

Lesson One

Diphthongs

Objectives: This lesson tends to help learners distinguish between vowels (fixed reference points), and gliding vowels which involve a movement from one position to another in the mouth.

1. Definition:

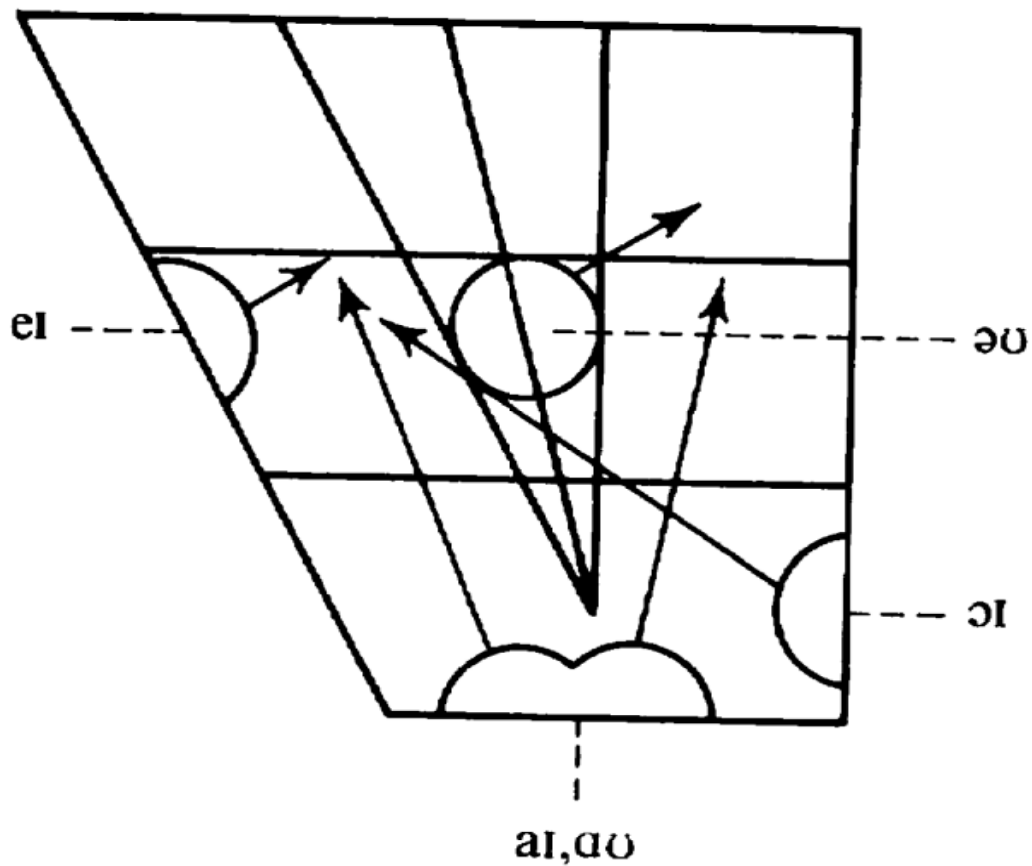
When we talk about pure vowels, we usually define them with reference to the part of the tongue involved in the production of vowels, the distance between the part of the tongue and the roof of the mouth, and the duration of vowel production (whether short or long). At the same time, these are always referred to as fixed points of articulation. For example, we can describe them as close/mid/open/, or as front/center/back vowels.

Another point that should be raised concerning the vowel production, which is the detectable 'quality'. If there is some detectable change in quality, we call them gliding vowels.

Crystal (2008) notes that "if two auditory elements are involved, the vowel glide is referred to as a diphthong" (p. 517). If three elements are involved, we call the sound as triphthong. However, if no perceivable quality is detected, that is, the quality remains unchanged, the sound is referred to as pure vowel. However, when we talk about diphthongs, we usually mention the beginning and the ends of the glide. In other words, we mention the starting point from which of the tongue moves, and the point to which it has reached. For example, the production of the diphthong / aɪ / involves a glide from back open position to a front close position.

2. English Diphthongs

As far as the Received Pronunciation is concerned, we can identify eight diphthongs (Jones, 1956). These include: eɪ aɪ ɔɪ aʊ əʊ ɪə eə ʊə Diphthongs can be classified into two groups: closing, and centering diphthongs. The first group (eɪ aɪ ɔɪ aʊ əʊ) involves a glide to the front/back close position (see fig 12). However, the second group (ɪə eə ʊə) involves a glide to the center position (see fig 13) .



The Closing Diphthongs, Gimson, 1980, p. 310

3. Closing Diphthongs

As it is included in table (15), we can organize the closing diphthongs into two groups:

one group includes the diphthongs whose glides moves towards the front close position, and the ones, which glides towards the back close position. Let us start with the diphthongs whose glides end in the front close position. These diphthongs include /eɪ/, which involves a glide from front mid to close position; /aɪ/, which involves a glide from the front open to the front close point; and /ɔɪ/ which glide slides mid back to front close position.

