B. Elan Dresher & Nila Friedberg (eds.), *Formal approaches to poetry: recent developments in metrics* (Phonology and Phonetics **11**). Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2006. Pp. viii + 314.

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This book is in part the product of a colloquium held in 1999 in Toronto. It brings together two traditions: American generative linguistics, including Optimality Theoretical approaches, and the Russian school, which incorporates both quantitative and generative traditions. Some of the articles in this collection, such as Nila Friedberg's 'Constraints, complexity, and the grammar of poetry' and Daniel Currie Hall's 'Modelling the linguistics-poetics interface', demonstrate the benefits of synthesising these two traditions into a combined approach. Given the book's theoretical roots, it is not surprising that most of the papers focus on Russian and English.

Formal approaches to poetry opens with Paul Kiparsky's article, 'A modular metrics for folk verse'. Contra Hayes & MacEachern (1998), Kiparsky proposes various arguments for the independence of metrical structure from musical structure in the English ballad. It is worth pointing out that this result is in accordance with the conclusions of recent work carried out on other corpora (see Banti & Giannattasio 1996; Dell & Elmedlaoui 2005). Using a modified version of Optimality Theory, the article presents a model of the quatrain in the English ballad that, while using fewer constraints than Hayes & MacEachern, succeeds in predicting the frequencies of forms and avoids overgeneration.

Marina Tarlinskaja's article, 'What is "metricality"? English iambic pentameter', claims that on the textual level, the metricality of an iambic set can be established by statistical data concerning the accentuation of even and odd positions, and relates these data to judgements of the period concerning what constitutes a 'good verse' (53). At the level of the line, metricality is claimed to rest upon a historical knowledge of the types of verses commonly used and the exceptions that are found. Considering evidence from numerous languages (French, German, Russian, Italian, Czech and English), the author proposes to explain the known forms of iambic meter on the basis of metrical, syntactic, lexical, semantic, historical and cultural criteria. With respect to semantic criteria, the article concentrates principally on English iambic pentameter. The article's main merit lies in its attempt to characterise metricality in all its complexity, without theoretical simplification.

Next is Nigel Fabb's article, 'Generated metrical form and implied metrical form', which revisits some of the issues addressed in Fabb (2002).

Fabb demonstrates that the rules of metrics can be explained in a generative theory (Bracketed Grid Theory), while metrical tendencies can be captured in a pragmatic account inspired by Sperber & Wilson's (1986) Relevance Theory. A difficulty that arises is that even what is presented as 'rules' is not without exceptions. Thus, Fabb tells us that '[i]n English iambic pentameter, a stressed syllable MUST be in an even-numbered position or first position if it is in a polysyllable' (77). However, several pages earlier, Tarlinskaja (57f.) points out that there are exceptions to this rule. The difference between 'constitutive' and 'implied' forms is thus not as clear as it might appear at first glance. Another problematic case is that of the sonnet, which Fabb classifies among the 'implied forms'. However, the sonnet carries with it a baggage of rules and tendencies (as does meter), and it simply cannot be said that the 'rules' underlying the sonnet are more difficult to describe than those that make up a metrical system (cf. Aroui, to appear).

In 'Anapests and anti-resolution', Michael Hammond analyses 447 anapestic-iambic lines by Robert Service, consisting of seven strong (S) positions with a caesura after the fourth strong position. The lines examined form the following pattern:

(1)   (W)(W)S (W)WS (W)WS (W)WS (W)(W)S (W)WS (W)WS

Under certain conditions, an accented monosyllable can appear in a weak (W) position. Hammond provides a lucid description and analysis of these conditions, using an Optimality Theoretic framework with clearly defined constraints.

Kristin Hanson devotes her article to 'Shakespeare's lyric and dramatic metrical styles'. On the basis of a comparison between the *Sonnets* and *Richard II*, the author shows that Shakespeare's lyric iambic pentameter is clearly distinct from his dramatic iambic pentameter. In the *Sonnets*, '[e]ach metrical position contains a single syllable' (115) and '[n]o weak metrical position contains a syllable which is strong within a lexical word' (114). Moreover, the sonnets 'have extrametrical syllables only line-finally[,] … no catalexis, and no lines which suggest "pre-metrical" syllables' (128). In Shakespeare's plays, by contrast, iambic pentameter is looser and accepts additional structures, as described by the author.

Gilbert Youmans' contribution, 'Longfellow's long line', deals with the dactylic hexameter of two narrative poems by Longfellow. The author makes use of prototype theory. Typically, Longfellow's dactylic hexameter is accompanied by medial caesura; and accented syllables 'are separated by one or two unstressed syllables' (137). The final foot is binary, usually a trochee, while the fifth foot is nearly always dactylic. Longfellow has a preference 'for early ternary feet' (142) and tends to reduce foot boundaries towards the middle of his lines, which 'prevents his hexameters from becoming too monotonously regular' (144). A number of metrical variants can be explained with reference to the meaning of the verse.

In 'The rise of the quatrain in Germanic: musicality and word based rhythm in eddic meters', Kristján Árnason proposes an analysis of the Icelandic meter *fornyrðislag*. Árnason analyses the *fornyrðislag* as a word-based meter, i.e. one that counts word accents (according to Hanson & Kiparsky's 1996 typology). The four word accents may not be 'subordinated to other word stresses on the level of phrasal phonology' (157). In compounds, the two accents may correspond to two strong positions and the accented syllables may eventually alliterate, which shows that 'compound stress was a phrase level phenomenon in Old Icelandic' (161). Understanding these typological properties makes a list of metrical variants superfluous.

