



Integration of English Meter, Genre and Subject Matter: Use of Iambic Pentameter in Robert Browning's 'My Last Duchess' - a Case Study

Ms Lata Taral

Assistant Professor

Department of English, Dr D Y Patil Arts, Commerce and Science College, Pimpri, Pune, India.

Email: letaral@gmail.com

Abstract: Segregation of body and soul will result in death; for spreading fire, burning of wood is necessary and for optimization of sense and poetic appeal, an integration of metric pattern, genre and subject matter is pivotal in poetry. Poetry is 'the rhythmic creation of beauty' for Edgar Allan Poe and 'musical thought' for Thomas Carlyle. Music cannot be isolated from meaning in poetry. It is prosody i.e. the craft of verse which controls music and meaning in poetry as it has advantages over grammar and vocabulary of a language. Meter, a master in prosody, is the very heartbeat of poetry. There is interconnection between metric pattern, form of a poem and meaning conveyed. In fact, subject matter determines language of a poem. As the form affects the impact of content, in poetry choice of appropriate meter functions like background music in a film which maximizes its sense. English meter is linked to genre and subject matter. This paper investigates how iambic pentameter and substitutes used for iamb in Robert Browning's 'My Last Duchess' are in tune with its dramatic form and Duke's noble position and his multifarious and intense emotions. It attempts scansion of the aforementioned poem and explores how metric pattern is integrated with genre and subject matter in it.

Key Words: prosody, meter, subject matter, integration, My Last Duchess.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Language is the medium of art but sound is the best medium of art. The most stable features of language are its sounds and not vocabulary or syntax. Poetry and song were originally one art. Song is poetic and poem is musical. Music empowers poetry. We can trace the association of music and poetry to ancient times. Poetry begins with music is exemplified by Orpheus and Amphion being the earliest singers and poets. 'De Musica' of St Augustine emphasizes the relation between poetry and music. The alliance of poetry and music has been reasserted in English poetry down the ages. The American poet critic Arthur Yvor Winters as quoted by Kennedy and Gioia (1998) says 'Even though poetry was written for the mind's ear as well as the physical ear, yet the mind's ear can be trained only by the way of the other, and the matter, practically considered, comes inescapably back to reading of poetry aloud.' It highlights meaningful and musical sound in poetry. Meaning cannot be segregated from music in poetry rather music is meaning in it is emphasized by Thomas Carlyle's definition of poetry as 'a musical thought'.

There is no art without craft. There is a lot of similarity between poetic and musical composition. In the management of rhyme, pauses, enjambment and meter, poet is like a musical composer and performer. In music sounds fit to each other leading to harmony and in poetry link between sound and sense leads to harmony. Music and metric patterns in poetry speak as loudly as tears of a miserable man. Bahadur (1960:115) rightly states "the effect of all composition, whether spoken or written may be greatly heightened, if the current of sound is adapted to the tenor of the discourse."

In the business of life coexistence of body and soul is necessary and their separation will result in end of life. The relationship between music and meaning is like the relationship between body and soul, between flame and wood as without burning of wood flame cannot be spread. Alexander Pope in second part of his (line 365) 'An Essay on Criticism' says 'The sound must seem an echo to the sense'. It highlights the harmony between sound and sense and association of music, meter and meaning in poetry. The heart of the matter here is that sound strengthens sense. Barrio as quoted by Hardison (2019:26) considers the idea that poetry is a constitutive activity, a definitive achievement of classical theory: "one of the most brilliant and-----modern doctrines of classical literary theory [is] the correspondence between signifier and signified_ the continuity and complementarity between the presence of phonetic – rhythmic materials and the nature of the sensations and sentiments associated with them."



2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Rhetoric and Prosody:

Rhetoric is originated in Greece and Rome. For Plato it is the 'art of winning soul by discourse'. We have classical rhetoricians like Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian. It has to do with arrangement and verbal expression. It is concerned with beauty and forces of style i.e. an effective, persuasive, elegant and exuberant rendering of matter.

