

# Rhyme and Rhyming in Verbal Art and Song

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## Abstracts for the conference

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## **Why is rhyme different from alliteration? A psychological and aesthetic account**

Nigel Fabb (Professor of Literary Linguistics, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow)

In ordinary English, alliteration is much more frequent than rhyme in conventionalized phrases (Lindstromberg and Boers 2008); in contrast, in modern English metrical poetry, rhyme differs from alliteration in being both systematic and frequent. In the world's poetic traditions, systematic alliteration tends not to be located relative to specific locations in the line (though it can depend on linguistic characteristics of the line), while systematic rhyme tends to be located at the the line-end or some specific position (as in hook-rhyme). Where alliteration is line-internal it involves nearby words and in wherever it is systematic it also avoids ABAB intersecting patterns, while rhyme involves words which are generally some distance apart and can include quite complex intersecting patterns (Fabb 1999). This all suggests that Leech (1969) was wrong to see alliteration and rhyme as equivalent options for sound patterning; instead different principles seem to underlie their operations. To understand these principles I turn to psychological experiments on rhyme and alliteration (in ordinary language, as well as in poetry).

It is well established that a word has two contrary effects on retrieving from memory another word which sounds like it: the similarity enhances accessibility, but via the 'Phonological Similarity Effect' or PSE it also blocks accessibility. For alliteration the PSE is weaker than for rhyme (Praamstra et al 1994), which may explain why alliteration is more common than rhyme in ordinary English, as it works better as a memory cue. However, for rhyme, the PSE can be removed by attending to the fact of rhyme (Rubin 1995), and this explains why rhyme needs to be located in predictable places such as the end of the line in order to allow focused attention on the rhyme, thereby removing the PSE and improving its role in predicting words (and perhaps helping recall the poem).

In the middle part of the presentation, I discuss the fact that rhyme allows for a greater range of variation relative to the schema than does alliteration. Rhymes can be mismatched (sometimes involving surface differences which relate to deep similarities, as shown by Kiparsky, Malone, etc.) and in some traditions must be mismatched (as Zwicky has shown). Alliteration may allow less mismatch because alliteration is the only clue that words are paired, while rhyme can rely also on structural position as well as the rhyme itself. (Relevant to this is that Knoop, Blohn, Kraxenberger and Menninghaus (in prep) provide experimental evidence that partial rhymes are judged better if in a structurally predictable position compared to ordinary prose.) The possibility of allowing more mismatch in rhyme in turn might explain why rhyme is more widely favoured than alliteration, precisely because it allows a greater degree of variety relative to the schema; intermediate levels of variation appear to produce an aesthetic effect (as Berlyne, following Wundt, argued).

I conclude the presentation by discussing how rhyme's demand for attention, repeating at a regular interval, functions to produce an aesthetic effect. This can be seen in the context of a general aesthetic of attending to the language of the text (Jakobson's poetic function), but offering a repeated peaking of attention, often at line-ends. I discuss this in the context of a general theory of aesthetic experience as the manipulation of expectation (drawing on Huron 2006 account of music).

## **Multiple origins? Some observations on the medieval Latin rhyme**

Seppo Heikkinen (Ph.D., Title of docent, Latin Language and Roman Literature, University of Helsinki)

The very etymology of the word ‘rhyme’ betrays the contexts in which rhyme in West European verse evolved, as the word itself was adopted in the Middle Ages from of the Latin *rhythmus*, by way of such intermediate forms as *ridmus*, *riddimus*, *rimus* etc. In other words, at least by the High Middle Ages, end rhyme was conceived as a quintessential, if not defining feature of rhythmic (or non-quantitative) poetry. This may strike us as surprising, as rhythmic (as opposed to the earlier metric) verse is generally defined as a form that only considers the number of syllables and, possibly, word accent, and its earliest definitions (e.g. the Venerable Bede) only discuss the number of syllables. At the same time, a substantial amount of metric verse with regular rhyme (e.g. the so-called leonine hexameter) was composed throughout the Middle Ages.

The origins of end rhyme in medieval Latin verse, together with its evolution towards increasing regularity, have been a matter of some debate: it has variously been attributed to Semitic or Celtic influences as well as certain mechanisms inherent in the Latin language and its verse technique. The problem of what constitutes rhyme is also problematic. Early examples of rhyme in, e.g., the hymns of Caelius Sedulius generally border on mild assonance and are a far cry from the elaborate and regular disyllabic end rhyme of the High Middle Ages. At the same time, however, the manneristic use of the hyperbaton (the separation of an adjective from its noun head) in Late Latin verse frequently produced a rhyme-like effect through its placement of identical case endings. Whether this was the desired outcome or merely a side effect is open to debate, but at least by the eighth century, such grammarians as Bede acknowledged the association of word order and end rhyme. This paper discusses the various traditions on which the medieval Latin rhyme drew in producing the form as it is known to us from High Medieval Latin and later vernacular verse.

## **Rhyme in Arabic Oral Poetry**

Dwight Reynolds (Professor of Arabic Language & Literature, University of California)

Rhyme has a unique place in the Arabic poetic tradition. Ancient Arabs considered mono-end-rhyme—in which the end of each verse of a poem rhymed on the same syllable for the duration of the poem—to be obligatory, and testimony to this practice is found in rock inscriptions dating as far back as the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE. The most basic definition of poetry in early Arab culture was that poetry was metrical, rhymed speech; anything that was not composed in meter and did not possess end-rhyme was, quite simply, not poetry. Since end-rhyme in later periods appears in many other languages, including European languages, it is worth reminding ourselves that none of the literary traditions of the ancient Middle East or South Asia used obligatory end-rhyme: it was not used in Sanskrit, Biblical Hebrew, Sumerian, Babylonian, Akkadian, Ancient Egyptian, Ancient Persian, Aramaic, Greek or Latin. Arabs do not seem to have invented end-rhyme (it has been used as an occasional ornamentation in several other languages, notably Latin, the way poets also use assonance or alliteration), but they were almost certainly the first culture in their part of the world to associate rhyme so strongly with poetry, and vice versa.

This presentation will examine the role of rhyme in three periods in the history of Arabic poetry: (1) ancient Arabic oral poetry and the formation of the Arabic literary tradition; (2) the “rhyme

revolution” that occurred in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries in medieval Muslim Spain (al-Andalus) and its possible connections with the sudden appearance of rhymed vernacular poetry in medieval Europe; and finally, (3) the function of rhyme in performances of the enormous Arabic oral epic poem, *Sīrat Banī Hilāl*, the epic of the Banī Hilāl Bedouin tribe. The professional, hereditary poets who sing this epic in modern Egypt, accompanying themselves on the two-string *rabāb* (spike fiddle), use techniques of memorization and composition similar to the Serbo-Croatian epic singers famously studied by Milman Parry and Albert Lord. Rhyme, however, occupies a remarkably different place in the Arabic epic tradition.

## Session 1:

### End rhyme in Aboriginal sung poetry

Myfany Turpin (Dr, University of Sydney)

Sound patterning such as end rhyme is common in poetry and song from across the world, yet very little is known about this in the sung poetry of Aboriginal Australia. Rhyme is said to be absent in some regions of Aboriginal Australia (Toner 2001:145); however, it is pervasive in central Australia, especially in the widespread women’s sung poetry known as *awelye* (Barwick & Turpin 2016). In this genre sound patterning operates at the level of the verse. A verse is a quatrain consisting of two lines, each of which is repeated (AABB). The rhyme scheme is enclosed rhyme (abba) and thus the pattern of line repetition plus end-rhyme can be diagrammed A<sub>a</sub>A<sub>b</sub>B<sub>b</sub>B<sub>a</sub>.

