

nursery rhyme may be more immediately apparent than the abstract pattern of a poem of another genre. It is this imposition of the abstract pattern onto the surface which gives nursery rhymes their sing-song quality. In the examples given in this paper this third level of representation, surface II, is pointed out whenever suitable.

The major interest of this paper is the correspondence rules of Italian nursery rhymes. Halle and Keyser, in "on The Theoretical Base of Metrical Verse," characterize the abstract metrical pattern of English nursery rhymes as shown in (1)

- (1) $(wS)^n (w)$ where $n = 2, 3, 4$.

(1) has the three expansions shown in (2):

- (2) a. wSwS
wSwSw
b. wSwSwS
wSwSwSw
c. wSwSwSwS
wSwSwSwSw

In (2a) $n=1$; in (2b) $n=2$; in (2c) $n=3$. The first line of (2a), (2b), and (2c) does not have the optional final w position; the second line does. w in this formula may correspond to 0, 1, 2, or 3 syllables. Guéron presents a similar proposal for English nursery rhymes, with the difference that she claims that n in (1) is precisely 4 and that a halfline analysis (which she compares to the analysis of Old English alliterative verse in Halle and Keyser's *English Stress*) can often be justified.³ Guéron claims that formula (1) gives the abstract metrical pattern for French comptines, and that w corresponds to 0, 1, 2, or 3 unstressed syllables in French as well.⁴

For the Italian nursery rhyme, however, (1) would be a possible but misleading characterization of the abstract pattern. It is shown in the examples below that most Italian nursery rhymes have an iambic or trochaic meter. Thus a better characterization of the abstract metrical pattern for the Italian nursery rhyme is seen in (3):

- (3) a. iambic $(wS)^n (w)$ where $n = 2, 3, 4$
b. trochaic $(Sw)^n (w)$ where $n = 2, 3, 4$

(3a) appears to be identical to (1). However, in (3a) w corresponds to zero or one syllable only (or more if synalepha⁵ is exhibited). The fact that w in (3a) and (3b) corresponds to zero or one syllable is a major difference between (3a) and (1).

In (1), besides the correspondence rule that w can be realized by 0, 1, 2, or 3 syllables, the only other correspondence rule given by Halle and Deyser is that stress maxima may not appear in w positions. A stress maximum is a tonic (stressed) syllable of a major category word (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, exclamation) which is located between two unstressed syllables within the line.

THE METRICS OF ITALIAN NURSERY RHYMES

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IN RECENT YEARS some transformational grammarians have turned their attention to the analysis of poetry. Some of the most important contributions have been made by Halle and Keyser, Maling, and Kiparsky.¹ In this work the metrical theory advanced by Halle and Keyser is applied to the analysis of Italian nursery rhymes. When suitable, examples are taken from other oral traditions including the religious carol and the proverb. Throughout this work standard Italian orthography is used when possible for rhymes in dialect as well as in standard. Many of the nursery rhymes have several variations. In such cases the choice of which variation to present was largely arbitrary, given that the metrical patterns of the variations were substantially the same.

When speaking of metrical patterns, there are at least two levels of representation to which one must refer. One is the **abstract metrical pattern**, which is a series of strong (S) and weak (w) positions in the line. The other is the **surface pattern**, in which the abstract underlying pattern is realized and in which the normal linguistic rules of stress of the language are observed. In these nursery rhymes the surface pattern is a sequence of stressed (') and unstressed () syllables. The **correspondence rules** map the abstract pattern into the surface pattern. It is the correspondence rules evident in these rhymes to which we will turn our attention.

When speaking of nursery rhymes we often find a third level of representation. This level is a second surface pattern, in which the abstract pattern may impose itself on the surface representation in such a way that the linguistic rules of stress may be violated, giving three levels: abstract pattern, surface pattern (in which the linguistic rules of stress are observed), and surface II (in which the linguistic rules of stress may be violated). For example, in Italian and in the various dialects of Italy illustrated in this paper, clitic pronouns² and articles never receive stress by the normal stress rules. But in these nursery rhymes both clitic pronouns and articles often receive stress. In all such cases the clitic pronoun or article corresponds to an underlying S position; that is, the abstract pattern imposes itself on the surface. Thus, the abstract pattern of a

Thus in (1) an underlying S position may be realized by a stressed or unstressed syllable. An underlying w position may be realized by any combination of 0, 1, 2, or 3 stressed or unstressed syllables. But if a w position is realized by a stress maximum, the line is unmetrical.