Prosody is a technical term which refers to sound patterns, rhythm and meter of language in linguistics and poetry. It entails devices for crafting verse. It has the potential of bringing dead languages back to life. It has advantages over grammar and vocabulary of language. It is the rhythmical use of language and the greatest asset to poets. Winifred Nowotny (1996:72) says 'the chief difference between language in poems and language outside poems is that the one is more highly structured than the other, and the more complex organization set up in poems makes it possible for the poet both to redress and to exploit various characteristics of language at large.'

Poetry is the product of feelings. Ideas, experiences, approaches, attitudes, etc., are disguised in feelings in it. And it is prosody that controls the effect of these feelings unfolding various layers of senses to readers. In a nutshell, rhetoric refers to the art of using language and prosody to rhyme, rhythm, stress, pitch and intonation which are pivotal not only in poetry but prose also.

Rhythm and Scansion:

The very pulsation of nature and life is rhythm. Music, dance, rising and falling of waves, cycle of seasons, heartbeats, etc., exemplify this. It is found in yoga, an ancient practice originated in India. According to a well yoga master BKS Iyengar yoga is like music in which the rhythm of the body, the melody of the mind and the harmony of the soul create the symphony of life.

How is rhythm created? It is not a matter of just identical sounds but their recurrence. It refers to the recurrence of stresses, silent stresses i.e., pauses and similar sound patterns. Because of it poetry approximates music is distanced from other modes of communication. In the words of Geoffrey Leech (1969:61) 'rhyme, as a basic component of verse form, is a correspondence between rhythmic measures rather than syllables.' Its semantic implications reinforce plethora of interpretations of a poem. The quality of rhythm is crucial for producing harmonious effect as succession of only stressed and unstressed syllables in a line will be monotonous.

Rhythm differs from language to language. Rhythm of classical Greek and Latin languages is quantitative, of French is syllabic, of old Germanic is accentual and of English poetry since fourteenth century is accentual-syllabic. English has stress-timed rhythm which is the recurrence of stressed syllables at regular intervals of time regardless of the number of intervening unstressed syllables. Elizabethan English poet Sir Philip Sidney in 'Apologie for Poetrie' (1896:61) states 'Nowe for the rhyme, though we do not observe quantity, yet wee observe the accent very precisely which other languages either cannot do, or will not do so absolutely.' Stress-timed rhythm of English imitates natural rhythm of life and used meticulously in English poetry.

The technique of scansion reveals rhythm and meter of a poem. It is nothing but dividing a poem into measures of feet and marking stressed and unstressed syllables. For perceiving myriad senses in poetry scansion is must.

Poetic Meter in English:

D H Lawrence as quoted by Mick Short (2013:128) says in a letter to Edward Marsh about the rhythmic regularity and importance of meter- 'I think more of a bird with broad wings flying and lapsing through the air, than anything, when I think of meter.' Poetry has undergone a lot of change with respect to form down the ages. But something unique about it is the specific use of language. Meter is its obvious external specificity. It is the heartbeat of poetry. It gives instinctive pleasure. Because of it poetry is akin to music. It affects the form as well as meaning of words and is the guiding principle of syllabication and prosody. It is not just a matter of stress but the relationship between stressed and unstressed syllables leading to rhythm. Meters are the part of rhythm is stated by Aristotle in 'Poetics'. But there is minute difference between them. Rhythm is subject to time intervals whereas meter is subject to arithmetical exactness of the number of syllables in a measure. "What the accent, therefore, is to rhythm, the measure is to meter." (Bahadur: 1960:136)

In poetry thought is clothed in rhyme, rhythm, metrical form, etc., Poetry being an art an employment of these elements empowers it semantically leading to aestheticity. The following lines from Louise Bogan's 'Single Sonnet' highlights the significance of meter.

'Staunch metre, great song, it is yours at length;
To prove how stronger you are than my strength.'

The system of 'measure', which is a term for 'foot' according to Geoffrey Leech, has been used for the scansion of English poetry. Poetic foot refers to combination of one stressed and one or two unstressed syllables in a measure



unit which is determined by the usual mathematical laws of variation. Poetic foot differs from language to language. And poetic foot successful in one language may not be successful in another language.

In English prosody one measure or foot admits only two or three syllables and one of them is accented. And not a number of syllables but a number of accents in a line determines its meter. English meter is governed by accent. The following are the type of poetic foot in English out of which first four are considered standard.