The rhyme pattern involves only the final vowel of a line, a position that never has a coda and which is always set to a long note. The pattern is made up of two vowels which are always [a] and the diphthong [æɪ], written *ay*. This is exemplified below a verse of the Kaytetye women’s song from Arnerre (see Turpin & Ross 2004):

Line		end-rhyme	author’s translation
A <sub>a</sub>	Arrenye arrenye arrenya	...Ca	<i>Yonder, yonder yonder</i>
A <sub>b</sub>	Arrenye arrenye arrenyay	...Cay	
B <sub>b</sub>	Arlangkwe errwenye arrernay	...Cay	<i>Where the bloodwood blossoms</i>
B <sub>a</sub>	Arlangkwe errwenye arrerna	...Ca	

Unlike most rhyme where words are selected for their vowel quality, in central Australian sung poetry, the rhyme is imposed, overriding the quality of the vowel in the speech word. Thus, in the example above the word *arrenye* ‘yonder’ becomes *arrenya* and *arrenyay*.

In Arandic languages such as Kaytetye, all words end in a non-contrastive vowel that can have various realizations, including omission altogether, without any change in meaning (Breen & Pensalfini 1999, Turpin et al 2014:55). The imposition of rhyme on a position that is non-phonemic in the language could be considered evidence of Russom’s view that metrical positions are abstracted from syllables (2018:8). That is, the rhyme schema of two imposed vowels derives from its multiple possible realisations in the language. However, Russom also argues that rhyme is

associated with linguistic prominence (2018:10), yet the word-final vowel in these languages is a position of low linguistic prominence.

This paper proposes that rhyme plays a role in maintaining the formal poetic units. In performance, a song can commence with any line and the verse is repeated without a break until the end of the much longer melody (Barwick 1989). Given this style of delivery, end rhyme may assist in keeping track of line boundaries, distinguishing them from hemistich or couplet boundaries. The fact that end rhyme is associated with AABB verse structure but is absent from Aboriginal genres that have a couplet structure (ABABAB etc) adds weight to this proposition. End rhyme may also assist in creating the favoured unison singing and the use of the diphthong may help maintain the pitch on long notes.

Finally, end rhyme may be associated with the central Australian aesthetic that the musicologist Cath Ellis calls ‘timelessness’ (1985:109–111,) by adding to the many units of interlocking structures (Turpin & Fabb 2017). Timelessness is also a feature of the law that underpins Aboriginal society and all that has created it, existing simultaneously in the past, present and future—which Stanner translates as the ‘everywhen’ (1953:24).

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## **Bordering the Rhyming World: Poetic devices in the Siberian Eastern Khanty oral sung tradition**

Jarkko Niemi (University Lecturer, Title of docent, Music Studies, Tampere University)

The traditional sung performances in the oral cultures of the indigenous peoples of the Siberian North abound with distinctive styles, which have been described and analyzed both in terms of sound and linguistic expression. Here, sound expression refers especially to the ethnomusicologically conceptualized realm of culturally organized sound that we usually label as “music”. By linguistic expression is referred here to the particular metrical organization of language, used and observable only in the moment of the sung performance.

This paper presents some of the most striking preliminary results of an analysis of a collection of narrative and ritual songs of the Eastern linguistic group of the Ob-Ugrian Khanty of western Siberia. This analysis was made in close cooperation with Lyudmila Kayukova, one of the most prominent specialists of the dialect and culture of the Yugan group of the eastern Khanty. The materials result mainly from our earlier fieldwork (of 1992) among the Tromyugan and Yugan Khanty performers. The preparation of the data (detailed transcription of the sung language and sound structures) was made during two intensive working periods (2011, 2013).

The preliminary results of the analysis of this data refer to a delicate and rich depository of poetic devices, used by the analyzed eastern Khanty performers. We shall approach the main theme of this conference by negation: the eastern Khanty oral traditions are typical representatives of the northern indigenous cultures in the sense that the particular poetic device of rhyme is totally absent. However, as our analysis has a flavour of structuralistic orientation in that we have faith on our possibilities of making judgments concerning cultural texts and their organization on the basis of recognition of recurring and syntactical organization of the parallel structures of sound (music) and language in performance, our preliminary results point to the direction of a rich cultural depository of other poetic devices that are in use in the eastern Khanty local cultures. These devices transform the spoken language into metrically organized forms, which emphasize repetition and similitude, and they interact both with the parallel organization of musical structures, also resulting as performance-specific semantic forms of address.

In the 2020s, these forms of local cultures are mastered by the last few performers. In part, they have to compete in the pressures of the minority language situation, but also in the pressure of other forms of the surrounding dominant culture.

## **The (N)Ever Changing Rhyme, or Rhyme Modifications in Loan Formulae**

Yelena Sesselja Helgadóttir (University of Iceland)

Rhyme is of critical importance for metrical organization of post-medieval Icelandic *þulur* (versified lists of names, sequences of short motifs and/or longer narrative episodes; hereafter *PMP*), albeit their metrical form is very irregular and rhyme is seldom used there systematically (as well as other metrical devices; cf. YSH 2016). Besides, rhyme is the key metrical element of a large part of

formulae in PMP, both in those that seem to have originated in PMP and in loan formulae. This is both true for those loan formulae that apparently were borrowed from other Icelandic folklore (so called ‘domestic’ loan formulae, hereafter *DLF*) and for those that came over the Atlantic Ocean (so called ‘transatlantic’ loan formulae, hereafter *TLF*); and among TLF, both for those from continental Scandinavian ballads and those from post-medieval continental Scandinavian poetry kindred to PMP, known as ‘rhymes’ or ‘rigmaroles’ (*rim*, *remser/ramsor*; cf. YSH 2016).

Domestic loan formulae were discussed in my paper at the Versification conference 2016 (cf. YSH [forthcoming]), which analysed the changes that these formulae undergo on the way from their source genres into PMP and scrutinized some mechanisms of formulae adaptation to a new context and metrical environment. Similar analysis was carried out on transatlantic loan formulae, in particular those that migrated into PMP from continental Scandinavian rigmaroles, in my paper at the Formula conference 2017 (cf. YSH 2017); the results were compared with those from the analysis of DLF. Both papers show that the changes in rhyme in migrating formulae differ from changes that other metrical devices in PMP undergo. Rhyme only changes in ca. half of those formulae that change metrically on the way from source genres to PMP, while alliteration changes e.g. considerably more often (in  $\frac{2}{3}$  of DLF and  $\frac{4}{5}$  of TLF that change metrically on their way to PMP). Semantically motivated variation often affects alliteration and beat in loan formulae – but not rhyme. One of the few differences between domestic and transatlantic loan formulae is the way to compensate for a rhyme lost in migration: with alliteration in DLF (the most specific metrical device for Icelandic poetry) but with another rhyme in TLF.

For this paper, I propose analysis of the remaining group of transatlantic loan formulae in PMP which has not received much attention in previous work: those of mixed ballad and continental Scandinavian rigmarole origins. Virtually all of the formulae common for ballads, rigmaroles and PMP are very general in their content and wording, open both to additional rhymes and to different contexts – and they heavily rely on rhyme. Many rhyming words involved differ slightly between Scandinavian languages, which results in an array of modifications in the formulae in question. The findings contribute to the discussion on the extent of free movement of formulaic diction between poetic systems and on interrelation and balance of rhyme vs. alliteration, these two powerful elements of Icelandic poetic form, in *pulur* and potentially in Icelandic poetry in general.