In Italian, as well, the correspondence rule that stress maxima may not appear in w positions is observed. However, various other correspondence rules also operate. These rules are pointed out below as the relevant examples are brought up.

Let us begin by examining some rhymes whose abstract pattern and surface realizations are very similar. (4) is a nursery rhyme in a dialect from Calabria, in southern Italy:

- (4) 'À gallina zoppa, zoppa / u / u / u / u / u
 Quanta penne tenne 'ngroppa / u / u / u / u / u
 È ne tene ventiquattro / u / u / u / u / u
 Una, due, tre e quattro. / u / u / u / u / u

The hen limps limps

How many feathers does it have in its hind?

It has twenty-four of them.

One, two, three, and four.

The diacritics above the line show the stressed syllables (˘) and stressed (˙) syllables to the right of each line above shows which syllables would receive stress by the linguistic rules of stress of the dialect. I will argue that synalepha is exhibited in the boxed-in syllables.

By comparing where the stress is actually heard and where the linguistic rules assign stress, we can see that in lines 1 and 3 there are instances in which a syllable which is not assigned stress by the normal linguistic rules appears with stress:

- (5) line 1 À gallina zoppa zoppa
 line 3 È ne tene ventiquattro

The circled syllables in (5) are not assigned primary stress by the normal linguistic rules of the dialect.

Thus (4) is an example of a rhyme which has three distinct levels of representation. What we actually hear is marked above the line, what the linguistic rules of stress would produce is marked to the right side of the line, and the abstract pattern is what we must still determine. If we contrast the diacritics above the line to the pattern to the right of the line, we find that every violation of a linguistic rule of stress yields a stressed syllable before an unstressed syllable. The pattern we actually hear (surface II) is given in (6):

- (6) / u / u / u / u / u
 / u / u / u / u / u
 / u / u / u / u / u
 / u / u / u / u / u

From (6) we see that lines 1, 3, and 4 are perfect trochaic tetrameter lines (SwSwSwSw). However, in line 2 there are two unstressed syllables instead of one before the last stressed syllable. Let us examine that line:

- (7) line 2 Quanta penne tene 'ngroppa
 / u / u / u / u / u

The two unstressed syllables in sequence are e and syllabic n.⁶ Since these syllabic segments are adjacent with no intervening consonants, the environment for synalepha is met. Therefore these two unstressed syllables may correspond to one w position in the abstract pattern. Assuming synalepha in this line, the poem is trochaic tetrameter throughout.

In (4) the only correspondence rules called upon were that S corresponds to precisely one syllable, w corresponds to at most one syllable, and synalepha allows us to count a vowel and the adjacent syllabic n as one syllable. The pattern for (4) stood out very strongly as being trochaic because of the violation of linguistic rules of stress.

Before leaving (4) it is worthwhile to note that besides the line final rhyme pattern aabb, there are also many line-internal sound relationships. *Zoppa* is repeated in line 1; *tene* appears in lines 3 and 4, as does *quattro*. Within line 2 *penne* and *tene* utilize the same vowel and internal consonant, although the contrast of double versus single consonant keeps us from calling this "rhyme." These line-internal relationships are not a random occurrence. In fact, line-internal rhyme (as in (4) above) and/or parallelism (as in (14) below) appear in most Italian nursery rhymes. That is, while each nursery rhyme may have its internal rhyme, repetition, or parallelism in a different place in the poem, and while each may have such internal relationships to varying degrees ((4) has four instances, other poems may have more or fewer), most nursery rhymes do have internal rhyme, repetition, or parallelism.