Sr No	Name of Poetic Foot	Description
1.	Iambic	Unstressed syllable is followed by stressed syllable (x /)
2.	Anapestic	Two unstressed syllables are followed by stressed syllable (x x /)
3.	Trochaic	Stressed syllable is followed by unstressed syllable (/ x)
4.	Dactylic	Stressed syllable is followed by two unstressed syllables (/ x x)
5.	Spondee	Consists of two stressed syllables (/ /)
6.	Pyrrhic	Consists of two unstressed syllables (x x)
7.	Amphibrachic	Stressed syllable is preceded and followed by one unstressed syllable (x / x)

For describing a metric line in a poem, number of poetic feet it consists of is considered. The following table explains this.

Sr No	Description of Metric Line	No of Poetic Feet
01.	Monometer	One Foot
02.	Dimeter	Two Feet
03.	Trimeter	Three Feet
04.	Tetrameter	Four Feet
05.	Pentameter	Five Feet
06.	Hexameter	Six Feet
07.	Heptameter	Seven Feet
08.	Octameter	Eight Feet

Meter is Complementary to Genre and Subject Matter:

Poets are concerned with metrical laws. Lack of it will result in unintelligibility of matter. According to Hardison (2019:25) “to identify poetry with ‘writing in meter’ is to assert that a musical element – sound – is the defining characteristic of poetry. It is to assert further that there is an essential rather than a conventional relation between meter and genre.’ There is a strong relationship between meter and subject matter. Form contains content. Content is related to meaning. Form empowers and strengthens content For example flowerpot and specific flower arrangement in it conveys specific meaning and change in form affects the meaning conveyed. Metrical form chosen should be complementary to the subject matter. In poetry its choice of depends upon topic, social status of characters represented and genre. The type of metrical pattern used by poet surely strengthens the meaning and affects the tone of a poem. It is like a background music influencing and affecting power of an image in a film. For example bouncy ballad meter of Eliza Cook’s ‘Song of the Sea-Weed’ strengthens the portrayal of phantom and gloomy scene.

Poet chooses appropriate meter and verse forms to help distinguish one character, experience, idea, etc., from another and to picturize character’s stature and stance. For grave and lofty subjects and messages poets use slow measures and long words. Quick and violent motions are conveyed by using a succession of unaccented syllables in a line. Alexandrine lines are used for slow and prolonged motions. Long and compound word convey the sense of extension. Trochaic foot is suitable for gay and lively subject matter with its rapid and stumbling movement. Trisyllabic measures are linked with forceful and frenzied movement compared to disyllabic measures.

Thematic Representation and Uses of Iambic Pentameter:

Meters must suit the languages they serve as English does. Iambic rhythm naturally suits English because of our tendency of spacing stresses at roughly equal intervals. Grammatical structure, vocabulary and accentuation of English suits iambic rhythm as Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle demonstrated alternating stress in polysyllabic words in their study of sound patterns of English.

Homer is the maker of iambics. Archilochus first used iambics for satiric purpose i.e. for attacking the vices and crimes of his foes. Iambic Pentametre dominated English poetry since fifteenth century. According to Mick Short it is ‘metrical norm’ (2013:132). It is the most conversational of meters and closest to speech. It is hospitable to standard words and suits to action. It is the meter of epic and extensively used in dramatic and didactic poetry. It suits the aristocratic position of royal characters. William Shakespeare’s royal characters speak in iambic pentameter but not



fools in his plays. It is smooth, graceful and stately and readily adapts itself to diverse situations such as gentler feelings, sublime and serious subjects and satire. Almost all the eminent English poets employed it their plays and poems. To name a few prominent examples of its use are 'Hamlet' and 'Romeo and Juliet' and sonnets by William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer's The Miller's Tale from 'The Canterbury Tales', John Donne's sonnets like 'Batter My Heart', etc.

Substitutes for Iambic Pentameter:

Paul Valery compares poetry to dance but dancelike adherence to regular metric patterns in poetry is not sensible. Metric variation is desirable for adding sonic impact. The basic metric pattern of a poem play the role of a stimulus and metric variants boost its emotional flavor. The necessity of metric variation is emphasized by Robert Frost. According to him without metric variation poem behaves like robot and will go to grave.

