

Proseminar: Metrics

Instructor: Bruce Hayes
2101G Campbell Hall
Phone: W (82)5-9507,
H 310 557-1927
bhayes@humnet.ucla.edu

Office hours: M 11-12, Thurs. 2-3 and
by appt. Drop-ins
for quick questions
usually ok.

The field of metrics studies how poetry aligns phonological material with conventionalized rhythmic patterns, or meters. In order to understand such alignments, we need to understand:

- the relevant phonological structures (especially prosodic)
- the principles that govern possible rhythmic patterns
- the principles that determine appropriate matches between pattern and linguistic material.
- The system of grammatical organization in which this all takes place.

General Course Outline

[I'm open to suggestions re. your favorite topics.]

- English literary metrics
 - How to scan iambic pentameter.
 - The phonological basis of English metrics: stress and juncture
 - How to annotate corpora for purposes of analysis (some practical hints, and perhaps some software)
 - Paraphonology (auxiliary phonology used in poetry)
 - Proposals for formalizing metrical grammars
 - How do we know when we're right? Methods:
 - corpora and profiling
 - comparisons with samples of prose
 - Current research: can new approaches to constraint theory and computational learning solve long-standing problems in metrics?
- Sung and chanted verse
 - silent entities—structural relevant of timing
 - the textsetting problem
 - higher-level structure: quatrains; line-length laws
 - genres: folk song, rap, Hausa sung verse, Serbo-Croatian epic improvised verse, Japanese children's songs
- Verse typology: a travelogue
 - quantitative verse—classics, Hausa, English (Hopkins's "sprung rhythm")

- tonal verse in Chinese (work of Chen, Duanmu)
- parallelism-based verse

Course Requirements:

- For four-unit students:
 - A **term paper**, on a topic in metrics of your own choosing. This is due Friday of finals week.
 - Two **meetings** with me, in which you describe what you're doing with your paper and listen to suggestions. I can also read preliminary draft material if you give me a couple day's notice.
 - About three short **exercises**, giving practice in prosodic annotation, scansion, software.
 - Various **readings**. I will post these on the course web site, <http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/251metrics/>.
- For two-unit students:
 - This is pretty casual (i.e. for two units it's up to you how much you want to get out of the course)
 - I recommend keeping up with the readings and doing the problems.