YSH 2017: Yelena Sesselja Helgadóttir. “Formulae across the North Atlantic (from Continental Scandinavia to Iceland)”. In *FORMULA: Units of Speech, ‘Words’ of Verbal Art. Working Papers of the Seminar-Workshop 17th–19th May 2017, Helsinki, Finland*. Ed. Frog. Folkloristiikan toimite 23. Helsinki: Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki. Pp. 135–154.  
YSH [forthcoming] = Yelena Sesselja Helgadóttir [forthcoming]. “Migration of Poetic Formulae: Icelandic Post-Medieval *pulur*”. In *Versification: Metrics in Practice*. Ed. Frog, Satu Gröthel, Kati Kallio & Jarkko Niemi. FF Communications. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

YSH 2016: Yelena Sesselja Helgadóttir. Formulaic Language in Minimal Metrical Requirements: The Case of Post-Medieval Icelandic *pulur*. *The Ecology of Metre*. A special issue of *RMN Newsletter* (11). Eds. Ilya Sverdlov and Frog. Helsinki, University of Helsinki, 2016. Pp. 49–61.

## Session 2:

### ***Hop on the Bus, Gus: Rhyme in Isolated Entanglement***

Frog (University of Helsinki)

*Metrical entanglement* describes a conventional linkage of language to metrical templates or poetic principles for organizing language into units of utterance. The phenomenon (without using the term) has been observed from countless angles in a wide range of poetic traditions. However, relationships between poetic principles and the crystallization of phraseology or its variation generally remain discussed more or less exclusively where the poetic principles are integrated in a poetic form of discourse being used. In this paper, I introduce the term *isolated entanglement* to poetic principles that organize units of utterance and condition variation in those units independent of the organizing principles of the broader discourse in which they occur. Focus is on isolated entanglement of rhyme, although the phenomenon is also found with alliteration, parallelism and metrical form. Isolated entanglement of rhyme is illustrated in poetry organized according to different principles, such as alliteration or parallelism. For example, Kalevala-meter poetry is characterized by rhyme, but a verse like *Iki Tiera, Lieran poika* ‘ancient Tiera, son of Liera’ exhibits rhyme rather than alliteration. The formulaic verse is well attested, and varies either by maintaining the rhyme or by exchanging the rhyme for alliteration. Rhyme also structures numerous sayings and idioms commonly used in unmetered discourse, and through which variations can be observed, as with *Hop on the Bus, Gus*, and which can also be considered in relation to what Gail Jefferson (1996) describes as “the poetics of ordinary talk”. Through these examples, the operation of poetic principles independent of poetic form will be illustrated, offering insights into different types of variation both within poetry and outside of it.

## **EFFECTS OF END RHYME ON READING FLUENCY AND MEMORY**

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Poetic end rhyme is well described in most of its formal aspects. Its psychological effects, however, remain comparatively poorly understood.

For instance, if rhyme occurs in the context of isolated (written) sentences, it causes interference and leads to local processing difficulty (e.g., Frisson et al., 2014). If it occurs in verse, however, it seems to consistently facilitate word processing in both reading and listening (*Chinese*: Chen et al., 2016; *Dutch*: Hoorn, 1996; *German*: Menninghaus et al., 2014; Obermeier et al., 2016). The exact source and nature of this discrepancy remains understudied. Moreover, the mnemonic effect of rhyme is well-established, and there is research into memory for rhyme in verse (e.g., Rubin, 1995). But whether and how memory effects of end rhyme are dependent on stanza position (or other factors) has not been experimentally examined. Here, we report two experiments (n=40 each) in which participants read selected and modified quatrains (ABAB, ABCD, AABB, ABCD) of German lyrical poetry.

To study how end rhyme affects reading fluency, we used self-paced reading—a classic and simple method to study language comprehension as it happens (Just, Carpenter & Woolley, 1982). Readers navigated through the text in a word-by-word manner (=non-cumulative moving window), which yields a quantitative measure of local processing ease (reading times per word). This allowed



us to test whether and how word processing is affected by rhyme (facilitated/unaffected/impaired). We further employed a probe recognition task to study effects of rhyme on memory for words in line-final position. After each quatrain participants were presented with a word and indicated per button press whether it had occurred in the quatrain or not. In addition to probing the rhyme words, we included an equal number of rhyming foils to reduce strategic rhyme bias (e.g., Norris, McQueen & Cutler, 2002).

We observed a facilitation effect of *stanza-final* end rhyme (ABCD/AABB) on reading fluency for identical words ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of *stanza-internal* end rhyme (ABCB/ABAB) showed no effect of rhyme on reading times for identical words (Exp. 1;  $p > .1$ ), and a detrimental effect when lexemes differed (Exp. 2;  $p < .001$ ). This pattern suggests that rhyme increases reading fluency only when it is predictable, i.e., inferable from prior input.

The probe task results showed asymmetric effects of the rhyming words on one another. The first word of a rhyme pair strengthened the representation of the second one, leading to more accurate recognition ( $p = .029$ ) without affecting foil rejection ( $p = .532$ ). The accessibility of the first rhyme word, however, was impaired by the occurrence of the second one which lead to interference in foil rejection ( $p = .017$ ) without affecting recognition accuracy ( $p = .654$ ).

Taken together, our results are compatible with the notion of poetic end rhyme as an asymmetric processing relation between two (or more) lexemes, in which the first rhyme word serves as a stepping stone for the second (and any that may follow).

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## **Audibility of Rhyme: Pattern, Distance and Degrees**

Catherine Addison (Professor, Department of English, University of Zululand, South Africa)

When we talk of rhyme we usually describe it in terms of a repetition of the last auditory part of an earlier-occurring word, which marks a prosodic and, often, semantic link or boundary. We normally consider only one repetition, but of course a rhyme may recur as many times as the specific language and the ingenuity of an individual poet allow. The more often a rhyme is repeated and the shorter the interval between repetitions, the more conscious will a listener be made of the rhyme. For an audience, the extreme condition of rhyme is repeated monorhyme (one rhyming syllable without variation) in a series of short lines. Prolonged monorhyme can have an overwhelming—almost hypnotic—effect on a listener. Especially when the intervals between rhymes are short, the mesmerizing impact of sound repetition dominates over semantic effects in the reception of monorhyme verse. In English, this feature has been exploited at least since the tenth-century Anglo-Saxon “Rhyming Poem” in the Exeter Book, through a variety of maverick written poems at various stages of Modern English, to the rap poetry and songs of our own time. However, extended monorhyme is not the norm in rhyming verse. An individual rhyme usually appears only once or twice before it is replaced by a different rhyme. In a great deal of traditional and contemporary poetry and song, two or more rhymes, sustained only for the stretch of one stanza, interplay in patterns of alternation or enclosure that are repeated with new rhymes in the next stanza. These patterns help a listener or reader to “hear” all the rhymes, especially once the pattern has been learned by sustained exposure. But if there is no repeated pattern or if the rhymes occur relatively far apart, an audience may have considerable difficulty hearing rhyme—or at least being conscious of hearing it. What this paper will do is to examine some of the conditions for audibility of rhyme, and also the degrees of audibility. The texts to be examined will mostly be written poems; but, since I am not interested in what some commentators call “eye rhyme,” I regard rhyme as a feature of sound. The eye may help a reader recognize rhymes, but, to realize them fully, even a silent reader must “hear” the syllabic echo in her or his “mind’s ear.” Thus, the oral and the written are not categorically different from one another in respect to rhyme.