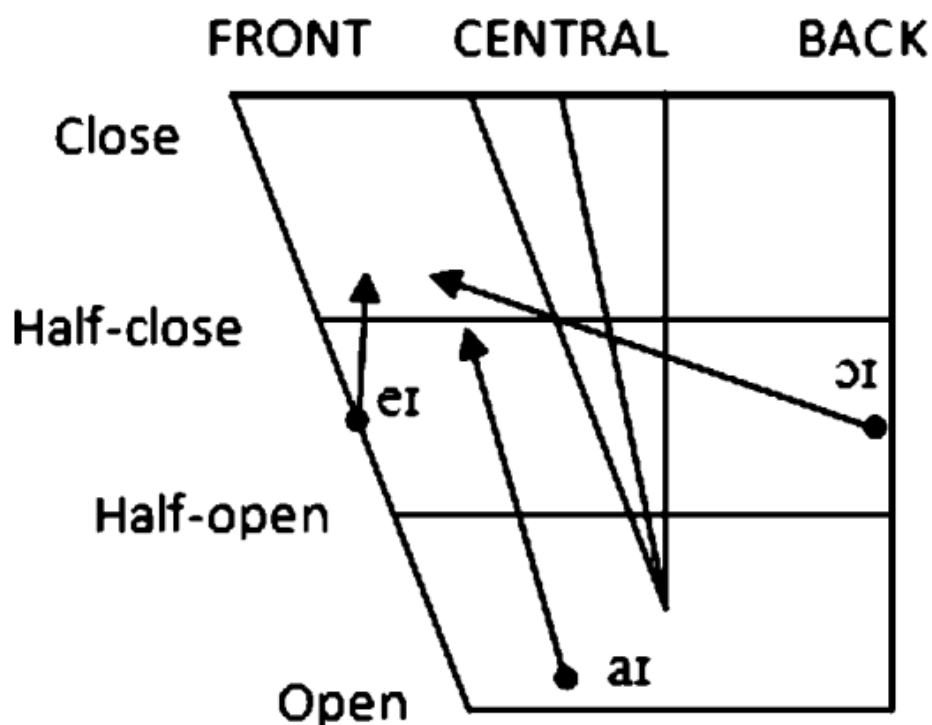


Fig 13: Front Closing Diphthongs

We can also speak of two diphthongs whose glides move towards the back close position. We have /aʊ/, which glide moves from open back to close back point; and /əʊ/, which glide moves from the mid center to the back close position .

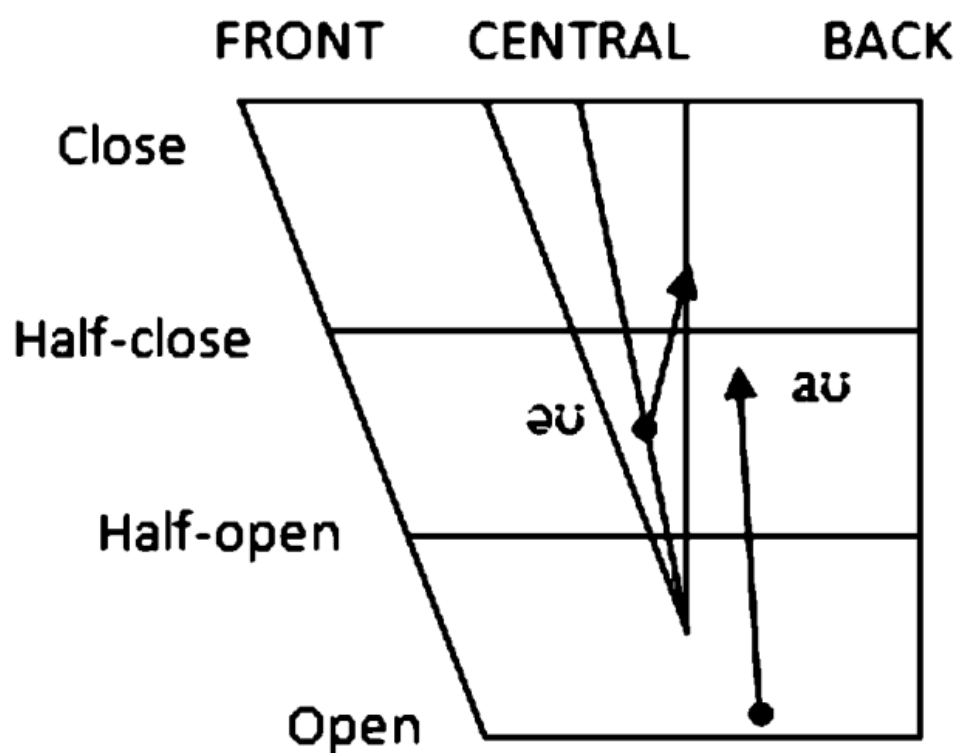


Fig .Back Closing Diphthongs

Practice:

