

# THE SYLLABLE

## **1/ What is a syllable?**

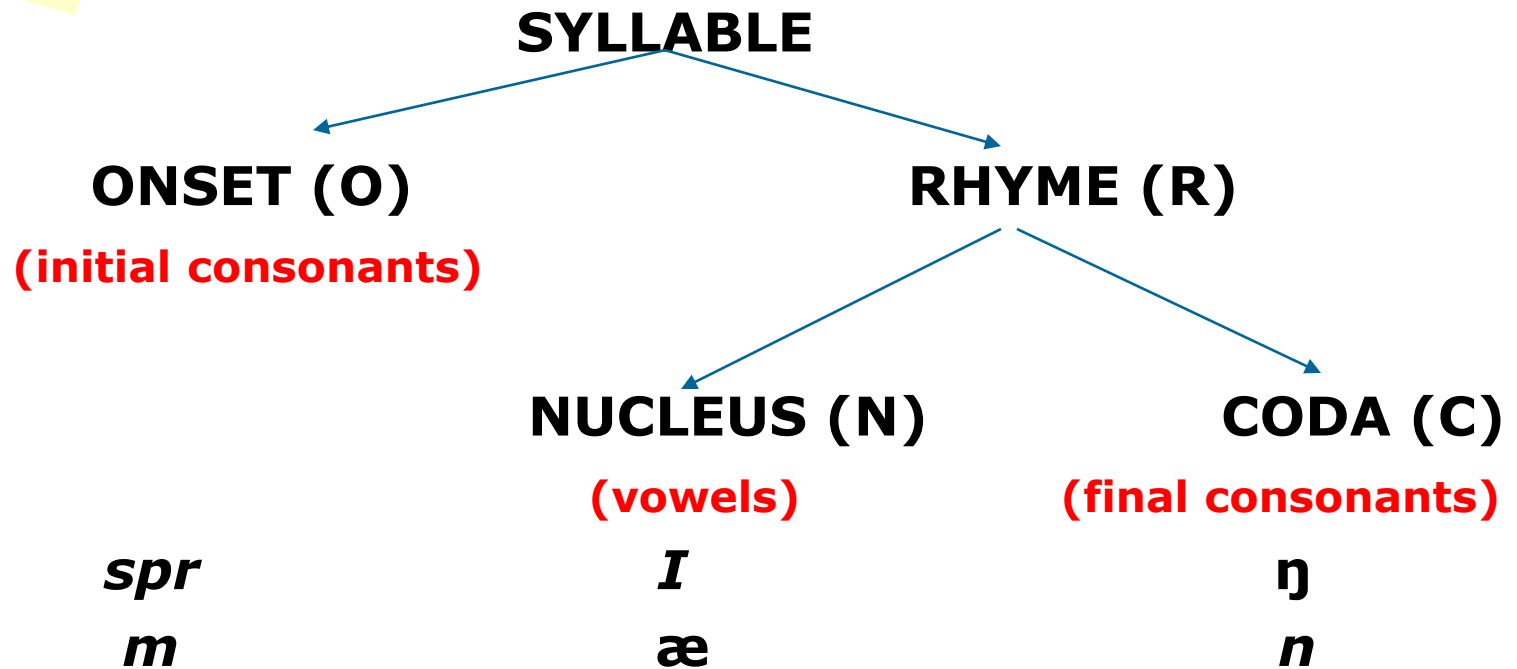
A syllable may be defined as one or more speech sounds forming a word or part of a word, containing **one vowel sound**, with or without a consonant or consonants and uttered at a single effort.

e.g: man, morning

## **2/ The functions of the syllable:**

- + to carry the phonetic manifestations of the suprasegmentals.
- + to be the chief domain of patterns of arrangement of phonemes.
- + to act as a unit of organization in the process of speech production.

## **3/ The internal structure of a syllable**



- => **Vowel = Nucleus/Peak/Center of a syllable**; syllabic sound.
- => Consonant= Onset, Coda; marginal; usually non-syllabic

#### **4/ Syllable formation:**

- + by any vowel (**V**): *or, are, I*
- + by one vowel preceded by one consonant (**CV**): *core, car*
- + by one vowel followed by one consonant (**VC**): *in, at, on*
- + by one vowel both preceded and followed by one consonant (**CVC**): *cat, dog*

**Note:** A syllabic consonant is a consonant which forms the nucleus or the centre of a syllable, i.e. no vowel is found in the syllable; instead, consonants as /l/, /n/.

/bl/ table, /pl/ apple, /tl/ little, /dl/ muddle, /gl/ struggle,  
/kl/ knuckle, /sl/ parcel, /nl/ Kernel, /dn/ garden

### **5/ Types of syllable:**

**a/ Open syllable:** a syllable which ends in a vowel is called an open syllable.

**b/ Closed syllable:** a syllable which ends in a consonant is called a closed syllable.

### **6/ Syllable division:** self study

**7/ Strong syllable:** will have as its center one of the vowel phonemes or possibly a triphthong.

**8/ Weak syllable:** can have only four types of center

+ the vowel / ə / (schwa)

+ a close unrounded vowel in the general area of /i:/ & /I/

+ a close back rounded vowel in the general area of /u:/ & /U/

+ a syllabic consonant /bl/, /pl/, /tl/, /dn/...