## **SESSION 3:**

### **Rhyme and cadence: Perspectives from medieval musical traditions**

Warwick Edwards (Dr, University of Glasgow)

A question that’s fascinated me off and on in my research on the rhythms of sung words in medieval times runs as follows: For how long does the beginning of a musical phrase bearing a unit of verse function as point of orientation in a singer’s mind before the end-point begins to exert a counterbalancing magnetic attraction? With the subjects no longer around to interrogate or to participate in neurological experiment a clear answer is unlikely to be forthcoming. But given the

focus of the present conference, and its interdisciplinary nature, I am minded to take the opportunity to address three related issues:

1. The extent to which the phenomenon of rhyme bears on the above more general question;
2. Whether, in turn, the manner in which Latin and vernacular verses are sung in the western Middle Ages can illuminate the function of rhyme;
3. And while on that tack, whether musical ‘cadence’ – to the extent it can be readily conceptualised in medieval song – can be regarded in any sense as rhyme’s musical counterpart.

I approach these questions principally by examining how verses and their melodies are set out in medieval musical notation and how contemporaries perceive the role of rhyme in sung verse. However, since I contend that the rhythms of sung verses at this time are conditioned above all by mnemonic considerations foreign to the culture of reading and writing to which most of us are now attuned, I also refer to rhythm and rhyme in traditional song cultures of the recent past that are entirely notationless, drawing particularly on recordings of singers from eastern Europe.

Taken as a whole, the evidence – tentative though it is – leads me to the conclusion that the links between rhyme and cadence in western medieval song are equivocal at best.

## **Studying Rhyming in Italian, English and German in Handel’s Opera Giulio Cesare**

Marjo Suominen (MA, PhD Candidate, University of Helsinki)

Handel’s opera Giulio Cesare in Egitto was originally written in Italian, but it has been later performed also in German, and English. It was first performed at the King’s Theatre, Haymarket, London 20<sup>th</sup> February 1724. It is a drama containing with strong ironic elements. Giulio Cesare was extremely successful due its associations with famous historical characters, and Shakespearean drama, added with connotations to British history. In Giulio Cesare there is affect, ie. emotive technique utilized, both musically and textually. One of the ways is to emphasize the meaningful words by rhyming.

The opera is an Italian art form having originated from poetry and antiquity emphasizing the importance of words and meaning. Giulio Cesare’s arias, the sung virtuosic solo numbers are set in a da capo model as tripartite, A-B-A form. The first part of the aria is repeated in the end as decorated by the soloist singer, and the middle part is varying, contrasting by its texture, rhythm, musical key, and mood, so that the listener’s attention is being caught by “shading” and contemplating the subject, bringing forth the emotional content of the text. There is an intention to further the message via an emotion encouraged to be reflected by the listener via verse of the poetical line of the text, so that the meaningful words are being emphasized by endings with a sound that corresponds to another. In Giulio Cesare the affectual tensions have been marked for instance by rhyming endings via the affect of positive love by hopefulness in Cleopatra’s aria non disperar in Act I, scene 5 playfully and cleverly crisscrossing with the words as rhyme pairs as follows: chi sà (who knows)& beltà (beauty), l’avrai (you will have)& troverai (you will find), amor (love)& cor (heart), etc.. In the English version of the aria the tone, shade of the meaning slightly changes as the emphasized words change according to their rhyming words into: knows & rose, by & eye, heart & smart. The German version takes the meaning more into the future and

uncertainties by emphasizing the words in between: weißt (knows) & lacht (laughs) [+hart (hard/strong)], Thron (throne) & schon (already), noch (yet) & doch (but).

The rhymes by different languages show in Giulio Cesare's case that via its affectual structure there always remains the basic ideas of affect. It is prevailing in each aria, character or situation of the work. Regardless of the language, there is the basic meaning left in the intermediary duality between the main themes, the affects of love and revenge, which are set as a bipartite counterforcible / reactional embodiments created by the characters of the opera. These characterisations affects can be described by the Tarastian existential semiotic (Soi/Moi) modality model, which owes to Plato's theory of atomism (429-347BCE), Aristotle's four elements theory (384-322BCE), and Greimassian structural modalities model (1992), which in turn concerned with personality, character, morals etc.

### **“Let us sing, Let us sing, Let us sing to the Lord”:**

### **Rhyme, sound and rhythm as performative elements in 18<sup>th</sup> century hymn poetry**

Eeva-Liisa Bastman (PhD, Finnish Literature Society / University of Helsinki)

The hymn is one of the most important poetic genres of Finnish literature before the romantic period. However, due to its popular, didactic, and spiritual nature and its oral-literary form, the hymn has never attracted much scholarly attention. This paper examines the forms and functions of rhyming in 18<sup>th</sup> century hymns from the Pietist revival movement, and the significance of rhyme and other forms of sound repetition in hymn poetics.

In comparison to earlier hymn poetry, 18<sup>th</sup> century Pietist hymns favour rhythmically more varied metres and longer stanza structures, together with more intricate rhyme patterns and a remarkably high degree of sound repetition. In fact, some of the longest stanzas and the most elaborate rhyme patterns ever written in Finnish verse can be found in this corpus. Interestingly enough, even though rhyme patterns become more complex, the rhymes themselves do not differ very much from the rhyming in earlier verse: so called half rhymes and slant rhymes are still the norm, and even a very small degree of sound similarity is enough to make an end-rhyme. In order to understand the workings of this kind of rhyming, it is fruitful to study the rhyme in relation to other forms of sound repetition – alliteration and assonance – where different degrees of sound repetition, from weak to strong, are used.

In this paper, I approach rhyme and other forms sound repetition as *performative elements*, by which I mean lyric elements that strive to engage and create a sense of community and belonging in the reader, listener, or singer. This approach provides a framework to examine rhyme as a part of hymn poetics. Furthermore, it makes visible and conceptualizes in a new way the collective and the communal elements of poetry, which have so far been largely marginalized by the emphasis on the personal and the individual in lyric theory.

## SESSION 4:

### **What matters? The Creativity of 14th Century Students in Central Europe**

Jan Ciglbauer (Ph.D., Department of Musicology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague)

With the creation of the university in the 2nd half of the 14th century, Prague witnessed an establishment of a new social network that attracted young and talented people from far and wide. Although their main task was to study, they also had a possibility to develop their creativity in music and verse: not only privately, but also by creating music for the liturgy in the college chapels. There are poems and verse structures which the students brought to Prague, that were equipped with a different melody. It is striking to follow which characteristics of existing texts were preserved, which ones were abandoned, and what was the nature of newly introduced qualities. This can be observed upon the (dis)respect of the "7pp+6p" and other verse patterns. In the process of adaptation of existing models and creation of new compositions, there was sometimes a clear struggle between theology, music and poetry. Who was the winner? Based on the examples of songs with long traditions, we can follow these developments deep in the 15th century. The old cores of 14th century poetry, filled with the faintest allusions to less known Bible contexts and theological problems of the Middle Ages, were preserved with great respect, although in a misunderstood way. Moreover, since ca. 1380, the developing ardent lay spirituality overwhealed the sometimes cold intellectual attitude, which lead to changes in the preference and qualities of metaphors. Small jokes and subtle hints to broad contexts were neutralized through the increasing abundance of diminutives and literality, so typical for local popular Christmas songs, for instance.