In (8) we see a carol sung by priests of the Trentino on Christmas Eve as they go from door to door begging alms. In this carol the linguistic rules of stress are observed, yielding an irregular surface pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables:⁷

- (8) Gesù Bambino è nato, / u / u / u / u / u
 È nato in povetà. / u / u / u / u / u
 Nè Pannisei nè fàscie / u / u / u / u / u
 Nè fuòco da scaldàr. / u / u / u / u / u

The Christ Child was born,
 He was born in poverty.
 No diapers, no swaddling clothes
 No fire to warm (him).

The boxed-in syllables are environments for synalepha. If we assume that synalepha occurs in line 1, then this line emerges as a perfectly regular iambic trimeter line with the optional final w position filled:

When we look at other children's rhymes, we find that we must modify the above generalization. Consider the following tongue twister:

- (18) Sul taglière l'aglio tágia / / / / / /
 Non tagliare la továgia / / / / / /
 La továgia non à l'áglio / / / / / /
 Se la tágia fai uno sbáglio / / / / / /

On the cutting board cut the garlic
 Don't cut the table cloth
 The table cloth is not garlic
 If you cut it you're making a mistake

If we assume synalepha in the boxed-in syllables of line 4 (*fai sbaglio*), lines 2, 3, and 4 have exactly the same surface pattern as that found in (14). Parallelism is not present here. However, even without the clue of parallelism we can distinguish a natural point at which to divide the full lines in (18), and that is precisely after the fourth syllable. Note that the break between the fourth and fifth syllables not only equally divides the line, but also coincides with a word boundary. Thus (18) may be analyzed as consisting of the following half lines:

- (19) Sul tagliere / l'aglio taglia
 Non tagliare / la tovaglia
 La tovaglia / non è l'aglio
 Se la tagli / fai uno sbaglio

and each half line of lines 2, 3, and 4 consist of the surface pattern $\cup \cup \cup$. Again we have a trochaic half line and the first S position is realized by an unstressed syllable. Line 1, however, has a stressed syllable in the first S position of the second half line ($\cup \cup \cup$). This variation from the other lines strengthens the hypothesis that what we have here are trochaic lines, since the variation is a stressed syllable coming precisely where we have proposed an underlying S position. Thus we might modify (17), as in (20):

- (20) The first S position of a trochaic half line is optionally and frequently realized by an unstressed syllable.

Example (18) displays many interesting poetic factors besides metrical ones. Remember that in (4) we noted internal repetition, and in (14) we noted parallelism. Here again we find a line-internal relationship. This tongue twister is built on the repetition of the sound *git* (λ) in the various forms of the verb *tagliare* (*taglia*, *tagliare*, *tagli*) and in the nouns *tagliere*, *tovaglia*, *aglio*, and *sbaglio*. Note that the first half line of line 3 is a repetition of the second half line of the preceding line. Looking back to the religious carol in (8), we find this same kind of repetition (*è nato* at the end of line 1 is repeated at the beginning of line 2) as well as parallelism (in lines 3 and 4). From this point on, such non-metrical relationships will not be pointed out unless they are particularly interesting or revealing. However, the reader will find that all of the examples in

this paper display such relationships. Certainly these relationships are not unique to oral poetry, whether it be religious or children's or some other type. However, it seems to me that such relationships are more prevalent in the children's poetry I have examined than in the more "literary" poetry with which I am familiar. I would suspect that repetition, both of sounds (internal rhymes, etc.) and syntactic structures (parallelism), is an integral part of the nursery rhyme.

Using the correspondence rule (20), we find that some more complex examples than those examined thus far now lend themselves to an analysis in which they are composed of trochaic half lines.

Consider (21), another religious chant from the Trentino, and (22), a Neapolitan nursery rhyme.

- (21) I angiolíni i pregáva / / / / / /
 La Madóna la predicáva / / / / / /
 El Bambín en ginoción / / / / / /
 El diséva le orazió / / / / / /
 Chi le sá e chi le dís / / / / / /
 El nará en Paradís. / / / / / /

The angels they begged
 The Madonna she preached
 The Baby on his knees
 He said the orations
 He who knows them and who says them
 He will go to Paradise.

