thin'

Nasal + Stop

-nd- *lgundal* 'hooligan/ ruffian'

-nt- *lsintal* 'thought'

-nʈ- *lbontɔnʈ* 'distribution'

-mp- *ltsompal* 'a kind of flower'

-mʈ- *lamʈal* 'odour of sweat'

-mb- *llambal* 'tall/ long'

-kt- *laktal* 'sudden'

-np- *lanpoʈ* 'unlettered'

-ŋʈ- *lleŋʈa* 'naked'

-ŋk- *lhunʈkarʈ* 'menacing shout/ challenge'

-ŋg- *lanʈgull* 'finger'

-nz- *lhanzal* 'evening/ ready'

Nasal + Nasal

-mm- *lammal* 'mother'

Liquid + Nasal

-rm- *lkormol* 'work/ duty'

/dormol 'religion'

/mormol 'meaning'

Nasal + Liquid

-ŋl- */siŋlal* 'bamboo stem'

-ml- */kamlal* 'worker'

-mr- */amral* 'we'

Nasal + Fricative

-ms- */gamsal* 'towel'

-ŋś- */oŋśol* 'part'

Liquid + Stop

-rp- */dorpol* 'proud'

-lk- */halkal* 'light'

-ld- */oldil* 'turmeric/ yellow'

-rk- */arkoŋl* 'bad'

Fricative + Stop

-sk- */askirl* 'nectar'

-sb- */k^hosbil* 'notorious/ very bad woman'

-st- */dastol* 'loose motion'

Fricative + Liquid

-sl- */kaslotl* 'habit'

Stop + Liquid

-bl- */toblal* 'tabor'

3.7. Syllabic Structure

A syllable is a sequence of one phoneme with one peak of sonority. The vowel is essential to the structure of syllable i.e., a syllable is not possible

without a vowel. There can be one or more than one syllable in a word. The preceding consonant of a syllable is called onset and which follows the syllable is called coda. If a syllable ends with a vowel it is called open syllable and if it ends with a consonant it is called close syllable. The nucleus of the syllable may be a vowel or a diphthong. The different types of syllable in Sylheti are illustrated in the following sections:.

3.7.1 Monosyllabic words

Monosyllabic words are common in Sylheti. Majority of the monosyllabic words in Sylheti have the CV pattern. However, the VC pattern is not frequently found in the variety. Here C represents consonants and V represents vowel.

Open Syllable

CV	<i>he</i>	‘he’
	<i>de</i>	‘give’
	<i>da</i>	‘dao’
	<i>ke</i>	‘who’
	<i>ma</i>	‘mother’
	<i>tsa</i>	‘tea’
	<i>na</i>	‘not’

Close Syllable

VC	<i>am</i>	‘mango’
	<i>an</i>	‘bring’
	<i>ag</i>	‘front/top’
CVC	<i>gan</i>	‘song’

<i>kan</i>	‘ear’
<i>nak</i>	‘nose’
<i>gun</i>	‘merit’
<i>tsun</i>	‘lime’
<i>tsul</i>	‘hair’
<i>nol</i>	‘pipe’
<i>puk</i>	‘insect’
<i>hur</i>	‘nymph’
<i>kol</i>	‘water tape’
<i>lal</i>	‘red’

3.7.2. Disyllabic words

Open Syllable

VCV	<i>uri</i>	‘bean’
	<i>ada</i>	‘ginger’
VCCV	<i>abra</i>	‘dumb’
	<i>ayna</i>	‘mirror’

Closed Syllable

VCVC	<i>abar</i>	‘again’
VCCVC	<i>aᅅgul</i>	‘finger’
CVCVC	<i>palonᅅ</i>	‘sleeping cot’
CVCCVC	<i>hirbar</i>	‘again’

3.7.3. Trisyllabic words

Open Syllable

VCVCV	<i>atuᅅa</i>	‘hammer’
CVCCVCV	<i>hatkora</i>	‘wild orange’

CVCVCV	<i>zanala</i>	‘window’
CVCCVCV	<i>kunbala</i>	‘at what time’
CVCVCCV	<i>mukosto</i>	‘craming’

Close Syllable

VCVCVC	<i>anaroś</i>	‘pineapple’
CVCVCVC	<i>kobutor</i>	‘pigeon’
CVCVVC	<i>zanoar</i>	‘animal’
CVCVCVC	<i>kalazam</i>	‘blackberry’

3.7.4. Tetrasyllabic Words

Open Syllable

VCVCVCV	<i>oporadi</i>	‘criminal’
VCVCVCV	<i>obohela</i>	‘negligence’