Shaping linguistic content into a chosen metrical form is indeed a Herculean task for a poet. But poetic license offers a few tools like relaxing metrical rules or language rules. A poet can either use 'poetic grammar' and relax grammatical rules or deform pronunciation or use special diacritic marks and spellings i.e. poetic orthography.

Metric variation in English poetry is very common and profuse. English prosody allows substitution of equivalent feet which may take place in a group of lines or in a line. There are three kinds of substitution for iambic verse. They are- an anapestic foot, a trochaic foot and a spondee foot with special purpose. Even double iamb also is found. And the most typical substitution for an iambic meter is the use of a trochaic or spondee foot at the beginning of a line for emphasis. Algernon Charles Swinburne (Saintsbury: 1926:216) states that 'English would always lend itself readily and successfully to any combination of iamb, trochee or anapest, never to those of dactylic and spondee.'

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Metrical pattern used in Robert Browning's 'My Last Duchess' is marked by using scansion method. The use of iambic pentameter and substitutes for it is investigated. The study of suitability of iambic pentameter and substitutes used for iamb in 'My Last Duchess' is carried out by using qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Robert Browning's 'My Last Duchess' as a Garniture on Dramatic Lyrics:

Dramatic poetry has been carved niche from classical times through Middle Ages and Renaissance down the ages. It refers to any verse written for the stage that may be verse plays of William Shakespeare or Moliere or dramatic monologues by great number of poets. Usually, it refers to dramatic monologue which is a speech by a character who is mouthpiece for poet. In this regard T S Eliot (Kennedy and Giona:1998:11) says "A dramatic poem does not consists of 'what the poet would say in his person, but only what he can say within the limits of one imaginary character addressing another imaginary character."

Robert Browning, Victorian multidisciplinary poet-artist, inherited his mother's immense musical talent and attempted musical compositions. He supplied philosophy to the contemporary poetry that every colour has its beauty and is required in the business of life. He perfected dramatic monologue as his genius suits it. His belief that 'art is an intermediate agency of personality' is personified in his dramatic monologues which are optically enthralling. His dramatic monologues are rather psychological monologues peopled with saints, scholars, artists and murders also. Like William Shakespeare he believed in the presence of good and bad in human nature. He explored dangerous mental states like insanity, fanaticism, vanity, hypocrisy, etc., through the vehicle of dramatic monologue as his obsession with the inner state of mind of his characters is propelled by the emergence of psychology and psychiatry with Sigmund Freud.

According to Phelps 'My Last duchess' is the finest dramatic monologue in the whole range of English literature-"One of the greatest dramatic monologues in all literature is My Last Duchess, and it is astounding that so profound a life-drama should have been conceived and faultlessly expressed by so young a poet"(Phelps:2013). The poem was published in 1842 in his 'Dramatic Lyrics'. William C Devane points out a historical basis of it. The character of Duke who is a merciless speaker in it is modeled on Renaissance aristocrat, Duke Alfonso II of Ferrara (1533-97) and Duchess is a poetic recreation of his wife Lucrezia who died suspiciously in 1561 at the age of seventeen just three years after their marriage. After her death Alfonso married the niece of the Count of Tyrol.

'My Last Duchess' is a story of incredibly possessive and narcissist Duke who is negotiating his second marriage with emissary from his would be father-in-law. Just like Porphyria's lover (dramatic monologue by Robert Browning) who narrated the story of his murdered wife after murdering her, Duke is describing the portrait of his dead Duchess after murdering her. In these poems love has become murder because of their hyper-controlling behavior. Duke projects himself as lover of art, sophisticated and blameless which he is not. He exposes faults of his last Duchess to emissary. His oratorical skills almost bring her back to life. Though he is talking about the portrait of his last Duchess, the poem turns out to be a portrait of controlling, jealous, cruel and narcissist Duke. Hierarchical sensibility of this aristocrat does permit him to understand indiscriminate, innocent and humane nature of his last Duchess. His mesmerist like control