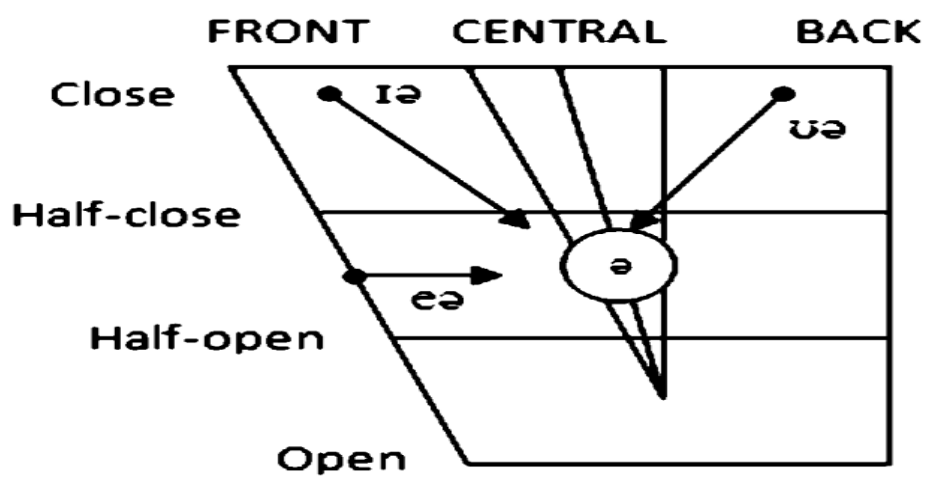
Examples of Closing Diphthongs

Closing Diphthongs

/aɪ/	/eɪ/	/ɔɪ/	/əʊ/	/aʊ/
wait	weit	nɔɪzi	fɔɪl	naʊ
rait	reit	ə' nɔɪ	dəʊ	ə' laʊ
fait	fert	bɔɪz	nəʊ	haʊ
maɪt	meɪt	səʊ	bɪ'ləʊ	ə' baʊt
laɪt	leɪt	ə' gəʊ	ɔɪl	kaʊ

Centering Diphthongs

As fig () suggests, centering diphthongs include /eə/ /ɪə/ /ʊə/. The first involves a glide from front mid position to the centre; the second moves from the front close to the centre; and the third slides from back close to the centre.



Centering Diphthongs

Examples of Centering Diphthongs

/eə/	/ɪə/	/ʊə/
beə	sfrə	ɪm'pjʊərɪti
meə	dɪə	tʊə
heə	klɪə	pjʊər
ðeə	hɪə	ʃʊə
weə	nɪə	pʊə
sweə	fɪə	spʊə

Practice:

Write the words that include closing diphthongs in Column A, and the ones with centering diphthongs in column B.

Objective: To enable learners to practically distinguish between closing and centering diphthongs.

Grow - identify - murals – frown - engineer – oiled - framework – volunteers - fair -
license -
specification – slowly – employ – modify – mutual – where – about – where – contour

[illegible]

Lesson two

English Triphthongs

Objectives: The main aim of this lesson is to explain that change in the quality during the articulation of vowels, results in change in type of vowels.

1. Definition

As we have mentioned previously, the difference between pure vowels, diphthongs, and triphthongs lies in the extent, to which we can notice a change in the quality during their articulation. When no noticeable change is perceived, the sound is termed as pure vowel /e/. If there is evident change in quality, one thinks of gliding vowel. If two auditory elements are involved, the sound is referred to as a diphthong /eɪ/; however if three elements are involved resulting in two glides, we call the sound as a triphthong /eɪə/

Triphthong Symbols: (eɪə aɪə ɔɪə aʊə əʊə)

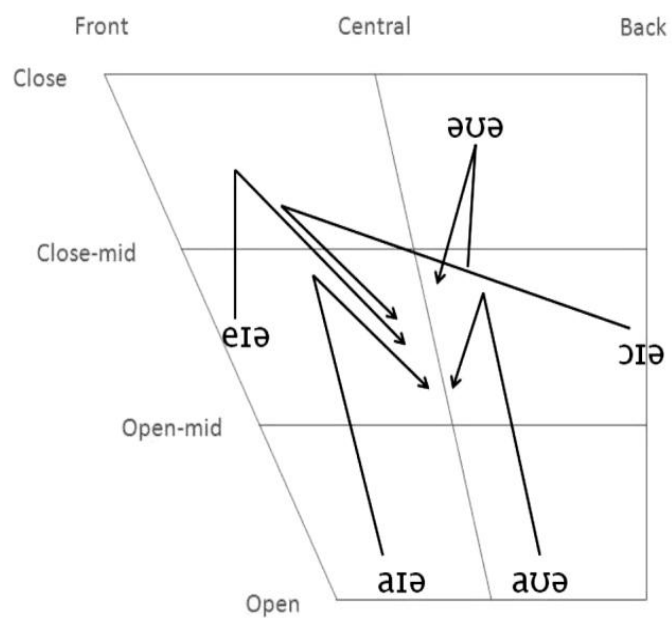
/ aɪə /: Liar /laɪə/ wire /waɪə/ fire /faɪə/ hire /haɪə/ dryer /draɪə/

/eɪə/: Player /pleɪə/ layer /leɪə/ sprayer /spreɪə/ prayer /preɪə/

/ɔɪə/: royal /rɔɪəl/ lawyer /lɔɪə/ loyal /lɔɪəl/ employer /ɪmplɔɪə/

/əʊə/: hour /aʊə/ flower /flaʊə/ shower /ʃaʊə/ coward /kaʊəd/

/əʊə/: lower /ləʊə/ slower /sləʊə/ knower /nəʊə/



English Triphthongs

Lesson three

The Syllable

Objectives: The main aim of this lesson is to acquaint learners with the notion of syllable, and its importance in stress placement.