- (22) Árrí Árrí Á / / / / / /
 E si mónica cacavađ / / / / / /
 E i ciúciu non potév / / / / / /
 E si mónica acciarev / / / / / /

Arri Arri A
 A holy monk was riding
 The mule wasn't able
 The holy monk killed him.

In (21), assuming synalepha in the boxed-in syllables, we find trochaic half lines whose first S position is realized as an unstressed syllable.⁹ We note, also, two other phenomena.

First, in the first half line of line 2 there is an extra final unstressed syllable. This corresponds to the optional final w position in the abstract pattern for trochaic lines and half lines given in (3b) above. Without a half-line analysis for (21), line 2 would be an irregular line under any metrical analysis. However, with a half-line analysis, the extra weak syllable is allowed since it falls at the end of the half line. Thus, this variation offers further support for our half-line analysis.

Second, in the second half line of lines 3, 4, 5, and 6, the final w position

extra optional w position at the beginning of the line in the abstract pattern for trochaic verse. However, this would be the first instance we have come across in which the optional w is at the beginning rather than the end of a line or half line, and such an optional w would greatly increase the difficulty of distinguishing between trochaic and iambic verse. Still another possible analysis is one in which diphthongs in Italian are counted as two syllables. Thus line 4 would have the syllable pattern seen below:

(27) La pioggia s'avvicina
 u u u u u u u u
 | | | | | | | |
 S wS w S wSw

Under this analysis, the first half line of (27) presents no new problems, since correspondence rule (25) tells us that the initial unstressed syllable is the realization of an underlying S. Note that saying that diphthongs are two syllables presents no problem for the analysis of all the previous rhymes in this paper, since synalepha can be called upon in all those cases to count the diphthong as one position. This last alternative seems the most reasonable to me. With it we can maintain the correspondence rule that S positions correspond to precisely one syllable in the surface representation and w positions correspond to one or zero syllables in the surface.

With the analysis that lines 4, 5, and 6 consist of trochaic half lines, we can view lines 1, 2, and 3 as also having an abstract pattern of trochaic half lines. We see, first, that the second half line of every verse of (26) is identical in the surface metrical pattern, with the exception that line 5 has synalepha. The first half line, however, varies. It is interesting to note that with this rhyme we can see that the division into half lines is a purely metrical division. There is no need of a caesura or even a word boundary between the two half lines. In line 3 we have only Sw instead of SwSw. In line 2 we have SwSw, but both ws are not realized in the surface. In line 1 we have Sw, but again the w is not realized in the surface.

(26) is an example of a very common poetic technique, that of ending the poem with a series of regular metrical lines. Halle and Keyser as well as Smith and others point out how this technique acts to bring a closure to the poem.¹¹

While (26) displays a certain amount of surface metrical irregularity, it is clearly trochaic. Not all nursery rhymes, however, are clearly trochaic or iambic. Consider (27), a Trentino rhyme:

(27) Ócio béli / /
 Só fradéi / /
 Recína béla / /
 Só soréa / /
 Campanéln d'arzént che fá / /
 Din dón din dón din dón / /

Pretty eye
 Its brother

Pretty ear
 Its sister
 Little bell of silver that goes
 Ding dong ding dong ding dong.

At a quick glance we can see that lines 1 and 2 are totally uninformative as to whether the meter is trochaic (with the final w not realized) or iambic (with the initial w not realized). Line 3 leads us to believe the meter is iambic, if we are to maintain the generalization that optional w positions come only at the end of lines and half lines and not at the beginning. But line 4 turns right around and contradicts line 3 by being a clear trochaic line. In order to analyze line 4 as iambic, we would have to say that the initial w was not realized and a final optional w was present—a metrical contortion that seems to have no purpose other than to impose an analysis as iambic on a trochaic line. Line 5 brings us back to an iambic meter, with the first strong position being realized by an unstressed syllable. And line 6 is clearly iambic.

