Syllable and Phonotactical Rules

Phonetics and Phonology

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The capsule they were travelling in was manned by the three famous astronauts, **Shuckworth, Shanks** and **Showler**, all of them handsome, clever and brave.

'What a **load of luck**!' cried Mr Wonka. 'We've landed ourselves slap in the middle of the biggest space operation of all time!'

'We've landed ourselves in the middle of a nasty mess,' said Grandma Josephine. 'Turn back at once!'

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'Knock-Knock,' said the President.

'Who's there?' said the Soviet Premier.

'Warren.'

'Warren who?'

'Warren Peace by Leo Tolstoy,' said the President.

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'Mr President, sir, this is Walter Wall. What a sumptuous hotel this is! The decorations are superb!'

'Have you noticed that all the carpets are wall-to-wall, *Mr* Walter Wall?' said the President.

'I have indeed, Mr President.'

'All the wallpaper is all wall-to-wall, too, *Mr Walter Wall*.'

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'Knock-Knock,' said the President.

'Who's there?' said the Chief Spy.

'Courteney.'

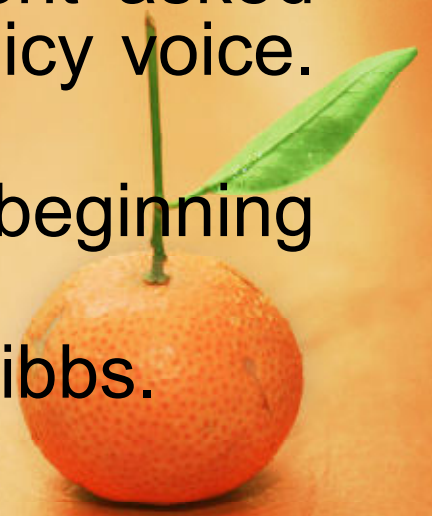
'Courteney who?'

'Courteney one yet?' said the President.

There was a brief silence. 'The President asked you a question,' said Miss Tibbs in an icy voice. 'Have you Courteney one yet?'

'No, ma'am, not yet,' said the Chief Spy, beginning to twitch.

'Well, here's your chance,' snarled Miss Tibbs.



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Let me get you a doctor. I know just the **man**
For a Knid with a nasty **disease**.
He's a butcher by trade which is not a bad **plan**,
And he charges quite reasonable **fees**.

Ah, here he is now! "Doc, you really are **kind**
To travel so far into **space**.
There's your patient, the Knid with the purple **behind**!
Do you think it's a desperate **case**?"

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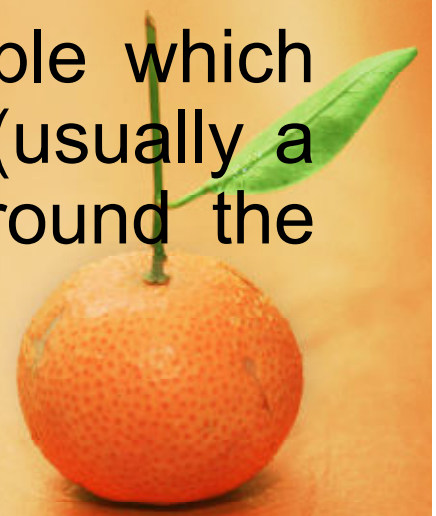
Syllable

- ☑a unit of linguistic structure that consists of a syllabic element and any segments that are associated with it
- ☑don’t serve any meaning-signalling function in language; they exist only to make speech easier for the brain to process
- ☑A word consists of at least one syllable which consists of a central peak of sonority (usually a vowel) and the consonants cluster around the central peak.



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Syllables have internal structure which requires four sub syllabic units.

- **Nucleus**: a syllabic segment that forms the core of a syllable.
- **Coda**: segments that follow the nucleus in the same syllable.
- **Rhyme**: the nucleus and the coda of a syllable in a word.
- **Onset**: the beginning segments of the syllable; the ones preceding the nucleus.

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See more at phonotactical rules.doc

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Why?

- Can you find any word in English beginning with the sound /ng/? (as what we find in Javanese words *ngombe, ngantuk, ngaji*, etc.)
- Can you find any word in English ending with the sound /h/? (as what we can find in Bahasa Indonesia words *rumah, mewah, sawah*, etc.)

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Phonotactics

is the set of **constraints** on how **sequences of segment pattern**. There are rules on the number and type of segments that can combine to form syllables and words which vary greatly from one language to language.

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Phonotactics (in Greek *phone* = voice and *tactic* = course) is a branch of phonology that deals with restrictions in a language on the permissible combinations of phonemes. Phonotactics defines permissible syllable structure, consonant clusters, and vowel sequences by means of *phonotactical constraints*.

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Phonotactic constraints are language specific. For example, in Japanese, consonant clusters like /st/ are not allowed, although they are in English. Similarly, the sounds /kn/ and /gn/ are not permitted at the beginning of a word in Modern English but are in German and Dutch.

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Some Phonotactical Rules

1. all phonological words must consist of at least one syllable, and hence must contain at least one vowel
2. sequences of repeated consonants are not possible
3. the velar /ŋ/ never occurs in the onset of a syllable
4. the glottal fricative /h/ never occurs in the coda of a syllable
5. the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ /, and the glottal fricative /h/ do not occur in complex onsets
6. if the first consonant in a two-consonant onset is not an /s/, the second consonant must be a liquid or a glide- /l/, /r/, /w/, /j/

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