1. Definition

"Syllables are usually described as consisting of a centre which has little or no obstruction to the airflow and which sounds comparatively loud; before and after this centre (that is, at the beginning and end of the syllable), there will be greater obstruction to the airflow and/or less loud sound" (Roach, 2000, p. 70)

The syllable is a "unit at a higher level than a phoneme, or segment, yet distinct from that of a word or morpheme" (Gimson, 1980, p. 55)

"In every word made up of more than a single sound, at least one of the sounds is heard to be more 'prominent' than the other(s). If there is only one such 'prominent' sound, the sequence is said to consist of a single syllable" (Jones, 1956, p. 134)

"A unit of pronunciation typically larger than a single sound and smaller than a word" (Crystal, 2008, p. 468).

The syllable can be defined as an uninterrupted unit of spoken language larger than a phoneme. It can be a word, or a part of a word, consisting of only one vowel sound (centre) which can be preceded, followed, or surrounded by one or more consonant.

2. Structure of the syllable

Objectives: This lesson targets to help learners identify the different constituents of the syllable, and distinguish between syllabic and non-syllabic segments.

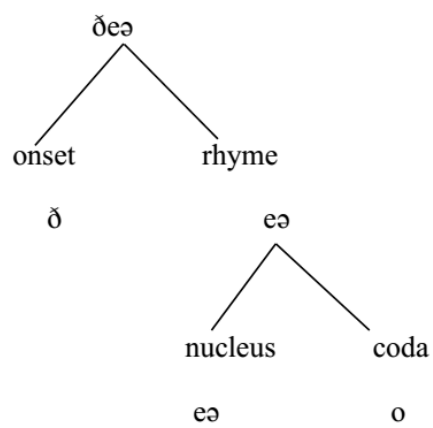
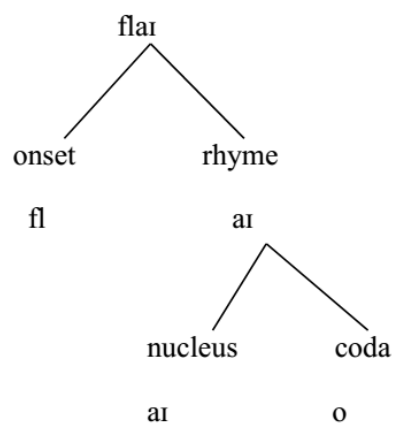
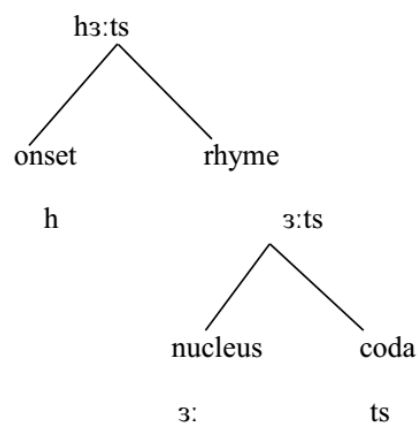
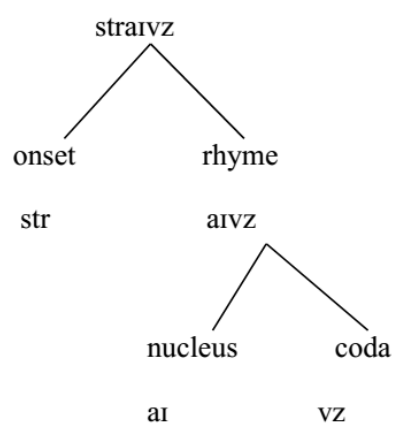
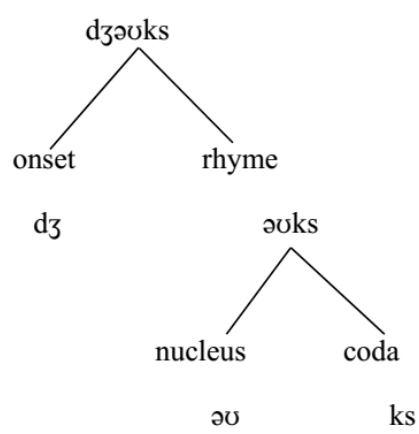
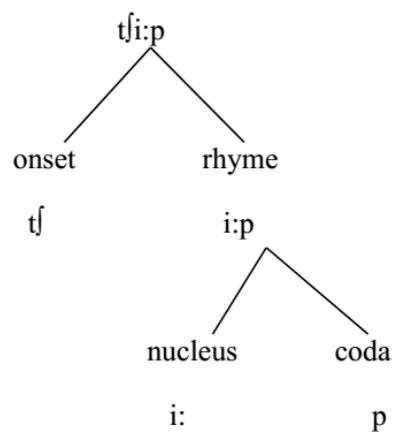
.2.1. The Onset: A term used in phonetics and phonology to refer to the consonant sound preceding the nucleus/peak in the syllable

