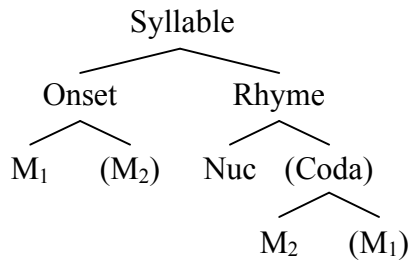


On the Relationship between Codas and Onset Clusters
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Various researchers have noted a relationship between a coda consonant and the second member of an onset cluster. Most apparent, as noted by Clements (1990) among others, is the preference for these consonants to be of high sonority. Another connection noted by Clements & Keyser (1983) and Cairns (1988) is what Cairns terms as ‘pan-syllabic constraints’ that prevent identical consonants from flanking both sides of a vowel only if there is a (marked) onset cluster and notes that “this would suggest that the /l/ in C_r [rhymal consonant] is marked the same way as in A_o , [second member of an onset] and distinct from C_o , [initial member of an onset] to account for **klull*” [p. 231]. A third connection proposed by Kaye & Lowenstamm (1981) is that there is an implicational universal between these two positions, namely that if a language allows for a complex onset it must also have a coda. That is, if a language allows for CCV syllables then it must also allow for CVC syllables; but the reverse does not hold. If a language allows for CVC syllables it may or may not have CCV syllables. The implicational universal proposed by Kaye & Lowenstamm has never been fully explored. Consider, for example, Blevins (2006) discussion of syllable typology where she lists Cheke Holo as an example of a language whose maximal syllable is CCV thus being an apparent exception to Kaye & Lowenstamm’s implicational universal. However, Blevins notes that Cheke Holo allows for closed syllables in loans. This suggests that the lack of codas in Cheke Holo native words is due to diachronic reasons and not really a fact of its synchronic phonology. Further, other connections that can be observed between codas and onset clusters often go unnoticed. Consider the diachronic development of Pali from Sanskrit (Zec 1995) and Middle Indic from Sanskrit more generally (Vaux 1992). Sanskrit allowed for coda consonants in a fairly unrestricted way and for true onset clusters (i.e., obs + son), but Pali has developed strict restrictions on possible codas and has also lost onset clusters. Similarly, in Campidanian Sardinian (Bolognesi 1998) the only single (non-assimilated) coda consonant allowed is [r] and the only consonant that can be allowed as a 2nd member of an onset cluster is [r] (as evidenced by the historical change of Latin PLUS to Sardinian *prus* ‘more’). While researchers on Pali and Sardinian have seen the developments in the codas and in the onsets in each of these languages as constituting independent changes, they can be considered to reflect a close connection between the coda and the second member of an onset; that is, as codas become more restricted over time so does the nature of the complex onset. Previous proposals on syllable structure have no formal way of accounting for the close connection between a coda and a second member of an onset, though, as noted above various researchers have occasionally observed the connection between the two positions within the syllable. In this paper we offer a formal model of syllable internal structure shown in (1) which we have termed the split margin approach to the syllable. In (1), consonantal positions within the syllable are divided into M_1 positions that favor consonants of low sonority and M_2 positions that favor consonants of high sonority. Once this structure is given to the syllable, all of the observations above can be explained. For example, pansyllabic constraints are OCP type constraints governing the M_2 position. The coda restrictions that develop in Pali and Sardinian can be viewed more generally as restrictions on the M_2

position. Likewise the implicational universal noted by Kaye & Lowenstamm can be understood as follows: if a single M_2 position cannot occur (as a coda) then it follows that it should not occur in conjunction with another consonant (i.e., with an M_1 consonant as a complex onset).

(1) Structure of the syllable



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