



Fundamentals of Prosody

Dr. Tanimata Dutta

What is Prosody?

- ➔ The term 'Prosody' comes from Gk. *Prosodia*, which means a song sung to music. It deals with the law of versification. It treats the rules which regulate the structure of verses.



General Rules regarding Accents

- Accent falls on the important or root syllable.
- Accent falls on important words.
- Accent falls on alternate syllables.
- In the case of a mono-syllabic word, accent depends on the nature and the position of the word.
- A diasyllabic word has one accented syllable.



General Rules regarding Accent 2

- When the word is of three syllables, accent is laid on one syllable which may be the first, second or third syllable.
- In case of tetrasyllabic words, accent falls on alternate syllables.
- Accent does not fall on articles, conjunctions, prepositions, interjections etc.
- Accent does not fall on prefixes and suffixes.

Nature of Feet

- A foot is composed of two or three syllables.
- The number of neither accented nor unaccented syllables does exceed two.
- A foot may be di-syllabic or tri-syllabic, but in the case of a tri-syllabic foot, the accented syllable is only one.

Disyllabic Feet

- **Trochee:** When an accented syllable is followed by an unaccented one.
- **Iambus:** When an unaccented syllable is followed by an accented one.
- **Spondee:** When both the syllables are accented.
- **Pyrrhic:** When both the syllables are unaccented.



Trisyllabic Feet

- **Dactyle:** When one accented syllable precedes two unaccented syllables.
- **Amphibrach:** When the middle syllable is only accented, and the rest remain unaccented.
- **Anapaest:** When an accented syllable is preceded by two unaccented syllables.



Variations of Disyllabic Feet

- **Catalectic:** If at the end of a trochaic line, there is only an accented syllable, it is presumed that an unaccented syllable is dropped, the foot is called catalectic
- **Catalectic occurs only in trochaic lines**



Variations of Disyllabic Feet

- **Acephalous:** If in the beginning of an iambic line, there is only an accented syllable, it is presumed that an unaccented syllable is dropped. And the foot is called acephalous.
- **Acephalous variation occurs only in iambic lines.**



Variations of Disyllabic Feet

- ➔ **Hypermetrical:** If at the end of an iambic line, there is only an unaccented syllable, it is presumed that the syllable is extra, and the line is called extra-metrical or hypermetrical.
- ➔ **Hypermetrical variation occur only in iambic lines.**



THANK YOU