

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SYLLABLE, ITS FORMATION AND SEPERATION
IN PHONETS OF ENGLISH

Jizzakh branch of the National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek
The Faculty of Psychology, the department of Foreign languages Philology and foreign
languages

Teshaboyeva Nafisa Zubaydulla qizi

nafisateshaboyeva@gmail.com

Student of group 203-20: Pirmuhammedova Muhlisa Maxsud qizi

muhlisapirmuhammedova610@gmail.com

ANNOTATION: This article is all about syllables and will give a definition for syllable definition, cover the types of syllables in English, and provide some syllable examples. We'll also cover syllable division □ in other words, how to divide a word into its constituent syllables. We learned in the last unit that a syllable is a sonority peak encircled by less sonorous sounds. Since we now know how speech is formed, we can also conclude that the sounds produced with the vocal tract unobstructed are the most sonorous and have the highest acoustic energy. Sonority is defined as acoustic energy. Vowels are the most sonorous sounds. Conversely, consonants are less sonorous due to an obstruction in the vocal tract. Therefore, a syllable can alternatively be thought of as a vowel surrounded by a few consonants. That's a fair starting definition, but as we'll see in this unit and the next, it's a little more complicated than that.

KEY WORDS: Syllable, formation of syllable, ways of separation, types of syllables, syllable division, sonorous sounds.

In spoken language, a syllable is a unit that makes up a whole word or portions of words. Typically, a syllable consists of one vowel sound plus any nearby consonants. For example, the word "butter" has two syllables: "ter" and "but." The division of a word into syllables, whether it be spoken or written, is known as syllabication or syllabification. When transcribing in the International Phonetic Alphabet, the written division is typically indicated with a period (e.g., syl-la-ble) instead of a hyphen. Syllables are formed when a vowel pairs with a consonant to create a unit of sound. Some words have one syllable (monosyllabic), and some words have many syllables (polysyllabic). New vowels sounds create new syllables. Words are made up of syllables, which have their own internal structure. The most sonorous component of each syllable is called its nucleus, and it usually consists of a vowel or another sonorous sound. Consonants are less sonorous sounds that make up the onset and coda of a syllable, if any exist. The rules that govern English syllable division are as follows: Vowels come before intervocalic consonants, which form the syllabic border. This indicates that a short stressed vowel always occurs in a closed syllable when it is the only consonant separating it from the sound of the subsequent syllable. Vowels and consonants combine to form syllables, which are units of sound. Certain words are monosyllabic (having only one syllable), whereas other words are polysyllabic (having several syllables). New syllables are formed by vowel sounds. Furthermore, a sound is made by two vowels. For instance: meet, boat, and coat. Syllables can be separated using prefixes and suffixes. For instance: pay-ing, hap-pi-ness, unkind-ness, return, unusual, pre-paid, and end-less.

A syllable is a unit of pronunciation that can join other syllables to form longer words or be a word in and of itself. Syllables must contain a singular vowel sound and may or may not have consonants before, after, or surrounding the vowel sound.

To illustrate this, here are some brief examples of what a syllable can look like:

The indefinite article "a" is a syllable (one vowel sound, with no consonants).

The word "oven" has two syllables because it has two vowel sounds – "ov" /-ʌv/ + "en" /-ən/ (each of these syllables includes a vowel sound and a consonant).

Many words consist of only one syllable, such as "run," "fruit," "bath," and "large." Each of these comprises a combination of one vowel sound and various consonants.

Types of syllables in English

Since you're an English Language student, we'll be focusing on the types of syllables in English rather than looking at syllables on a more global level.

There are six key types of syllables in English:

Closed syllables are those that have a short vowel sound and terminate in a consonant. For example, in the word "picture," the first syllable, "pic," /pɪk/, ends in a consonant and has a short /ɪ/ sound.

Open syllables are those that feature a long vowel sound at the end of their syllable (for example, in "zero," the final syllable "ro" /rou/ finishes with the long vowel sound /oʊ/).

Syllables ending in a long vowel, a consonant, and a silent -e are known as vowel-consonant-e syllables. For example, the one-syllable word "Fate" ends in a long -a /eɪ/, a consonant (t), and a silent -e. Moreover, syllables classified as diphthongs (vowel teams) are those that consist of two consecutive vowels combined to produce a single sound. For example, in the word "shouting," the first syllable "shout" (ʃaʊt) consists of the sounds -o and -u combined to produce the diphthong /aʊ/. Thus, syllables that finish in at least one vowel and then -r are known as R-controlled syllables. For example, the last syllable "er" in the name Peter is made up of a -e and a -r.

Examples for syllable: an example of a syllable is the word 'hello', which has two syllables: "hel" and "lo". To ensure each of these syllable types is cemented in our minds, let's look at a few more syllable examples for each type:

Closed Syllables

cat (/kæt/)

napkin – nap(/næp/) + kin (/kɪn/)

spin (/spɪn/)

doughnut – dough + nut (/nʌt/)

In all of these examples, the underlined syllables end with a consonant and have a short vowel sound.

Open Syllables

go (/goʊ/)

sky (/skaɪ/)

we (/wi/)

mosquito – mos + qui + to (/toʊ/)

In all of these examples, the underlined syllables end in a vowel that has a long vowel sound.

Vowel-Consonant-e Syllables

plate (/pleɪt/)

tame (/teɪm/)

mite (/maɪt/)

bone (/boʊn/)

In all of these examples, the syllables underlined consist of a vowel, followed by a consonant, followed by a silent (or "magic") -e. The -e in each syllable elongates the sound of the vowels.

Syllable division

If you don't used to doing it, syllable division can sometimes be a bit tricky. What do we mean by 'syllable division'? Syllable division simply refers to the process of dividing a word into its constituent syllables. That's why, there are several ways to divide words into syllables, and these ways depend on the composition of the word. There are seven rules you can learn to make syllable division easier.

In conclusion, words are made up of syllables, which have their own internal structure. The most sonorous component of each syllable is called its nucleus, and it usually consists of a vowel or another sonorous sound. Consonants are less sonorous sounds that make up the onset and coda of a syllable, if any exist. Additionally, onsets in the midst of a word are avaricious, taking as many consonants as they can while adhering to the rules of the language's grammar.

Importance of Syllables

Syllables serve as the building blocks of speech, giving language its rhythmic quality. They help us understand the pronunciation of words, especially in languages like English, where syllable stress can completely change the meaning of a word. Think about "present" (noun) and "present" (verb) – same spelling, different stress, totally different meanings!

Formation of Syllables

Syllables are formed by arranging phonemes (the sounds that make up words) into groups. Each syllable has a nucleus, which is usually a vowel sound, but can also include certain consonant sounds. Consonants and vowels work together to form structured sequences, creating the syllabic rhythm of spoken words.

Separation of Syllables

Knowing how to separate syllables is crucial for correct pronunciation and understanding of word stress. In English, we often use certain rules to separate syllables, such as looking at vowel combinations like "ea" in "break" or "ie" in "pie" and understanding when a consonant goes with the following vowel to form a syllable. But there are always exceptions, as English loves to remind us!

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