Rhymes such as (27), which "lead you up the garden path" with some verses (such as line 4), are not unusual. Part of the overall point of the meaning of this particular rhyme is to hold you in suspense until the end and then surprise you. The rhyme is accompanied by hand gestures. As you say line 1, you point to a child's eye; with line 2, to the other eye; with line 3, to an ear; with line 4, to the other ear; with line 5, you slowly move your finger from the bridge of the nose down to the tip; and with line 6, you wiggle the nose between your fingers, one time for each syllable. The hand gestures, thus, move from one side of the face to the other and back, finally coming to concentrate on the center of the face. The metrical lines, likewise, alternate between iambic and trochaic, finally settling down to iambic as the hand points to the child's nose. We have here an example of the way meter may be used to parallel and thus point out nonphonetic aspects of a poem.

Rhyme (27) also answers a question posed earlier with respect to correspondence rule (25). The question was whether this rule applied only to half lines or to full lines as well. From line 5 of (27) we can see that the rule applies here to a full line, allowing the first S position to be realized by an unstressed syllable. Thus we may alter (25) in the following way:

(28) The first S position of a line or half line is optionally and frequently realized by an unstressed syllable.

Thus far we have examined the correspondence rule seen in (28) which tells us which S positions may be realized by unstressed syllables. Other types of metrical regularities are often found in these rhymes as well. In (29) we find an example of metrical "nesting"; that is, the two outer lines (1 and 4) have identical metrical patterns and the two inner lines (2 and 3) have identical metrical patterns distinct from those of the outer lines.

(29) Gíro giro tóndo / /
 / /
 / /
 / /

Cásca il móndo / / / / /
 Cásca la térra / / / / /
 Tutti giù per térra / / / / /

Spin spin around
 The world falls
 The earth falls
 Everyone down on the ground.

Lines 1 and 4 are clearly trochaic. Line 2 would be a pure trochaic line if synalepha were called upon to reduce the two internal unstressed syllables to one:

(30) casca / mondo /
 / / /

However, if we employ synalepha in line 2, we lose the obviously intended metrical identity with line 3 (an identity that matches the syntactic parallelism). Thus, I conclude that synalepha is not to be employed in line 2.

The problem, then, is how to account for the second internal unstressed syllable in lines 2 and 3. If the poem were analyzed as consisting of half lines with the second half line of each verse being a trochee, then the extra unstressed syllable in lines 2 and 3 would be a realization of the underlying optional final w position (see (3b) above). The analysis is strengthened by the fact that the last two syllables of each verse are lengthened when children sing them, setting them apart from the preceding syllables. (29) is sung as children hold hands in a ring and then all fall down, as in the English nursery rhyme "Ring Around the Rosie." And like *rosie* in the first line, *tondo* in the first line of (29) is emphasized. Also, as the children fall with the last line, the intonation of the line descends, starting from a higher peak than the other lines:

(31) tut /
 tí /
 giù /
 per ter /
 ra /

An alternative way to explain lines 2 and 3 is to propose that they are trochees with the second S position being realized by an unstressed syllable and the second w position not being realized. Such an analysis allows S positions which are not the first S of a line or half line to be realized by an unstressed syllable and thus reduces correspondence rule (28) to vacuity. For this reason, combined with the fact that the song makes a clear break before the last two syllables of each verse, I reject this proposal in favor of the half-line analysis.

Note that the metrical nesting in (29) does not parallel the rhyme scheme. The metrical nesting has the pattern abba, while the rhyme scheme is aabb. In (32) we see another instance of metrical nesting, but this time the metrical

pattern and the rhyme scheme are identical, both being abcba:

(32) Ambarabà ciccì coccò / / / / /
 Irè civette sul comò / / / / /
 Che facevano l'amore / / / / /
 Còlla figlia del dottore / / / / /
 Il dottore le sgridò / / / / /
 Ambarabà ciccì coccò / / / / /

Eeny meeny miney mo
 Three little birds on a dresser
 Who were making love
 With the daughter of the doctor
 The doctor shouted at them
 Eeny meeny miney mo.