### **Rhymes and non-rhymes (on the example of Russian folklore and literary poetry)**

Mihhail Lotman (University of Tartu, Tallinn University)

Ever since the 18th century, the Russian literary poetry has the presumption of rhyme, that is, a regular verse is rhymed, while unrhymed verse can be perceived on this background as a deviation, or using Juri Lotman's term, a minus device. In folklore epic poetry, it is on the contrary: absence of rhyme is a norm and rhyme occurs as an occasional violation of the norm. Yet there are also such forms of folklore, where rhyme is a usual, even prevailing phenomenon. Here we can name lyric songs, chashtushkas and especially raeshniks. In the latter, rhyme is an inseparable constructive principle. Nevertheless, rhymes of raeshnik are different from the rhymes in literary poetry in the 18th-19th century. Part of them would not even qualify as rhymes, although they can be phonetically very sonorous. This means that rhyme is not just a consonance, but a consonance which follows certain conventions. In my paper I will also briefly dwell on the phenomenon of rhymed prose and so-called shadow rhyme.

## **How rhymed is it? Kalevala-meter, Lutheran hymns and *Kulnasatz* of Olaus Sirma**

Kati Kallio (Finnish Literature Society / University of Helsinki)

Absence of rhyme is commonly regarded emblematic of the Finnic Kalevala-meter: according to this interpretation, rhyme may appear only occasionally and unintentionally, as a grammatical rhyme caused by similar inflected forms in parallel verses. In oral meter, such verse units are typically of irregular length. Nevertheless, sometimes this casual rhyming structure is quite dense, and some 19th and early 20th century singers prefer parallel sections of two or four lines to the extent that their verses give the impression of a rhymed couplet or a stanza. This ambivalence produces problems in the interpretation of the 17th century Finnish poetics. In this paper, I will study this type of verse units together with the two Saami poems by Olaus Sirma in the book *Lapponia* (1673).

Recently, Jukka Saarinen and Frog have asked whether the use of irregular end rhyme (and various types of assonance) might be one meaningful part of the poetic structure of the Kalevala-meter. Even if being occasional and produced mainly by equivalent inflected forms in parallel verses, these poetic features participate in the creation of the sound patterns. Moreover, even if alliteration is regarded as typical of the meter, neither that appears in any regular way.

Employing Lutheran hymns, literary poetry, and oral proverbs and riddles in Kalevala-meter as their examples, the 17th century scholars Aeschillus Petraeus (1649) and Michael Wexionius (1650) claimed that all Finnish poetry makes use of rhyme. In the literary contexts of that time, learned poets complemented the Kalevala-meter with a regular rhyme. In the 20th century scholarship, these descriptions as well as the learned uses of the meter were described as misconceptions. However, in my interpretation, the 17th century perception of the Kalevala-meter as a rhymed meter might have been based on the inherent, even if irregular, structures of grammatical rhyme, comparable to the first vernacular Lutheran translations of medieval hymns by Mikael Agricola (1544), which had similar irregular rhyming structures. In the first complete Lutheran Finnish hymnals (1583, 1605) the rhymes – although regular – still took very weak forms. It is not always clear how many and how strong rhymes a poem was supposed to have in order to be considered as rhymed poetry.

Whereas the rhyme structures in the first Lutheran hymns by Agricola have been interpreted as being poor and incomplete, and the occasional rhymes in oral Kalevala-meter as accidental and poetically insignificant, similar rhyming structures in the first Saami songs have been considered as a potential proof of their literary character.

In the 17th century oral poem *Kulnasatz* created by Kemi Saami student Olaus Sirma, the rhymes are constructed mainly by using equivalent grammatical forms in parallel verses, and rhyme is missing altogether in one couplet. In addition, in his poems *Morse faurog*, rhymes occur in middle of the verses and in a very irregular way. In his case, this has been regarded as an indicator of the possibly fabricated (rather than purely oral) nature of his songs. Yet, the style of his songs is nearer to some later Saami joiks and lyrical poems in Kalevala-meter than to the learned literary poetry of the time.

## SESSION 5:

### **Finnish rhymes and songs in Norwegian traditions**

Reidar Bakke (Associate Professor, The Norwegian University of Science and Technology NTNU, Department of Music, Norway)

There have been several periods of Finnish immigration to Norway. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, many Finns settled in Finnskogen in the south east of Norway. Today we call these settlers and their descendants “skogfinner” (forest Finns). During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many Finns settled in the northern part of Norway, and we call these settlers and their descendants “kvener” (kven people). In Finnskogen and in northern Norway we still can find Finnish traditions, and today both skogfinner and kvener are officially recognised as two of five national minority groups in Norway. Up in the north people still speak Finnish, but the language has died in Finnskogen in the south.

For some years, I have been collecting Finnish songs, rhymes and stories in the Varanger district of northern Norway. A lot of this material has survived through oral traditions. The rhymes I have found include jingles and rigmaroles, etc. Among the songs, we find nursery songs, children songs, folk songs, popular songs and religious songs. Most of the rhymes and songs have rhymed endings, and a few of them have alliterations and/or parallelism. The old Finnish rune singing tradition seems to be rather weak in the Varanger district, as my collecting work includes only a very few melodies reminding of rune songs. The rune singing tradition has been stronger in Finnskogen in the south, as there are several rune songs collected from this district. The Finnish *Kalevala* epic has a rather young history in the Norwegian language. Elias Lonnrot's *Kalevala* was published in 1849, but we had to wait until 1967 before the first Norwegian translation of the *Kalevala* was published, by the Norwegian scholar Albert Lange Fliflet. In 2017, another Norwegian translation of the *Kalevala* was made by the Finnish-Swedish author Mikael Holmberg. The two translations are quite different. This paper will give some examples of rhymes and songs from Varanger and Finnskogen, followed by a few perspectives on the two *Kalevala* translations in the Norwegian language, and conclude with some *Kalevala* extracts performed in Norwegian.

### **Between singing and saying: oral tradition of Norwegian stev shares stress- and rhyme-patterns with Old Norse and Old English**

Jacqueline Ekgren (Founder, Head of Ekgren Musikk institutt, Oslo, Norway)

Norwegian stev are one-stanza songs sung throughout centuries in Norway, especially in the regions of Setesdal and Telemark. The living oral tradition of Norwegian stev is now thought to connect over a millennium in an unbroken line with Old Norse poetry. The stev stanza has four lines, with four stresses per line in nystev (new stev), whereas gamalstev (old stev) have a pattern of 4-3-4-3 stresses (“ballad meter”). The predominant metric pattern of two stresses in a half-line is shared with Old Norse poetry as well as Old English, such as Beowulf.

Literature on stev and rhyme will often describe assonance and end-rhyme, whereas stave-rhyme is seldom discussed, possibly because the stave-rhyme is less frequent in stev as compared to Old Norse poetry. Old English and Old Norse poetry feature assonance, internal rhymes, and stave-

rhyme (alliteration). These features are prevalent in gamalstev, and less so in nystev. Stave-rhyme in Norwegian stev seems to have been treated by only two writers. in the early 1900's.

The features of rhyme in Norwegian stev may support the strong connection to Old Norse and Old English. It appears that the closeness of rhyme and riddles in Old Norse is still alive in Norwegian stev, especially the gamalstev.

Performing the living oral tradition of stev, called kveding, can be described as “not singing, not saying” but somewhere in-between, where the stev-melody is elastically fitted to various texts of accentual verse. Texts abound while melodies are few: 20 000 nystev use 43 melodies, and 5 000 gamalstev use 5 melodies. In this text-driven vocal traditon, rhyming can be a way to display ones prowess as a performer, especially in the improvised stev in stev-battles, which in principle are much the same as duels between performers of modern-day rap.