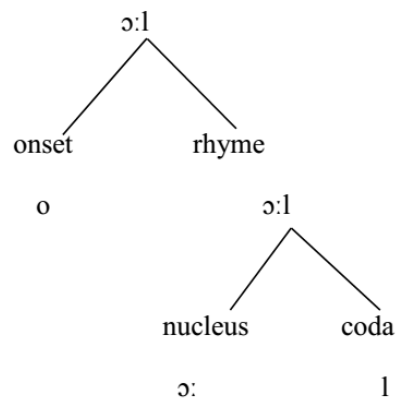
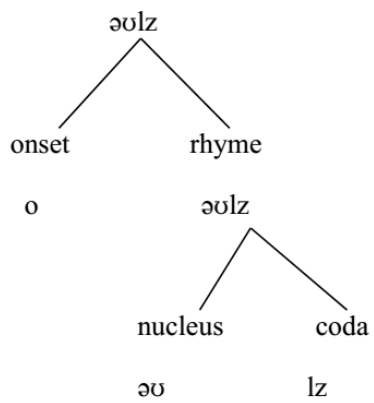
.2.2. The Coda: This refers to the consonant sound (s) following the peak in a syllable.

.2.3. The Rhyme/ Rime: A term referring to a single constituent of syllable structure comprising the nucleus (the non-consonantal segments) and coda (the final sequence of consonantal segments)

2.4. The Peak: In phonetics and phonology, a term used to characterize a relatively high level of prominence. It is the syllabic element, or the centre of a syllable. Every syllable is made of a syllabic segment, mostly a vowel. This means that some consonants can be syllabics (we will explain the issue of syllabic consonants later). Additionally, most syllables, as we have mentioned in the definition above, have non-syllabic segments (consonants) before and after them. The syllabic segment is called center, peak, or nucleus. The consonant, or consonants, which precede the nucleus, are called the onset; and the ones that follow the peak are labeled as the coda. The nucleus and the coda are called the rhyme (rime).

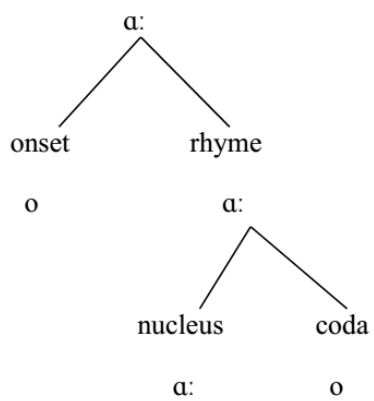
Examples of Syllable Division



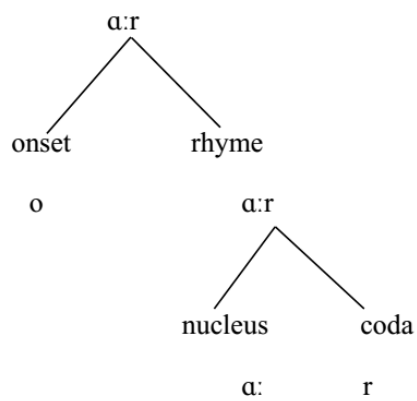


are (RP)

/ɑ:/

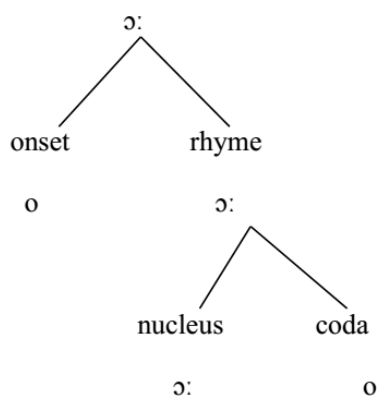


are (AE)

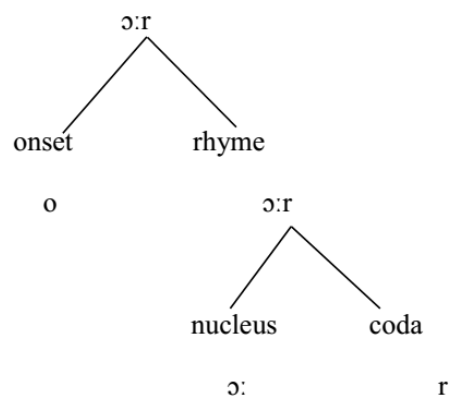


or (RP)

/ɔ:/



or (AE)



Practice:

Divide these words into onsets and rhyme, and the rhyme into a nucleus and a coda:

Objectives: To measure the extent to which learners can divide syllables into lower level constituents.

