



The Realization of Metrical Phonology in Blake's The Lamb

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Abstract

Metrical Phonology is one of the main approaches devoted mainly to the study of phonological analysis of the structure and the acoustic limits of stress. This present study aims at proving and discovering the language of poetry is scientifically built and used. It is based on the hypothesis that language of poetry is analyzed hierarchically in the mind of the poet unconsciously and not merely an intelligent job. For this purpose, William Blake's, 'The Lamb' is analysed in terms of metrical phonology. Each line in the poem represents a simple tone unit. This tone unit may contain four kinds of syllables: a) a syllable which is accented, [+ accent] (and also [+stress] and [+strong]); b) one or more syllables which are [+stress] (and also [+strong] but [-accent]); c) one or more syllables which are [+strong] but [-stress] (and therefore [-accent]); d) one or more syllables which are weak, [-strong] (and therefore [-stress] and [-accent]) (Kriedler's 1989). The inner and outer rhythmical structure of 'The Lamb' reflect a fact that rhythm is everywhere in the poem. It is neither limited to weight, utterance, sound, image or symbol nor it is an independent component of the poem, but it is within all its components. The importance of rhythm consists in that there is a vertical line hierarchically built stemming from the beginning of the poem to its end coming through the horizontal lines including themes, pronunciation, sounds, images, symbols and weight in an indefinite central point that represent the root of the rhythmical interactivity to convey it from its meaningless accumulated images to its constructional formation. The underlying level of representations in 'The Lamb' and its phonetic representation exist in the mind of the poet in all stages of forming the poem.

Keywords: *Metrical Phonology, poetry, sounds, images, symbols;*

Metrical & Non-Linear Phonology

Farrokhphey (1999:21) states that Non-linear phonology covers a number of models avoid the representation of the structure as a set of parts occurring in a strict horizontal sequence where each part is being analysed (horizontally) ,for example, being (-syllabic),(-voice),(nasal),(coronal+), ...etc. and limits itself to hierarchical representation. Metrical phonology is one of the main approaches that is devoted mainly to study the phonological analysis of stress as it exists in the study of strings of phonological units through using a segment, a syllable and tone unit in a hierarchical way. It is developed to cover the entire area of the structure and the acoustic limits of stress. Stress patterns are at least a part of importance between grammatical and grammatical components on one hand and Rhythm and Metre of William Blake 'The Lamb' on the other hand. (Crystal, 2008: 330)

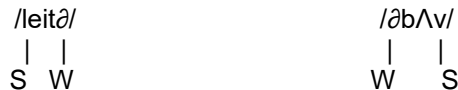
Metrical Phonology & Stress

All sound units in 'The Lamb' are organized and analysed in terms of acoustic features. The goal of phonology is to show how sound units are patterned in the language and make rules as much as possible about the nature of the sound systems in the languages of the world. (Crystal,2008: 365).In this theory the strings of *sound units* are represented hierarchically, using concepts such as strong and weak syllables, foot and word. They all introduced as a hierarchical theory of stress, approaches developed for covering the full range of section structure and acoustical limits. Stress of the patterns are considered to reflect at least in part, the relationships of Prominence as far as the Morphological aspects of the utterance. And the metrical structure of words and phrases can be represented in metric form Tree in which nodes that reflect relative, relative strength between both (w = weak, s = strong) are existed. (ibid).

(Aitchison,1999,47) deals with Metrical Phonology as a word or group of words that has its own rhythm through the interaction of stressed and unstressed syllables.

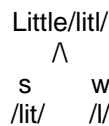


Examples:



Moreover, organizing segments into groups of relative prominence; organizing segments into syllables; syllables into metrical feet; feet into phonological words; and words into larger units are the main concerns of this study. The organization of 'The Lamb' can be represented formally by metrical trees showing both under representation and phonetic one. (London school www.ling.fju.edu.tw).

Katamba (1989: 225) adds that metrical phonology is developed within generative phonology framework in recent years to handle stress phenomena. It complements auto-segmental phonology which was primarily designed for the description of tone although it was used later to account for other aspects of phonology. A stressed syllable is more prominent than an unstressed one. This fact is regarded as crucial in metrical phonology. Relative prominence is expressed using binary branching trees which are labeled strong (S) and weak (w). The more prominent syllable is dominated by (S) and the less prominent one is dominated by (W).



Strong and Weak syllables are paired together by a procedure called foot formation. What is proposed is that stress in Blake's poem is assigned to strings which have constituent structure consisting of two elements, one of which is strong (dominant) and the other is weak (subordinate). The dominant one is the head and governs its immediate neighbour to the left or right. (Carr, 1993: 93)

Acoustically, the poet uses stress to indicate the degree of force on the production foot. The usual distinction can be shown between assertion and unsettled syllables, the first are more prominent than the latter and marked in copying with vertical line lifting. This is usually the reason behind increasing the loudness of the stressed section, but increasing in length and often the pitch may contribute to the inclusive impression of prominence. In popularity use, stress is usually associated with an undifferentiated idea of emphasis or Energy from the point of view of phonology, the main function of stress is to be responsible for distinguishing between concentration or variation in sentences(stress),as in '**The big man looks angry**'. Many pairs of words and word sequences can also be distinguishable-Guided by stress (lexical stress or word stress), as in contrast between **The need for an increase in wages & I am going to increase this wage**. Stress is assigned to syllables of words by repeated application of the rules (such as lexical, compound, and nuclear rules) (Waengler: 2009). The most prominent portion in the foot is called stress president. Foot, in this context, refers to the underlying unity whose analysis differs according to the theoretical approach. When two syllables are stressed immediately adjacent, the situation is described as a stress struggle. Speakers have a tendency to avoid stress the clash. (Crystal, 2008, 454,455).