First note that (32) is an example of a rhyme whose surface stress pattern (shown to the right of the lines)^{1 2} violates the rules of linguistic stress (that is, a rhyme with a surface II). In lines 1 and 6 the word *ambarabà*, a nonsense magic word, receives final stress. However, its initial syllable is said with equal stress to the final syllable. By normal rules of stress, we would expect only a secondary stress on the first syllable. In line 3 the final syllable of *facevano* would not receive stress by the linguistic rules of stress. The same is true of *il* and *le* in line 5. *Sul* of line 2, *che* of line 3, *colla* and *del* of line 4 all may receive emphatic stress, but in an unemphatic reading of those lines would not receive stress. Thus in this rhyme the underlying metrical pattern is imposed on the surface to a large extent. This fact comes as no surprise when you consider that (32) is a counting rhyme (just as the English "Eeny Meeny Miney Mo" is). Thus a strong surface beat is essential.

There are at least two reasonable ways to analyze (32). One is to say the poem is basically iambic, as the boxed-in section in (33) shows:

(33) / / / / /
 / / / / /
 / / / / /
 / / / / /
 / / / / /
 / / / / /

Lines 1 and 6, under this analysis, begin with an inverted foot. Lines 2, 3, 4, and 5 have an initial w position that is not realized in surface. And lines 3 and 4 have the optional final w position.

Alternatively, one might say (32) is basically trochaic, as the boxed-in section in (34) shows:

(34) / / / / /
 / / / / /
 / / / / /
 / / / / /
 / / / / /
 / / / / /

che (line 3) and the last syllable of *chesto* (line 4), are all violations of the normal stress rules, since these syllables would not ordinarily be assigned primary stress.

It would be possible to analyze (37) as a trochaic poem. However, the pattern that emerges there is not one in which both stressed and unstressed syllables play an equal metrical role. Rather the overriding metrical fact of (37) is that each line has precisely four stressed syllables, except for the last one, which has only three. The effect of the lack of a fourth stressed syllable in the last line is to jar you, an effect which matches perfectly the meaning of the poem. The last syllable of the last line is said as you point to the person who now becomes "it" in whatever game you are playing. The similarity between the first two lines of (37) and the first two lines of the English rhyme "Rain Rain Go Away" (analyzed by Halle and Keyser in "On the Theoretical Bases of Metrical Verse") is striking.

More interesting than the metrics of (37) is the intricate scheme of sound relationships between the words. *Pin* is a nonsense word, chosen precisely for its sound. It rhymes with *oselin* and *taiilin* and an internal part of *indovina*. *Pin* and *pan* echo each other, with only their internal vowels contrasting. *Pin* enters into alliteration with the second *pin*, *pè*, *pan*, and the second *pan*. In the last two lines the words *che*, *chesto*, and *chi* alliterate. The first line has its first two syllables enter into parallelism. The third line has its first two syllables parallel to its last two syllables. The second stressed syllable of line 2 rhymes with the third and fourth stressed syllables of line 4.

And finally, there are brief nursery rhymes which seem to have a random metrical system, as this Calabrese one:

(38) Gióngio / / v v / /
Chiflé chi i v'de vó' / / v v / /

Gióngio [boy's name]

Whatever he sees he wants.

It is possible to say that (38) is iambic with an inverted initial foot in both lines. Alternatively, one could say that the poem is made of half lines where the first half line of each verse is trochaic and the second half line is iambic and line 1 is missing its second half line. There are many other (equally far-fetched) analyses one could propose, I am sure. But with just two lines to judge by, this rhyme defies a definitive analysis.

In conclusion, we have seen that Italian nursery rhymes require correspondence rule (28) in addition to Halle and Keyser's rule that a stress maximum may not fall in a *w* position. We have also seen examples of metrical mirror images and metrical nesting. Insofar as various lines of a poem have the same underlying abstract pattern but different surface realizations in a precise pattern such as nesting (see (34) where lines 2, 3, 4, and 5 have identical underlying patterns, but 2 and 5 are realized in a different way from 3 and 4), we have examples of correspondence rules.

