**English Phonology file 7-1**

**6.2 Number of Syllables**

**(1) Even in uncommonly used vocabulary such as comsumptiveness [kən.ˈsʌmp.tɪv.nɪs], docility [dɑ.sí.lə.ti], divinatory [di.ví.nə.tə.ri], cosmographical [kɒz.mɒ.ɡrǽ.fɪ.kəl] ([kaz.mo.ɡrǽ.fɪ.kəl] AE), most English speakers know that ‘consumptiveness’ and ‘docility’ have 4 syllables, and ‘divinatory’ and ‘cosmographical’ have 5 syllables.**

**Depending on native speakers’ intuition, it seems that English speakers**

**recognize how many syllables the words have without any difficulty when they speak.**

**Syllables can be produced based on vowels. So generally it is considered that the number of syllables is the same with the number of vowels involving syllabic consonants in a word. And the production of syllables contributes to ease of communication with a large amount of sonority(amount of resonance). Therefore, the language that we use necessarily consists of resonance of vowels whose waves could carry sounds easily. All the languages that we use must have syllables. If there is no syllable, languages will not exist. The syllable is significantly important in languages.**

**By the way, in the syllable, the vowels play an important role as a syllable peak.**

**A single vowel without any consonants can produce a syllable.**

**For example, the exclamations such as ‘Ah’, ‘Oh’, ‘Wow’ produce a syllable because each of them has a vowel as [a:], [oʊ], [waʊ]. Thus a syllable can be created by a single vowel without consonants.**

**(3) The syllabic nasal is one of the syllabic consonants. The syllabic consonants include [m, n, ŋ, l, r]. These sounds play a similar role to a vowel when they are placed after other obstruents in the syllable-final position.**

**Only in this environment, syllabic consonants can be created by having the similar function to vowels with more sonority as a syllable peak.**