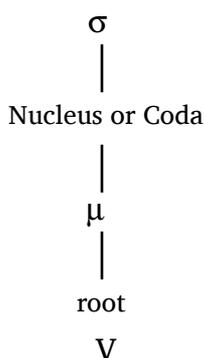


**MORICITY
 AND
 THE CONTRASTIVE OR ALLOPHONIC VOWEL DURATION TYPES**

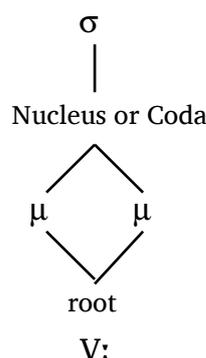
Jean-Pierre Angenot

The mora is used in phonology for representing the segmental length. The two way vowel length contrast is expressed through a monomoraic vs. bimoraic distinction (McCarthy & Prince, 1986, Hayes, 1989), as, for example, in Luganda: [okusona] “to sew” versus [okuso:na] “to take by surprise”:

Short vowel:



Long vowel:



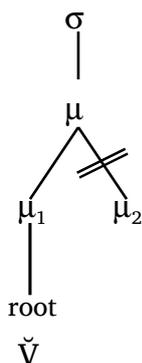
The above two-way distinction is not sufficient for giving an account of the whole set of the following five duration degrees which are phonologically, allophonically or phonostylistically attested among the world languages:

- ◆ extra-short vowel \check{V}
- ◆ short vowel V
- ◆ half-long vowel $V\cdot$
- ◆ Long vowel $V:$
- ◆ extra-long vowel $V::$

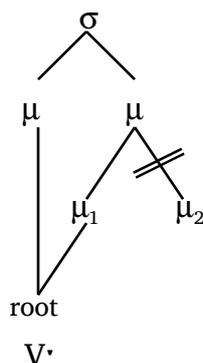
As far as we know, the Moraic Phonology theory has not worked out the moraic structure of the extra-short, half-long and extra-long vowels in order to

determinate their participation in the syllable weight. Tentatively we propose the following moraic structures for these types of vowel:

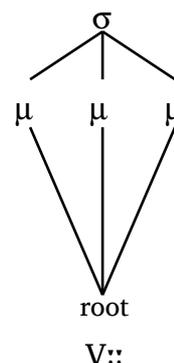
Extra-short vowel:



Half-long vowel:



Extra-long vowel:



A small number of languages make a triple length distinction in vowels (Laver, 1994:442). One example is the Applecross dialect of Scottish Gaelic distinguishes between three degrees of length (short, long and extra-long) on realization of vowels (Laver, 1994):

[tuɫ] “to go” versus [u:l] “apple” versus [su:l] “eye”.

In the Mixe language we find the typologically uncommon contrast between short, half-long and long vowels² (Hoogshagen, 1959; Ladefoged & Maddieson, 1996):

[pet] “climb” versus [pe:t] “broom” versus [pe:t] “Peter”

[po:] “guava” versus [po:ʃ] “spider” versus [po:ʃ] “knot”

[pi:] “flea” versus [pi:ʃ] “marigold” versus [pi:ʃ] “cat”

[?oi] “although” versus [?oi:] “he went” versus [?oi:] “very”.

Other classical example of three contrastive vowels length in Czech were appointed by Troubetzkoy:

mu:kva: “flour”, ruka:va: “sleeve”

vo:da: “water”, dobro:ta: “kindness”.

² Nevertheless according to van der Hulst, Harry, Keren Rice & Leo Wetzels (2010). this type of triple contrast observed in some Meso-american languages would be more accurately interpreted as a case of opposition between short, long and glottalized vowels.

An allophonic alternation between half length and full length is attested in Inari Saami where a phonologically long vowel is realized long if the nucleus is a monosyllabic foot but only half-long elsewhere.

In Chickasaw (Gordon, Munro & Ladefoged) /V/ → [Vː] / VC ----- C

/i/ → [i] /pisa/ → [pisa] “she looks at him”

→ [iː] /pisali/ → [pisaːli] “I look at him”

/i// → [i:] /pi:ni?/ → [pi:ni?] “boat”

In Contrastive Phonology allophonic half-long vowels of phonemic long vowels are attested in some Bantu languages as in Sukuma [F21] but not in other Bantu languages as Yao [P21].

According to Hubbard (1995) and Maddieson (2003:37):

(a) “Sukuma lengthened vowels are almost exactly intermediate between underlying short and long vowels”. /V-_μ-C/ ³ → V:N^C → [VːN^C] (= half-lengthened vowel + post-oralized nasal obstruent).

(b) “Yao has a long/short contrast and significant compensatory lengthening so that vowels before prenasalized stops are as long as underlying long vowels and have more than double the duration of short vowels”. /V-_μ-C/ → [Vː^NC] / (= lengthened vowel + pre-nasalized oral obstruent).

“little goat”.	SUKUMA [F21]	YAO [P21]
Morphophonological representation	/ka- _μ -buli/ ↓	/ka- _μ -busi/ ↓
Phonemic representation	/ka:m ^b uli/ ↓	/ka: ^m busi/ ↓
Allophonic realization	[kaːm ^b uli]	[ka: ^m busi]

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³ where -_μ- symbolizes the class 9 nominal prefix constituted by a floating syllabic (and moraic) nasal infrasegment.

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