

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SYLLABLES, THEIR SEPARATIONS IN PRONUNCIATION

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Annotation: *This article provides an in-depth analysis of the concept of a syllable, its formation, and separation within the English language. A syllable is identified as a unit of speech composed of vowel and consonant sounds, serving as the foundational building block of words and their pronunciation. The study delineates the structure of a syllable, which typically consists of a nucleus—commonly a vowel or a vowel-like sound—potentially flanked by an onset and a coda, which are consonant sounds that precede and follow the nucleus, respectively. The research further examines the English language's syllable formation, anchored in the phonological opposition of 'vowel versus consonant', and recognizes exceptions where certain consonants can be syllabic. The paper categorizes syllables into open and closed types, depending on whether they end in a vowel or consonant phoneme, respectively, and extends the classification to include syllables with varying consonant-vowel arrangements. It also investigates the phonetic and orthographic aspects of syllables, noting the importance of not confusing the two in the context of reading rules. Through the analysis of linguistic works by notable scholars, the article elucidates the rules for syllable division, focusing on the implications of stressed and unstressed vowels and consonant clusters. The annotation emphasizes the article's relevance for language learners and educators, as it sheds light on the complexities of English pronunciation and the pedagogical conditions necessary for fostering a clear understanding of phonetic principles.*

Key words: *Syllables, Formation, Seperation, fully open syllables , fully closed syllables ,open syllables ending ,closed syllables ending*

INTRODUCTION

A syllable is a fundamental unit of sound in spoken language. It is created by one or more phonemes, which are the smallest units of sound that can change the meaning of a word. Syllables can consist of vowels, consonants, or a combination of both. The structure of a syllable is determined by the phonetic makeup of a word. Typically, a syllable consists of a nucleus, which is usually a vowel or a vowel-like sound. The nucleus is often accompanied by an onset, which is a consonant that comes before the nucleus, and a coda, which is a consonant that comes after the nucleus. However, not

all syllables have an onset or coda. Syllable formation in English is generally based on the phonological

opposition 'vowel vs. consonant'. Vowels are usually syllabic while consonants are not, with the exceptions of [l, m, n]. The English language of the type of phoneme the syllable ends in. He states the existence of two types of syllables:

- (1) open syllables ending in a vowel phoneme (I [aɪ], me [mi:], spy [spaɪ], spray [spreɪ]);
- (2) closed syllables ending in a consonant phoneme (it [ɪt], and [ænd], ants [ænts]).

The linguist underlines that these are phonetic syllables which distinguish the actual pronunciation of a word. They shouldn't be confused with orphthographic syllables into which words are divided in writing and which are used in the system of reading rules.

M.A. Sokolova, V.D. Arakin and other linguists suggest another approach. They define four types of syllables in English on the basis of the number and arrangement of consonants with a vowel. These are:

- (1) fully open syllables, which consist of a vowel sound only (V type): are [a:], or [o:], I [aɪ];
- (2) fully closed syllables, in which a vowel is between consonants (C) CVC(C) type): cat [kæt], jump [dʒʌmp], plan [plæn];
- (3) syllables covered at the beginning, in which a consonant or a sequence of consonants precede a vowel (CC)CV type): so [sku], spy [spaɪ], screw [skru:];
- (4) syllables covered at the end, in which a consonant or a sequence of consonants follow a vowel (VC(CC) type): on [ɒn], old [kʊld], acts [æktz].

Certain peculiarities of the system of English phonemes admit the existence of types of syllables which consist of consonants only, with the nucleous [l, n, m]. These are:

- syllables of CC type (table [teɪbl], taken [teɪkn], rhythm [rɪðm]);
- syllables of CCC type (decent [di:snt], seldom [seldm]);
- syllables of CCCC type (students [stju:dnts]);
- syllables of CCCCC type (functional [fʌŋkʃnl])

There are the following rules for syllable division in the English language.

I. Syllable division concerning stressed long monophthongs, diphthongs and diphthongoids doesn't present any difficulty. These are free vowels which occur in a phonetically open syllable and the point of syllable division is right after them: carpet ['ka:-pɪt], greeting ['gri:-tɪŋ], taming ['teɪ-mɪŋ].

II. Syllable division in case of short vowels manifests their checked character under stress.

A short stressed vowel separated from the next vowel by a consonant or a consonant cluster always occurs in a closed syllable in order to retain

its checked character: city ['sɪtɪ], ekstra ['ekstr̩]III. Syllable division concerning English pre-tonic unstressed vowels also depends on the number of consonants separating them from the next stressed vowel, no matter whether it is a monophthong, a diphthong or a diphthongoid.

1) When an unstressed short vowel is separated from a succeeding stressed one by a single consonant, the syllable it belongs to is always open (before [bɪ-'fɔ:], idea [aɪ-'dɪk]).

2) The case when vowels are separated by a cluster of two consonants is more difficult. The point of syllable division is determined with IV. Still most linguists state that it should be before the consonant: history ['hɪs-t̩k-rɪ].

In conclusion, a syllable is a unit of sound in spoken language that is formed by one or more phonemes. It can be made up of vowels, consonants, or a combination of both. The formation of a syllable depends on the phonetic structure of a word, with a nucleus (vowel or vowel-like sound) often accompanied by an onset (consonant before the nucleus) and a coda (consonant after the nucleus). However, not all syllables have an onset or coda. Syllables can be separated for annotation using a hyphen or a dot to indicate the boundaries between syllables. It's important to note that syllable separation can vary depending on dialect and pronunciation. The conclusion of the article synthesizes the exploration of syllable formation and separation in the English language. It underscores that syllables, as units of sound in spoken language, are constructed from one or more phonemes, comprising vowels and consonants in various combinations. The phonetic structure of a word defines the syllable formation, which typically includes a nucleus, often a vowel, and may also have an onset and a coda, although not all syllables contain these elements. Syllable separation is essential for proper pronunciation and varies by dialect. The article also distinguishes between phonetic syllables, which reflect actual pronunciation, and orthographic syllables used in reading and writing. Additionally, it categorizes syllables based on their phoneme content and structure, outlining rules for syllable division, especially in the context of stressed and unstressed vowels, and the presence of consonant clusters. This linguistic analysis is crucial for learners of English, as it aids in the understanding of the language's phonological intricacies and assists in the development of accurate pronunciation skills.

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