Strong and Weak Syllables

One of the most noticeable features of English pronunciation of 'The Lamb' is that all lines of the poem can be analysed between strong and weak syllables, and how these weak syllables are pronounced and where they occur in English through the analysis of the poem as a whole. Elision of some syllables in connected speech is a closely related subject, and in considering intonation the difference between strong and weak syllables is also important. Finally, sentences with strong and weak forms are clearly related matter. The researcher looks at how we use these terms to refer to phonetic characteristics of syllables. When we compare weak syllables with strong syllables, we find the vowel in a weak syllable tends to be shorter, of lower intensity (loudness) and different in quality. For example in the word data / deitə / the second syllable, which is weak is shorter than the first, is less loud and has a vowel that cannot occur in strong syllables. In a word like **bottle** / bɒtl / the second weak syllable contains no vowel at all, but consists entirely of the consonant syllabic sound[l]. We call this a syllabic consonant. There are other ways of characterising strong and weak syllables. We could describe them partly in terms of stress (by saying, for example, that strong syllables are stressed and weak syllables unstressed). (Roach, 2009, 64).



Metrical Feet

Generally speaking, human speech reflects different rhythmical patterns with regular placement of beats. One pattern contains a perceptually salient syllable followed by a less salient syllable, as in the English word **better**/betə/. Such a structure is known as a trochee, and is referred to as a **trochaic** structure. Another pattern contains a less salient syllable followed by a more salient one as in the English word **ahead**/ə'hed/. This is known as an **iambic** structure. The structures in question are often referred to as **metrical feet**. (Carr, 2008:150)

Rhythm and Metre

Rhythm is an essential quality of poetry in general and 'The Lamb' in specific. It represents the pulse of life which is similar to the beats of hearts. In the poem, rhythm is marked by accents or stresses placed on certain syllables which need to be emphasized. The terms 'rhythm' and 'metre' are often used interchangeably. Metre is prearranged rhythm. That is, when rhythm follows a definite pattern so that the number of syllables between accents is regular, we have metre. In other words, rhythm is the larger term while metre, is the smaller and more particular. (HAARY, VANDER HULSTON, 1995)

Metre means 'measure' and applies mainly to poetry. In English poetry, metre is made up of recurring patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables. In English poetry, the symbols that are used to mark the unstressed (v or x); and (') for stressed syllables. This process of sorting out the metrical pattern of a poem is called Scansion which refers to marking stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of verse. In poetry, these feet are usually grouped in certain definite patterns to form the lines which are named according to the number of feet in each line. A line of poetry in the Lamb may consist of either trimeter, tetrameter or Pentameter. The most common meters in English verse are tetrameter and pentameter. There are many different patterns of syllables which make up the various feet used in English poetry. The most common is the iambic foot. (1996, 1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 14)

Tools of Metrical Phonology

Tree and Grids are two forms to study Metrical Phonology. The form of tree is used in this study. The most visible element in a tree called a designated station. It is that the node dominates only by (S) and root labels. It consists of basic stress and secondary stress. It is also referred to by labelling, because any knots are relatively more prominent than the other. The result encoded is typical of acoustic phonetics. (Haary 1995). The analysis is easily distributed into nuclear English stress, and importance (neutral or non-elliptical) stress in the actual classes, the unclear pressure is always prominent right that is the right node is labelled (S). Formally, the inherent characteristics of the measurement theory are as follows complementary labels (S) and (W) relative relationship, where it can be prominent. (DHIA A.H. ALJUBOURI M.A., 1982).

Phonological Metrical Analysis of William Blake's 'The Lamb'

Blake's poem 'The Lamb' consists of 20 lines, each line represents one tone unit within the poem construction as a whole. This poem has been built according to metrical tree into seven groups. As in table No.1 below, lines number (1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 12) have the form (strong +weak) in three feet. Line number (3, 6, 7, 8) have the form (strong +weak) in three feet plus strong syllable in isolation. Line number (4 and 5) have the form (strong +weak) in three feet plus one foot with a weak and a strong syllable. Line number (13 and 18) have the form (weak+ strong +weak) in two feet plus two weak syllables. Line number (14 and 17) have the form (weak +strong) in three feet plus a weak syllable in isolation. Line number (19 and 20) have the form (strong +weak) in two feet plus two strong syllables in successive. Line number (15 and 16) have the form (weak+ strong) in two feet plus three weak syllables among them.

Group No.	Lines No.	Metrical Form
1	1, 2, 9, 10, 11, and 12	SW, SW, SW
2	3, 6, 7 and 8	SW, SW, SW+S
3	4 and 5	SW, SW, SW & WS
4	13 and 18	W+WS, W+WS
5	14 and 17	W+WS, WS, WS
6	19 and 20	SW+S+S+SW
7	15 and 16	W, W+WS+WW+WS



Conclusion

Poets in general and William Blake in specific are comprehensively aware of the concept of metrical phonology. This has been reflected in the romantic poetry of Blake's 'The Lamb'. The present study has shown that this approach is the most suitable one to analyze the poem through dividing each line into strong and weak syllable in each foot. It also states that the phonological building of the poem exists in the form of strata in the mind of the poet whether he studies it in academic establishment or not. This poem is a good example of application such a modal to study stress specially in the field of poetry. In this poem we can see that we have 62 strong syllables, and 69 weak syllables this means that the ratio is almost equal.

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