

Prepalatals in Arandic

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The phonetic sequences [iiC] and [eiC] occur in a number of Arandic varieties. In nearly all cases, the [C] is an alveolar consonant. Vowel length is not generally analysed as contrastive in the Arandic varieties. Consequently, analyses of the sequences [ii] and [ei] as a long vowel and a diphthong respectively have no independent support. On the other hand, Australian languages generally avoid clusters whose first member is an approximant, such as /y/, and clusters whose second member is an alveolar. The Arandic varieties generally conform to standard Australian cluster patterns. Consequently, an analysis of these sequences as /V+y+C_{alv}/ is also problematic. To avoid these problems, analyses of the [iC] sequence as a unit of some kind, termed a 'prepalatal', have been proposed. I show that the [iC] sequence is not a unit, and that these sequences are phonologically /V+y+C_{alv}/, despite the fact that this cluster type is aberrant both synchronically and diachronically.