In 'The function of pauses in metrical studies: acoustic evidence from Japanese verse', Deborah Cole & Miyuki Miyashita aim to demonstrate that the lines that make up the Japanese classical verse form *tanka* are uniformly composed of eight moras each, contrary to the tradition that sees the *tanka* as a set of five lines made up respectively of 5, 7, 5, 7 and 7 moras. The key argument is that line-final pauses 'function as additional moras in the meter to regulate line length' (173). This study leaves a number of questions unanswered. It is thus not clear why silent moras are always line-final, or why the schema of uttered moras is (almost) always 5–7–5–7–7. A possible answer to these questions might be that there are no silent moras, but rather that there are two metrical structures superimposed on each other: a mora-based prosodic metrical structure and an isochronic metrical structure. Similar mixed structures are attested in other traditions. Pauses would then have significance only in isochronic metrical structures.

Colleen M. Fitzgerald's article, 'Iambic meter in Somali', deals with the *masafo* genre of Somali poetry. Traditionally, *masafo* is seen as an alliterative meter, which is made up of half-lines composed of nine moras each. However, the number of moras is subject to considerable variation. Fitzgerald claims that the half-lines of *masafo* are in fact made up of four iambs each. Her analysis succeeds in accounting for 84% of the half-lines in the corpus. Nevertheless, Fitzgerald's results remain disputable for two reasons. First, Fitzgerald departs from other studies in analysing the diphthongs of Somali as systematically bimoraic (205, fn. 1). Second, Fitzgerald, following other Somali specialists, calculates the weight of the mora only on vowel length, without taking codas into account (194). It is true that the initial half-lines of *masafo* tend to be longer than final half-lines (196), a regularity which provides support for Fitzgerald's proposed analysis of the mora. However, it is to be noted that Fitzgerald's calculation of the weight of the mora is not mainstream, and it would have been interesting to see also an analysis based on a more conventional calculation of the mora.

Nila Friedberg's article, 'Constraints, complexity, and the grammar of poetry', deals with Russian iambic tetrameter. On the basis of statistical

data, Friedberg constructs a model in which constraints are of greater or lesser strength. This model permits an explanation of the preferences of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian poets, particularly with respect to the position of unaccented syllables inserted into strong positions. Some of the proposed constraints appear to be used by all the poets in the corpus, whereas others are used only by some.

The following article, 'Modelling the linguistics-poetics interface', by Daniel Currie Hall, is a particularly interesting piece of work, which focuses once more on Russian iambic tetrameter. The author proposes to extend Friedberg's work to a 'metrical source-filter model' of rhythmic patterns. In this model, the metrical grammar of ranked Optimality Theory constraints has its source in the natural prosody of Russian, and its output is the actual rhythm of lines of poetry. Hall's model succeeds in explaining why we most commonly find the structure WSWSWWWS, even though metrical grammar has a preference for WSWSWSWS rhythm.

Mihhail Lotman's article, 'Generative metrics and the comparative approach: Russian iambic tetrameter in a comparative perspective', shows how a description of Russian iambic tetrameter is possible in a theoretical framework that facilitates cross-linguistic comparison. Lotman's framework is characterised by metrical rules, correspondence rules and prosodic rules. Comparisons are established with Greek iambic dimeter and the iambs of English, German, Estonian and Finnish.

Pushkin's 'Onegin stanza' is commonly presented as a rhymed set (ababccddeffegg), where the rhyming subgroups do not always coincide with syntactic groups. In 'Structural dynamics in the Onegin stanza', Barry Scherr attempts to account for this tension by proposing a hierarchised set of five constraints. His approach is an innovation in the explicit and quantitative study of the stanza.

The book closes with Maria-Kristiina Lotman's article 'The ancient iambic trimeter: a disbalanced harmony', which studies Greek iambic trimeter by era and genre. The theoretical framework is identical to that used in Mihhail Lotman's contribution. It is argued in this article that the rules that make up meter become 'more liberal' (294) over time, even more so in comedy than in tragedy. In the Hellenistic period, however, meter once again became more strict. Lotman's article also examines Roman trimeter. Unfortunately, the rules are formulated a posteriori, that is, on the basis of uncritical reliance on data and results of the metrical tradition. In the final analysis, this study appears more descriptive than explanatory in nature.

Formal approaches to poetry is a book that, following Kiparsky & Youmans (1989), can be expected to become a classic in its field. It will be of primary interest to metrists, but will also interest phonologists, musicologists, literary analysts, folklorists and advanced-level students.

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Adele E. Goldberg, *Constructions at work: the nature of generalization in language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. vii + 280.

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This book presents Adele Goldberg's latest work on developing what she has come to call 'Cognitive Construction Grammar', and the emphasis is two-fold: the book it addresses psycholinguistic issues concerning constructions, including acquisition, and it tackles the problem of capturing generalizations in a constructional theory. This second point is highlighted by the subtitle of the book, and to understand why this is an issue of special significance for an approach like Construction Grammar, a little historical background is necessary.

Within twentieth-century linguistics in the United States, there was a struggle between the demands of description and the desire to capture generalizations about language, which, if one wished to personify the clash, could be characterized in terms of Boas vs. Chomsky. Boas (1911), reacting against the use of Latin-based grammatical categories and constructs in the description of Native American languages, proposed a descriptive framework which would allow the analyst to describe each language in its own terms, and which would avoid the imposition of inappropriate categories

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