Norwegian stev are sung-recited and have great flexibility in both rhythm and rhyme, which may be a key to the survival of the tradition through centuries. Stev-performance can be perceived as accentual poetry with a complex meter, closer to free verse than to strict meters. The living tradition of Norwegian stev may provide inspiration for re-performing accentual poetry where the oral tradition is lost, such as the visuorð in Old Norse poetry, and possibly in Old English such as epic poetry like “Beowulf”.

The flexibility in Norwegian stev is readily demonstrated through performance. Stev will be performed.

## **End Rhymes in Finnish Rhyming Couplets and Literary Folk Songs**

Hanna Karhu (University of Helsinki / Finnish Literature Society)

As John Hollander writes in his *Rhymes Reason*, “the ghost of oral poetry never vanishes” from written poetry (Hollander 1981/2000, 4). The importance of the relationship between oral and written poetry is extremely crucial when we look at the history and forming processes of Finnish written poetry in the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. I will discuss this complex question in this paper by focusing on the end rhymes of Finnish rhyming folk songs (Finnish rhyming couplets, *rekilaulu*) and written poetry by Otto Manninen (1872–1950), Eino Leino (1878–1926) and Ilmari Kianto (1874–1970).

Finnish rhyming couplets were the dominant genre of oral folklore singing in Finland at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Finnish rhyming couplets became an extremely popular way to express feelings about a changing world, with different kinds of new questions from romantic love to the changing nature of communities (Asplund 2006, 152–156). Moreover, many Finnish poets, influenced by the ethos of National Romanticism, became interested in Finnish rhyming couplets in the 1890s and started to write poetry that resembled Finnish rhyming folk songs. I call these poems *literary rhyming couplets*.

End rhymes were a dominant characteristic of Finnish rhyming couplets. Even if, as Heikki Laitinen has argued, an end rhyme was not an obligatory element of the songs (Laitinen 2003, 284), and



many half rhymes or false rhymes occur in the material I have studied, there is nevertheless a considerable amount of rhyming in them. Rhymes give structure to the songs and produce interesting and humorous meanings. It is also said that at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century rhymes became such a crucial part of Finnish rhyming couplets that the creation of rhymes became more important than the content of the songs (Asplund 1997, 265). In written art poetry of the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century Finland, the perfect rhyme was however an obligatory feature.

In my paper, I will compare end rhyming of the notes made of Finnish oral rhyming couplets, archived in the Archives of the Finnish Literature Society and end rhyming of literary folk songs written by Manninen, Leino and Kianto. I will look at some of the similarities and differences of the end rhyming.

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## SESSION 6:

### **Rhyme in Estonian poetic culture**

Maria-Kristiina Lotman (University of Tartu, Estonia)

The origin of Estonian rhymed poetry lies in the 17th century, when the first Estonian literary poems were composed and when the number of church songs were translated into Estonian in syllabic-accentual forms with end-rhyme. Yet the systematic development of Estonian rhyme canon began in the middle of the 19th century, where the tradition of Estonian literary poetry started to form. It turned out that due to certain qualities of Estonian prosodic system, end rhyme is a challenge for authors and from early on, different licences were accepted besides the full rhyme.

In the beginning of the 20th century the Modernist movement reached Estonia, affecting the entire poetic culture and enriching poetry with new genres, unused poetic forms, fresh verse metres and stanzaic structures, etc. The traditional principles of rhyme appeared to be outdated and obsolete too and several poets and poetry translators started to work on the new models of rhyme. Of the most important authors, Johannes Aavik and Valmar Adams should be named, who both looked for the new methods to broaden the Estonian rhyme repertoire, yet offered completely different solutions. As a reaction to these efforts, a puristic rhyme type was developed by a literary group Arbujaad (the Sorcerers). Hence, there are at least four models of rhyme in Estonian poetic culture, which can be associated with different literary periods and movements. In my paper, I will use statistical data to demonstrate, which rhyme types occur most frequently in the actual poetry of authors with different aesthetic orientation.

## **Analysing irregular rhyme sequences: Lauri Viita's *Kukunor* (1949)**

Sakari Katajamäki (Dr, Finnish Literature Society)

In my research on *Kukunor* [Koko Nor] (1949) by Lauri Viita, I have encountered an interesting problem. This 123 page long Finnish poem is almost entirely written in rhyme but it very seldom follows any regular rhyme scheme. Its rhyme structure intuitively feels natural and functional. It definitely cannot be truly arbitrary. Even a short random rhyme sequence has hundreds of potential rhyme structures. For instance, a 6-line long poem can have 203 different rhyme schemes. If the poem had 7 lines, the number of potential rhyme patterns would be 877. Every additional line increases this number by leaps and bounds: 4140 (8 lines), 21147 (9 lines), 115975 (10 lines), and so on. Mathematically speaking, the number of distinct rhyme schemes for a poem of  $n$  lines follows the so-called Bell numbers (1, 1, 2, 5, 15, 52, 203, 877, 4140, 21147, 115975, 678570, 4213597, ...). If Lauri Viita's rhyme sequences are irregular, but evidently not truly arbitrary, how would it be possible to analyse and describe them?

In my paper, I will propose a method of sliding a fixed size frame down the rhyme sequence and picking up the rhyme pattern of every successive view. If we, for example, have an 11-line rhyme pattern *a a b c c d b c c d b*, and we choose a frame of four rhymes, these 11 lines comprise 8 sequences:

*a a b c | a b c c | b c c d | c c d b | c d b c | d b c c | b c c d | c c d b*

This set of 4-line sequences can be then be converted in to sequences that always begin by letter *a*:

*a a b c | a b c c | a b b c | a a b c | a b c a | a b c c | a b b c | a a b c*

In my study, I will experiment with this kind of frame analysis by having samples of varying frame sizes and by studying what kind of frequencies they generate. In addition to this small-scale analysis of near-locating rhymes, I will discuss what kind of methods could handle rhyme pairs with longer distances.

## **From song to sign: The function and functioning of rhyme in two poems by Tuomas Anhava**

Pauli Tapio (FM, University of Helsinki)

Keywords: free verse, rhyme, modernism, parody

Before the final breakthrough of modernist poetics in the 1950s, Finnish poetry was grounded in song. The poetic norm which prevailed for over a hundred years required poems to be written in accentual or accentual-syllabic verse, with regular stanza structure and end rhyme. The most widespread symbols of poetry were the classical lyre and the national romantic kantele.

The years after World War II brought about a period of exploration, experimentation and polemics, by the end of which poetics had decisively changed in regard to the use of meter and rhyme as well as the metaphors through which poetry represented itself. The age of the lyre and the kantele was over and the age of the visual image had begun. Meter and rhyme, the rules of which had already loosened considerably during the preceding decade, gave way to free verse. Generally speaking this state of affairs continues even today.

In my paper I will suggest that the decline of rhyme was not, in fact the result of a deliberate rejection but rather the result of a process of change in which rhyme failed to secure a relevant place in the structural repertoire of the emerging free verse poetics. Crucially, this failure was not for lack of trying. This becomes evident in the poems of Tuomas Anhava, arguably the period's leading advocate of modernist poetics.

I will look at two poems by Tuomas Anhava, both of which are located on the boundary of accentual and free verse and both of which are rhymed. In the first poem, the use of rhyme is parodic. In it, Anhava travesties the metered and rhymed poetics of previous generations. For this to work, the function of rhyme must remain essentially the same as it had been previously. In the second poem we see rhyme being used for altogether different ends. "Luen esineitten ehdottomia fantasioja" combines what is essentially free verse with a terza rima rhyme pattern. Whereas the first poem resists interpretation by virtue of its absurdity, the second poem is a prime example of modernistic openness and opacity. The text itself seems to suggest a number of readings but doesn't encourage the reader to go down any particular interpretational path. In this context rhyme ceases to be a merely structural feature of the text and becomes an ineludible object of open interpretation.