over her does not allow her to enjoy the things in surrounding and nature like sunset. To correct her faults is to stoop for this heartless and egoist person. He is a microcosm of power. Duke, a power of power, puts an end to her imperfect behavior by giving a single command of her murder. He compares himself to Neptune, a Roman sea god and his last Duchess to a sea-horse which is tamed by him. Through this comparison at the end of the poem he gives a warning to his would be wife that she also would be tamed like sea-horse by shrewd Duke and if she imitates his last Duchess she also would meet the same fate. Thus this psychopath controls emissary's responses, his last Duchess after death and would be wife also. The poem reflects the institution of marriage existed then and creates tension between sympathy and moral judgment for readers. Robert Browning intertwined the themes of art, marriage, power and cruelty in a metrical craft of iambic pentameter in optically enthralling manner.

Scansion of 'My Last Duchess:

For marking metric pattern in 'My Last Duchess', symbol of ictus (/) is used for stressed syllables and symbol of remiss (x) is used for unstressed syllables.

/ x x / x / x / x /
 That's my | last Duch | ess paint | ed on | the wall, (1)

/ x x / x / x / x /
 Looking | as if | she were | alive. | I call (2)

/ / x / x / x / x /
 That piece | a won | der, now: | Fra Pan | dolf's hands (3)

/ / x x x / x / x /
 Worked bus | ily | a day, | and there | she stands. (4)

x / x / x / x / x /
 Will't please | you sit | and look | at her? | I said (5)

x / x / x / x / x /
 "Fra Pan | dolf" by | design, | for ne | ver read (6)

/ x x / x / x / x /
 Strangers | like you | that pic | tured coun | tenance, (7)

x / x / x / x / x /
 The depth | and pas | sion of | its ear | nest glance, (8)

/ x x / x / x / / x
 But to | myself | they turned | (since none | puts by (9)

x / x / x / x / x /
 The cur | tain I | have drawn | for you, | but I) (10)

x / x / x / x / x /
 And seemed | as they | would ask | me, if | they durst, (11)

/ x x / / x x / x /
 How such | a glance | came there; | so, not | the first (12)

x / x / x / x / x /
 Are you | to turn | and ask | thus. Sir, | 'twas not (13)

x / x / x / x / x /
 Her hus | band's pre | sence on | ly, called | that spot (14)



x / x x x / x / x /
Of joy | into | the Duch | ess' cheek: | perhaps (15)

x / x / x / x / x /
Fra Pan | dolf chanced | to say | "Her man | tle laps (16)

/ x x / x / x / x /
Over | my la | dy's wrist | too much," | or Paint (17)

x / x / x / x / x /
Must ne | ver hope | to re | produce | the faint (18)

x / x / x / x / x /
Half-flush | that dies | along | her throat:" | such stuff (19)

x / x x x / x / x /
Was cour | tesy, | she thought, | and cause | enough (20)

x / x / x / x / x /
For call | ing up | that spot | of joy | She had (21)

x / x / x / x / / /
A heart - | how shall | I say? - | too soon | made glad, (22)

x / x x x / x / x /
Too eas | ily | impressed; | she liked | whate'er (23)

x / x / x / x / x /
She looked | on, and | her looks | went eve | rywhere. (24)

x / x / x / x / x /
Sir, 'twas | all one! | My fa | vour at | her breast, (25)

x / x / x / x / x /
The drop | ping of | the day | light in | the West, (26)

x / x / x / x / x /
The bough | of cher | ries some | offi | cious fool (27)

/ x x / x / x x / /
Broke in | the or | chard for | her, the | white mule (28)

x / x / x / x / x /
She rode | with round | the ter | race- all | and each (29)

x / x / x / x x / x /
Would draw | from her | alike | the approv | ing speech, (30)

x / x / x / / / x /
Or blush, | at least. | She thanked | men,- good! | But thanked (31)

x / x / x / x / x /
Somehow - | I know | not how - | as if | she ranked (32)



x / x x / / x / / /
My gift | of a | nine-hund | red-years- | old name (33)

x / x / x / x / x /
With an | ybod | y's gift. | Who'd stoop | to blame (34)

x / x / x / x / x /
This sort | of tri | fling? E | ven had | you skill (35)

x / x / x / x / x /
In speech- | (which I | have not)– | to make | your will (36)

x / x / x / x / x /
Quite clear | to such | an one, | and say, | "Just this (37)

x / x / x / x / x /
Or that | in you | disgusts | me; here | you miss, (38)

x / x / x / x / x /
Or there | exceed | the mark"- | and if | she let (39)

x / x / x / x / x /
Herself | be les | soned so, | nor plain | ly set (40)

x / x / x / x / x /
Her wits | to yours, | forsooth, | and made | excuse, (41)