While it may be possible to support the hypothesis that there is a universal

abstract pattern for all nursery rhymes, such a hypothesis would be basically uninteresting, since it is precisely the correspondence rules (which may differ vastly from language to language) that give nursery rhymes their highly regular, often sing-song, surface realizations. Thus the proper focal point for a student of metrics looking at nursery rhymes is the correspondence rules.

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1. Morris Halle and Samuel Keyser, *English Stress: Its Growth, and Its Role in Metrical Verse*, New York: Harper and Row, 1971; Halle and Keyser, "On the Theoretical Bases of Metrical Verse," forthcoming; Joan Maling, *The Theory of Classical Arabic Metrics*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, M.I.T., 1973; Paul Kiparsky, "The Role of Linguistics in a Theory of Poetry," *Daedalus* (1973), 231-44.

2. A clitic pronoun is a weak (or *atone*) pronoun. For example, in *la vedo*, *la* is a clitic pronoun. But in *vedo lei*, *lei* is not clitic.

3. Jacqueline Guéron, "The Meter of Nursery Rhymes," *Poetics*, 12 (1974).

4. Jacqueline Guéron, "Linguistic Patterns in Children's Verse," *The Great Excluded, II*, Storrs: Univ. of Connecticut Press, 1973.

5. Synalepha is a metrical convention which allows adjacent vowels (and certain other elements) to be counted as a single syllable. This does not mean that the vowels will be pronounced as one syllable. Synalepha is a convention by which surface syllables may correspond to positions in the abstract pattern. It is a purely metrical device and does not entail any elision or slurring in the spoken verse.

6. The syllabic *n* is the result of an optional rule which here dropped the initial vowel *i* before *n* in the prefix. Thus *nigrappa* is a reduced form of *ingrappa*. Another example of syllabic *n* is discussed in footnote 13. Examples of syllabic *n* are seen in examples (24) and (26).

7. In (4) and throughout this paper diphthongs are treated as one syllable. In example (8) in line 3, *pannisei* is treated as though it has four syllables. However, the third and fourth syllables are shown to exhibit synalepha. Thus, if one were to argue that *pannisei* has only three syllables (the last being a diphthong), the same metrical analysis proposed for (8) would still apply.

See the discussion in the text following (26) and (27) as well as footnote 14 for further remarks about the handling of diphthongs.

8. John Ross, *Constraints on Variables in Syntax*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, M.I.T., 1967.

9. Notice that the half-line break is a metrical abstraction which need not (and in (21) does not) correspond to a surface caesura. For further examples or half lines without corresponding caesuras, see (26) and the discussion following it.

10. Perhaps at a level before truncation rules in the phonology take place this *w* is filled by an unstressed syllable. For example, *gnocion* (line 3), *orazion* (line 4), *dis* (line 5), and *Paradis* (line 6) may have underlying *gnocioni*, *orazioni*, *dise*, and *Paradise/o*. At this pre-truncation stage, *Bambin* (line 3) would have an underlying *Bambino*, making the first half line of line 3 have an extra final *w* position (just as line 2 does).

It would be interesting if we could argue that all *w* positions must be realized by one syllable at some point in the derivation, but in surface a *w* may correspond to zero syllables. However, an examination of examples (26) (line 2), (32) (lines 1 and 6), and (37) (lines 4 and 5) shows that such a proposal must fail.

11. Halle and Kiparsky, "On the Theoretical Bases of Metrical Verse," op. cit.;

Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Poetic Closure*, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1968.

12. Note that the pattern of stressed (/) and unstressed (\) syllables to the right of each line in (32) is the pattern one *hears* and not the pattern produced by the linguistic rules of stress. Thus this pattern is *not* surface II, in contrast to (4) above, where the pattern to the right of each line *is* for surface II.

13. In the first line of (35) we have syllabic *n* in *'hcan*. The syllabic *n* here is the result of the same rule discussed in footnote 6.

14. Were we to count the diphthong in *riamo* as two syllables, we would have a perfect trochaic half line as the first half line of (35).