Brushed/ waves / are / speaks / blow / moved / eats / wished / fourths / owls / or/
drives/ peaks/
strikes / occur / words / stopped / called / pairs / air / rhymes / ear / heirs / plea / cares

Lesson four

Consonant Clusters

Objective: To help learners identify the probable number of consonants preceding or following a peak in a given syllable of the English language.

Consonant clusters refer to the sequence of consonant phonemes with no intervening vowel between them. We usually talk about consonant clusters as arrangements or sequences of two or more consonants within the same syllable. For example, in the syllable strikes /straiks/, we can see a sequence of three consonants at the beginning of the syllable /str/, and two consonants /ks/ at the end. The word sixth siksθs begins with one consonant /s/ and ends in a sequence of four consonants /ksθs/. Any single consonant can occur as the onset of an English word except /ŋ/ and /ʒ/.

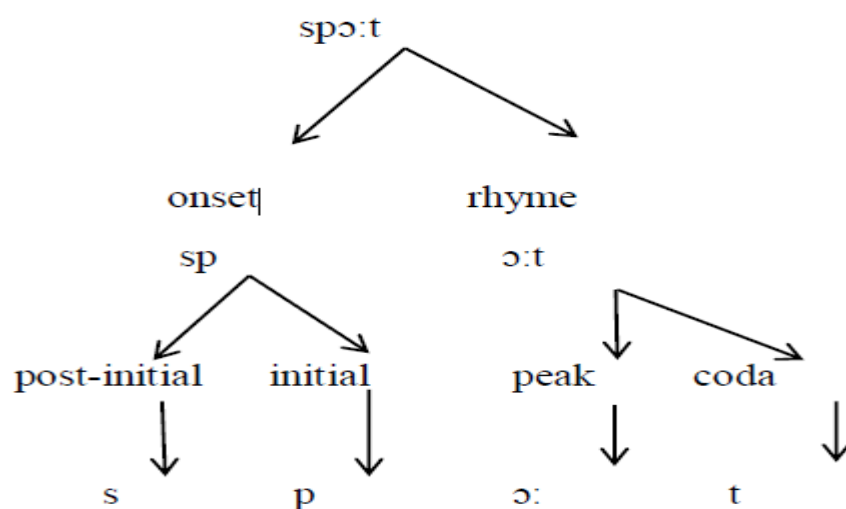
1. Syllables beginning with two Consonants

Two types of initial two-consonant clusters can be identified in English language. One type is composed by /s/ followed by ,l **s**mill /smel/, n **s**now /snʊə/, k skill /skɪl/, f sphere /sfɪə/, l slot /slɒt/, p sport /spɔ:t/; /sr/ is also possible as in syringe /sɪrɪndʒ/, or /srɪndʒ/, **s**tay /steɪ/, sw suite /swɪt/, sj sewer /sjʊə/. In these syllables, we call the first phoneme of the cluster /s/ as the pre-initial and the consonant phonemes that follow the /s/ as the initial consonants. However, Roach (2009) signals that clusters formed by s+ l, r, w, "can be analysed *either* as pre-initial s plus initial l, w, j, r *or* initial s plus post-initial l, r, w, j,. There is no clear answer to the question of which analysis is

better"

(p.

69).



The other set begins with one of the following sounds (p b t d k g f v θ s ʃ h l m n)

followed by /l, w, j, r/. The first consonant of this set is called initial, while the second

is identified as post-initial.