I will suggest that these poems by Tuomas Anhava comprise a critique of rhyme, an attempt to develop this time worn structural device so that it might be used within the context of modernist poetics. In this light, the fact that this rhyme didn't flourish within modernist poetics becomes less an instance of politics steering poetics and more a case of historical contingency. This allows for a more open reading of modernism's relationship with the preceding tradition.

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## SESSION 7

### **Rhyming: The hidden history of 2 and 3 in Arabic and early European poetry**

Ed Emery (a research associate at the Centre for Diaspora and Migration Studies, SOAS, University of London)

At a certain point in medieval poetics there was a shift from mono-rhyming end rhyme to more complex rhyme systems. Among, these the 2+3 format is particularly distinctive, and throughout the medieval period was the bedrock of Arab, Jewish and Early European poesis, a set of poetic traditions that has an ill-defined but distinctive association with music, song and dance. The 2+3 format (AABBB, which shows also as AABBBBA) was characteristic of the Andalusi muwashshah and zajal repertoires; it was also characteristic of the sonnet and ballata. This much is familiar territory.

My research over the past five years has been into the possible genetic connection between those Andalusi and Early European verse forms. This paper will summarise the present state of my research. It will also argue that what links the two repertoires is not only a similarity of verse forms (and an ongoing complexification of internal rhyming structures), but also a similarity of poetic behaviours, insofar as the 2+3 format is intimately associated with poetic duelling or ‘agonistic poeteeing’. It will then briefly excavate the hidden history of 2+3, from its putative Andalusi origins through medieval mystery plays, popular theatre, political protest verse, and extending even to the national anthem of the USA.

## **FEMININE SONGS IN THE ORAL TRADITION OF SARDINIA**

Tiziana Palandrani (Independent researcher, Sardinia, Italia)

Musical tradition in Sardinia is still very strong and present, despite the danger of extinction that threatens all oral cultures in the world.

While the repertoire of male songs has been more studied and documented, the female repertoire has remained more in the shade, for the characteristics of the role of women in Sardinian society, which despite being a very strong role (we speak of a culture where matriarchy is in force) tended, however, to express their songs in the family and home or in a private sphere, anyhow.

In Sardinia the range of songs which are exclusively reserved to women concerns the highlights of human life: childhood (rhymes to entertain and amuse children), funerary lamentations (the *attitos*, improvised funeral songs that praise the deceased and express the pain for the loss), religious songs (which are interpreted not only by women, but linked in any case to the Virgin) and songs of love where the rhyme plays a very important role to support improvisation and also a greater effectiveness of the message.

Undoubtedly - also with regard to ethnomusicological research - there are often difficulties in finding the opportunity for listening to them; difficulties due to the unpredictable nature of the event, and the boundaries.

About the *attitos*, the emotional tension and the semantic density reside in the recurrent rhythmic and melodic cells, since they are improvised songs. I believe that in them the anaphora and the epiphora carry out some vital functions. Besides contributing to the rhythmic organization of the text, they involve complex skills, offering the interpreter the chance to extend the time, the minimum necessary to allow him to develop the verse.

Moreover, in my opinion, we can act further on the perception of time, (moreoften expanding it) not only in the performer but also among the audience.

Furthermore, in this case, I believe that the rhyme interacts with the kinesics, accompanying, somehow, the oscillating movement of the body during the performance.

*Attitos* bear witness to such an ancient vision of the world that is almost archetypal in the collective imagination. They came from an era in which poetry was conceived exclusively as singing (and was not acted) and where repetition and symmetry constituted an aesthetic and spiritual need especially during the rites of passage.

The chants of the infantile lullabies nursery rhymes etc. have retained a more fixed form, affected by the improvisation but generally reproduce texts already memorized by tradition, because in this case the rhymes have the function of supporting the learning.

Moreover this is a sort of borderline repertoire, because some of the formats can be sung to accompany the dance. And, viceversa, the dance songs can enter in the musical context meant to be used for children.

## SESSION 8

### **Cognitive strategies in rhyming in new ballads – an improvisatory approach**

Susanne Rosenberg (Professor, Doc Mus, Royal College of Music in Stockholm)

In the artistic research project “Folk Song Lab” (Rosenberg, 2019-2021) methods for oral composition and improvisation is tested from the concept of the song as being a cognitive framework both when it comes to tonality, melody and lyrics referring to Bronson’s quote: “What was it she had carried in her memory? Not a text, but a ballad: a fluid entity soluble in the mind, to be concretely realized at will in words and music.” (Bronson, 1969:71)

By collective improvising sessions new songs are created in the project, both when it comes to melody and lyrics using rhyme as a vital ingrediency. The cognitive framework being useful both regarding to tonality and when it comes to text-formulas such as rhyme-pattern. The narrative starting point comes from structures that can be found in the Swedish medieval ballads and paring with different returning formulas (Jansson, 1999) such as “the grey horse”, “the green woods”, “the lily-white hand” by rhyming. In the Folk Song Lab project new ballads are improvised where the end-rhyme is a vital part. Also song-games that are promoting end-rhyme is tested in an improvisatory setting to enhance the participants internal knowledge in how to use rhyme as an tool for creating new songs.

How does todays folk singer deal with rhyming as a tool? How can you learn the skills of rhyming? What are the benefits of using rhyme in an improvisatory setting?

This paper presents findings from this ongoing research projects and compares these findings with traditional material. It will also present the viewpoint that improvisatory skills and creativity benefit from using formulas such as rhymes, and that internal knowledge could give room for strategies that promotes being freer in the moment (deManzano & Ullén 2012; Pinho et al 2016). This also reflects on the cognitive framework as useful when creating, and points back to quotation such as Albert Lord’s: “Our oral poet is composer. Our singer of tales is a composer of tales. Singer, performer, composer, and poet are one under different aspects but at the same time. Singing, performing, composing are facets of the same act.” (Lord, 2003).

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## **Surrender to the flow – Rhyme as the defining structural element in rap**

Kjell Andreas Oddekalv (RITMO, University of Oslo)

Rap flows are perhaps the most commonly encountered form of poetry in the cultural mainstream. It is also one of the most structurally formalised, where the 16-bar format rules supreme, and most exceptions are variants of the same symmetrical theme. Within those strict structural boundaries, rappers create personal universes and strong artistic identities, not only poetically, but also musically. Looking at rap flows as a musical phenomenon, we can see that the structurally defining elements are found in the interaction between the strict, symmetrical 4/4 meter and the placement of rhymes. Without even considering the lyrical content, the words create the music and the musical signature of the performer. This paper explores the different ways different rappers use different strategies in the placement of rhymes to create different rhythmical effects. Some rappers use enjambment, bridge rhymes and other transitional tools to create hypermetric asymmetry. Some might conform closely to the symmetrical bar structure, but use changes in rhyme density or even “non-rhymes” or “twisted rhymes”. The combination of metric accents (created by the pulse of the beat), verbal accents (from the word stress) and poetic accents (created by rhyme) generate the musical accents and syncopation that define rappers’ musical style. In this paper, I will present the different tools musicologists have used and developed to study rap flows, and how these have been altered or made to adequately represent the musical impact of rhymes. We also need to explore some sort of hierarchy of different types of rhymes, as different rhymes have different type of structural weight. We will look at the concept of primary and secondary rhymes (in a musical context), and whether or not the type of rhyme (perfect, assonance, and even “non-”) correlates with metrical significance. These musicological analysis tools will be accompanied by music examples and discussions on how we can expand our “toolbox” by exploring the methodological approaches of other disciplines, such as linguistics, psychology and poetry.