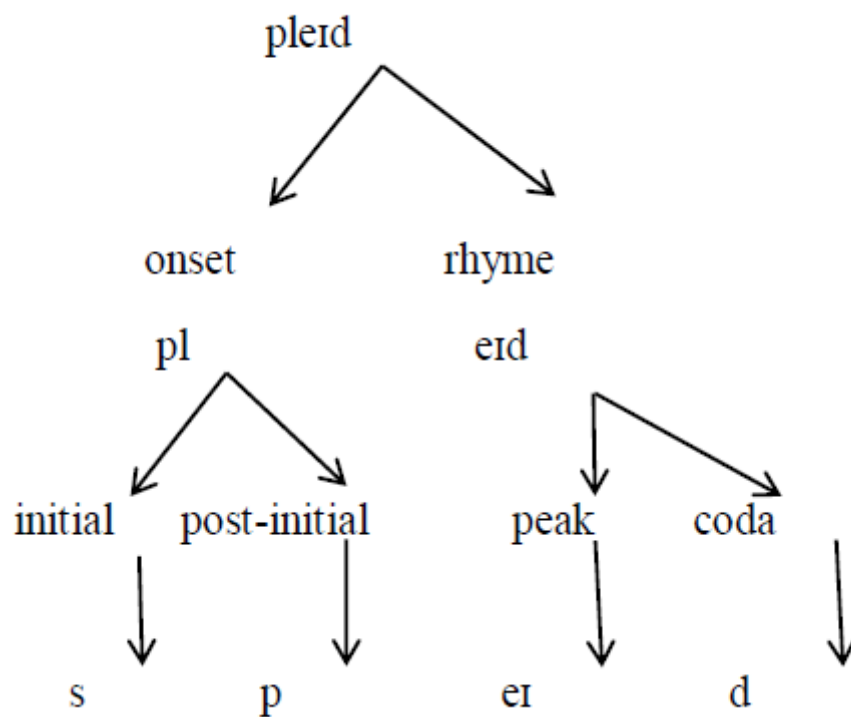


Table 7: Initial CCV Clusters	
p+ l, r, j	l+ j
t+ r, j, w	f+ l, r, j
k+ l, r, j, w	v+ j
b+ l, r, j	θ+ r, j, w
d+ r, j, w	s+ l, j, w, p, t, k, m, n, f
g+ l, r, j, w	ʃ+ r
m+ j	h+ j
n+ j	

Source: Gimson, 1980, p. 241

Table 8: Initial CCCV Clusters	
s + [p]	L, r, j
t] +	r, j
[k]	l, r, j, w

Source: Gimson, 1980, p. 241

Examples of Initial CCCV Consonant Clusters

Table 9: Initial CCCV Consonant Clusters				
Words	transcription	Pre-initial	Initial	Post-initial
sclerosis	sklɹə'reʊsɪs	s	k	l
Spring	sprɪŋ	s	p	r
spume	spju:m	s	p	j
Square	skweə	s	k	w
street	stri:t	s	t	r

Final Consonant Clusters

Final consonant clusters can range up to four consonants (sixth sɪksθs). When a syllable ends in one consonant only. We call that phoneme as final consonants. Of course any consonant can be a final except for the following (h, w, j).

Two-consonant final cluster can be organized into two sets. The first set includes a final consonant preceded by a pre-final consonant. In the second set, we can notice the final consonant which is followed by a post-final consonant. The pre-final consonants

encompass the following: (m n ŋ l s). The post-final consonants also form a small set:

(s z t d θ).

Table 10: Final VCC Clusters			
p+ t,	θ, s	ŋ+ k d	z
t+	θ, s	l+p, t, k, b, d, ʃ, dʒ, m, n, f, v, θ s z	
k+ t	θ, s	f+ t	θ s
b+	d z	v+	d z
d+	z	θ+ t	s
g+	d z	ð+	d z
ʃ+ t		s+p, t, k,	
dʒ+	d	z+	d
m+p	d f θ z	ʃ+ t	
n+ t,	d ʃ dʒ θ s z	ʒ+	d

Source: Gimson, 1980, p. 246

Table 11: Final VCCC Clusters			
p+ t,	θ		p+s
t+	θ		t+s
k+ t			k+s
m+p	f		d+s
n+ t,	θ	+s	m+ p
ŋ+ k			n+s, ʃ
l+p, t, k, f,	θ		ŋ+s k
f+ t,	θ		l+s, p, t, k ʃ
s+p, t, k,			s+p, k
n+ d			k+ s
l+b, d, m n v		+ z	n+ t
			ŋ+ k
			l+ f
			+ θ

Source: Gimson, 1980, p. 250

The pre-final consonants encompass the following: (m n ŋ l s). The post-final consonants also form a small set: (s z t d θ).

Examples of Final VCCC Consonant Clusters

Syllable	pre-final	Final	Post-final	Post final 2	Post final 3
bangs	ŋ	g	z		
helped	l	p	t		
Fifths		f	θ	s	
next		k	s	t	
prompts	m	p	t	s	
Twelfths	l	f	θ	S	
texts		k	s	t	s

Practice:

Provide the appropriate analysis of the following one-syllable words.

Objective: To consolidate learners' knowledge about the syllable structure with practical activities.

Squeezed - scratched - strengths – screams - proud – teaches – cramped – splashed –

Sings – sinks - prompted - scrambles – sixths – jinxed – tempts

[illegible]

Lesson five

Weak and Strong Syllables

Objectives: To distinguish the syllables that can take the primary/secondary stress from those which are usually unstressed.

Weak syllables refer to those syllabic segments which tend to be shorter in duration, lower in intensity (pitch), and different in quality (reference articulation points). If we consider the word 'driver' /draɪvə/, we can perceive that the second syllable is shorter than the first, less loud, and includes a vowel /ə/ that cannot be found in strong syllables. In the same way, if we examine the word settle /setl/ we notice that it is made up of two syllables /set/ and the syllabic consonant /l/, which does not occur in strong syllables (Roach, 2000). At the end of a word, weak syllables can end in the following vowels:

- i) the vowel /ə/ ("schwa");
- ii) a close front unrounded vowel in the general area of i: and ɪ (symbolized ɪ);
- iii) a close back rounded vowel in the general area of u: and ʊ (symbolized ʊ).

It is worth noting that the close unrounded front /ɪ/ is in a position in-between the close front long /i:/, and the half-close short /ɪ/; and the close rounded back /ʊ/ is placed between the back close long /u:/ and the back half-close short /ʊ/. The vowel /ɪ/ is found in word final position spelt with final 'y', or 'ey' preceded by one or more consonant letters, eg., funny /fʌni/, easy /i:zi/, and in words like easier /i:ziə/ happier /hæpiə/. We can also find them the prefixes (re- pre- de-) preceding a vowel; in suffixes spelt 'iate' 'ious'. In addition, this sound can be noticed in these function words: he /hi/ she /ʃi/, me /mi/, we /wi/ be /bi/.

Conversely, strong syllables are stressed, and have as a peak of one of the vowel phonemes (i: u: ɜ: ɔ: ɑ: ɔ:), diphthongs eɪ aɪ ɔɪ aʊ əʊ ɪə eə ʊə, or triphthongs (eɪə aɪə ɔɪə aʊə əʊə). If the last syllable includes a short vowel, it will have a coda.

Dividing Words into Strong and Weak Syllables

Salad	balloon	bulletin	remember
S w	w S	S w w	w S w
'sæləd	bə'lu:n	'bʊlɪtn	rɪ'membə
measure	command	Canada	contagious
S w	w S	S w w	w S w
'meɪʒə	kə'mɑ:nd	'kænədə	kən'teɪdʒəs
value	result	elephant	develop
S w	w S	S w w	w S w
'vælju:	rɪ'zʌlt	'ɛlɪfənt	dɪ'veləp
yellow	supply	harmony	annoyance
S w	w S	S w w	w S w

Engineer	architect	architecture	California
s w S	S w s	S w s w	s w S w
ˌɛndʒɪˈnɪər	ˈɑːkɪtɛkt	ˈɑːkɪtɛktʃə	ˌkælɪˈfɔːnjə

lemonade	elevate	elevator	elevation
s w S	S w s	S w s w	s w S w
ˌləməˈneɪd	ˈelɪveɪt	ˈelɪveɪtər	ˌelɪˈveɪʃən

understand	modify	modifying	understanding
s w S	S w s	S w s w	s w S w
ˌʌndəˈstænd	ˈmɒdɪfaɪ	ˈmɒdɪfaɪɪŋ	ˌʌndəˈstændɪŋ

Lesson six

Syllabic Consonants

Objective: This lesson explains to learners that the concept of 'syllabic', or syllabic segments is not constrained to vowels alone, but certain number of consonants can stand as peaks. Syllabic Consonants refer to those segments where no vowel is found, and where the consonant itself stands a peak. The nasals and laterals, and the retroflex r can be syllabics.

Syllabic /n/

cotton maiden Britain sudden nation

'kɒt**n** 'meɪd**n** 'brɪt**n** 'sʌd**n** 'næʃ**n**l

kitten beaten brighten mutton patient

'kɪt**n** 'bi:t**n** 'braɪt**n** 'mʌt**n** 'peɪʃ**n**t

lesson prison reason present caution

'les**n** 'prɪz**n** 'ri:z**n** 'preznt 'kɔ:ʃ**n**

botany monotony president

'bɒt**n**i mə'nɒt**n**i 'prezɪd**n**t

Threaten threatening

'θret**n** 'θret**n**ɪŋ

seven heaven often

'sev**n** 'hev**n** 'ɒf**n**

We do not find n after l ʃ ʒ

swollen kitchen pigeon

'swɒl**ə**n 'kɪʃ**ə**n 'piʒ**ə**n

happen happening ribbon

'hæpən 'hæpnɪŋ 'rɪbən

'hæpn 'hæpnɪŋ 'rɪbn

'θɪkən 'weɪkən

'θɪkn 'weɪkn 'θɪkɪŋ 'weɪkɪŋ

Nasal+plosive+syllabic nasal is very unusual

abandon lantern london

ə'bændən 'læntən 'lʌndən

Syllabic ŋ

'brəʊkɪ ki: ŋ 'θɪkɪŋ

3. Syllabic /m/

Call them kɔ:lm, keep them ki:pm,

kill them kɪlm, "Hung them all" hʌŋgm ɔ:l

Happen 'hæpm / open the door əʊpm ðə dɔ:(r)

/ I am working m wɜ:kɪŋ

4. Syllabic r

pr'tɪkjʊlɪ hɪstri or hɪstəri Hungary 'hʌŋɡri missionary 'mɪʃnəri

visionary 'vɪʒnəri veteran 'vetrən

'betə 'lædə 'kʌvə 'dɪnə / In some regions in Britain, shwa is dropped and replaced with syllabic

/r/ 'betr 'lædr 'kʌvr 'dɪnr

5. Syllabic /l/

Preceded by alveolar Consonant

cattle bottle muddle meddle wrestle settle model cradle

'kætl 'bɒtl 'mʌdl 'mɛdl 'resl 'setl 'bætl 'mɒdl 'kreɪdl

Preceded by alveolar a non-alveolar Consonant

trouble couple people struggle smuggle shackle

'trʌbl 'kʌpl 'pi:pl 'strʌɡl 'smʌɡl 'ʃækl