## **Skillful Syllables: Decoding Rhyme in Hip-Hop**

Robert Komaniecki (Appalachian State University)

Traditional music analysis often begins with observations on a piece’s harmony and melody. Rap music, however, is regularly performed in a declamatory vocal style that is free of melody and recorded over a backing track with harmonies that are either sparse or absent altogether. Understanding a rapper’s uses of rhyme and rhythm is therefore paramount to analyzing and interrogating their musical output. In this presentation, I investigate rhyme’s dual function in hip-hop as both a musical and poetic parameter. Using a combination of musical transcriptions and lyric grids, I propose that rhyme functions as generator of musical form in rap music. By comparing tracks from a variety of rap artists over the last several decades, I trace rhyme’s path through the genre and its function as a determinant of musical form. I situate my analysis at the intersection of

poetics and music, revealing the existence of a wide variety of rhyme-determined forms in rap, ranging from simple (Example 1) to exceptionally complex (Example 2). I also showcase some rarer and more antiquated poetic forms as they occur in hip-hop, such as the sestet (Example 3) or the “limerick” scheme (Example 4). I conclude by demonstrating several ways in which rhyme interacts with the musical parameters of rhythm and harmony. Example 5 shows the tendency of rhymed syllables to be consistently set against an unchanging rhythmic motive. Example 6 shows that when multiple end rhymes are being invoked in a single line, they will often be performed using contrasting rhythmic motives, allowing concurrent end rhymes to be differentiated from one another. Example 7 shows an instance in which a rapper’s rhyme scheme (AAbbA) perfectly mirrors the chord progression in the background beat. In presenting this research, I aim to reveal several productive points of alignment between poetic and musical formal analyses. It is my goal to encourage intersectional, multidisciplinary scholarship on rap music.

#### Examples:

Example 1. Transcribed excerpt of Mac Lethal’s “Die Slow.”

Example 2. Transcribed excerpt from The Fugees’ “How Many Mics?”

Example 3. Transcribed excerpt from De La Soul’s “D.A.I.S.Y. Age.”

Example 4. The limerick rhyme scheme, as it appears in Dr. Dre’s “Forgot About Dre.”

Example 5. Transcribed excerpt of Lady Leshurr’s “Queen Speech 4.”

Example 6. Transcribed excerpt of Dr. Dre’s “Forgot About Dre.”

Example 7. Transcribed excerpt of Dr. Dre’s “Forgot About Dre.”

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## SESSION 9:

### ***“Misdirected by Swagger and Beaten by Rhyme”*: Lyricism, Musicality and the Poetics of Insecurity**

Susie McComb (Independent Scholar, UK)

Rhyme is often described as a ‘musical’ poetic device in stylistics textbooks, yet even songwriters with extensive musical training frequently express frustration at having to work within its confines. Young people who aspire to follow in the footsteps of their songwriting heroes are often guided towards music lessons; rarely towards any formal education in linguistics. In this paper, I will consider the peculiar challenge that rhyme presents to poets and lyricists in its elusive position at the intersection between music and language, drawing insights from the words and lyrics of artists such as Kanye West, Alex Turner and Kurt Cobain along with my own experience as an ‘emerging’ UK spoken word artist applying concepts from cognitive poetics, phonaesthetics and music cognition to my rhyming practice. In particular, I will advocate for greater ‘cross-pollination’ between the fields of cognitive poetics and music cognition, arguing that deeper appreciation of, and investigation into, the explicit connections and equivalences between lyricism and musicality will be of benefit not only to the academic community, but also to lyricists and poets themselves.

Phonemes, like musical notes, possess pitch and timbre. As songs unfold in time, our brains attend not only to the meaning of song lyrics, but also their sonic rhythms, patterns and connections, which may complement or contrast with the underlying melody and tactus. I argue that the ‘musicality’ of rhyme is a literal, rather than metaphorical, quality, and may be better understood through application of theories such as Huron’s *‘Imagination, Tension, Prediction, Reaction, Appraisal’* (2006) theory of musical anticipation and emotion to the lyrical speech stream. As an example, I suggest that direct parallels can be drawn between (musical) consonant intervals and octave equivalence and the ‘identity’ of (phonetic) consonant cognates. Further, I propose that the aesthetic impact of ‘concealed alliteration’ (the poetic chiming of phonemes which are not identical, but which are produced similarly in terms of voicing and the place and manner of articulation) can similarly be understood in light of the idea of ‘consonant harmony’ (the assimilation of non-adjacent consonants which are ‘difficult’ to transition between) from child language development.

Rhyme is a potent and persuasive tool for songwriters; when fused effectively with melody, its charms can lull a baby to sleep or soundtrack a revolution. It is also widely held to be a tantalising, obfuscating and irritating facet of songwriting craft. Combining qualitative appraisal of working with rhyme with relevant detail from the academic literature, I hope to demonstrate the value in appreciating the musicality of lyricism – and rhyme in particular - for linguists and artists alike."

## **Strategies of rhyming in extemporized oral composition – an ethnographic account**

Venla Sykäri (Finnish Literature Society/University of Helsinki):

In discussions on rhyme in oral traditions, end rhyme patterns are conventionally considered to be memorized, and to appear in a linear way. While this is certainly true for many poetic cultures, it is not the only possibility: in several vital oral traditions, one of the performer's main tasks is to invent his/her end rhymes on the spur of the moment. These traditions of lyrical improvisation focus on exhibiting the oral composer's dexterity in the creation of situation-sensitive meaning together with inventiveness in the patterning of sounds.

Today, most cultures of verbal improvisation employ poetic registers whose primary trademark is end rhyme. In this case, end rhyme also is the key compositional device, which leads the cognitive process in the construction of lines and line units. The composer-performer can arrive at end rhymes either one by one, through very quick phono-semantic associations, or by anticipating ahead of time what he/she wants to say. When the goal of lyrical improvisation is to develop arguments (in a verbal contest or other type of collaborative exchange of utterances in front of an audience), the oral composer always tries to surprise his/her audience by delivering the best and sharpest punchline at the end of the utterance/compositional unit. This means that the improviser has to anticipate the key end rhyme (the rhyme agent) in his/her mind, together with at least a rough idea of the clause that will lead to this rhyme, *before* composing and performing the preceding lines and rhymes that prime this punchline. Such method, which I have referred to as the *anticipation method* in my research (Sykäri 2019, see also Sykäri 2014, 2017; cf. e.g. Díaz-Pimienta 2014; Egaña 2007), seems to characterize the construction of poetic arguments in all oral poetic registers with end rhyme.

Mastering the reversed method of extemporized oral composition necessitates cognitive skills that are rarely developed in other contexts in our literary Western world. Nevertheless, lyrical improvisation is today of considerable interest also to many young people. In many contemporary cultures of lyrical improvisation young generations continue with new passion an existing oral tradition, while such practices have also been newly invented in communities without access to earlier vernacular models. This is the case for example with improvised rap (freestyle) in Finland. The aim of this presentation is to discuss the methods, challenges and styles in the practice of lyrical improvisation from the improviser's viewpoint. The paper draws from interviews and analysis of performances carried out during long-term ethnographic fieldwork, in particular on Finnish improvised rap. References to other contemporary traditions will be made, as well.

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