/ x x / x / x / x /
-E'en then | would be | some stoop | ing; and | I choose (42)

/ x x / x / x / x /
Never | to stoop. | Oh sir, | she smiled, | no doubt, (43)

x / x / x / x / x /
Whene'er | I passed | her; but | who passed | without (44)

/ x x / x / x / x /
Much the | same smile? | This grew; | I gave | commands; (45)

x / / / x / x / x /
Then all | smiles stopped | toge | ther. There | she stands (46)

x / x / x / x / x /
As if | alive. | Will't please | you rise? | We'll meet (47)

x / x x x / x / x /
The com | pany | below, | then. I | repeat, (48)

x / x / x / x / x /
The Count | your mas | ter's known | muni | ficence (49)

x / x / x / x / x /
Is am | ple war | rant that | no just | pretence (50)



x / x / x / x / x /
 Of mine | for dow | ry will | be dis | allowed; (51)

x / / / x / x x x /
 Though his | fair daugh | ter's self, | as I | avowed (52)

x / x / x / x / x /
 At start | ing, is | my ob| ject. Nay, | we'll go (53)

x / x / x / x / x /
 Toge | ther down, | sir. No| tice Nep| tune, though, (54)

/ x x / / / x / x x
 Taming | a sea- | horse, thought | a rar | ity, (55)

x / x / x / x / x /
 Which Claus | of Inns | bruck cast | in bronze | for me! (56)

4. ANALYSIS:

Robert Browning's verse is characterized as strident and irregular. He is the one who has exploited poetic license optimally. He experimented with metric patterns and made his verse more eloquent. As quoted by Hiram Corson Prof E Johnson in his paper 'Conscience and Art in Browning' has ably shown that 'the economy of music is a necessity of Browning's Art- that music instead of ever being an end to itself, is with him a means to a much higher end.' Robert Browning has proved that metric techniques can be improved for optimization of effect and meaning. His through knowledge of Greek drama influenced his choice of iamb as Greeks thought that iamb was the closest to speech. He employed iambic pentameter creatively in 'My Last Duchess'.

Iambic pentameter in 'My Last Duchess' matches Duke's aristocratic position. Here Duke's self-aggrandizing, hyper-controlling behavior, his ego, narcissism, skepticism, jealousy, cruelty, hierarchical sensibility of aristocracy, etc. , are converted into iambic pentameter and its substitutes. Throughout the poem Duke is conversing with an emissary but in this conversation turn taking never takes place as Duke is controlling his emissary's responses. As iamb is the metre of conversation and natural speech, a great number of lines from the poem such as 'Sir, 'twas not Her husband's presence only-----', 'She had A heart----how shall I say?- ', 'Sir 'twas all one!----', 'Will't please you rise? We'll meet The company below, then.', 'Nay, we'll go Together down , sir.', 'Notice Neptune----' boost the conversational tone. Rhetorical question in the line 'Who'd stoop to blame This sort of trifling?'----magnifies conversational tone and Duke's persuasive skills.

In 'My Last Duchess' husband murders his wife and narrates it to an emissary from his would be father-in-law. Iambic pentameter its substitutes suit the portrayal of psychopathic Duke and his inner conflict and intense emotions. The substitute of trochaic foot in 'That's my' in line (1), 'Looking' in line (2), 'Stranger' in line (7) magnifies Duke's intense and electric emotions for lifeless objects. Rapid and stumbling movement of trochaic foot in 'Over' in line(17), 'Broke in' in line (28), 'Never' in line (43), 'Much the' in line (45), 'E'en then' in line (42), 'Taming' in line (55) amplify Duke's narcissism, hyper-controlling behavior and unyielding authority of an aristocrat.

The substitute of spondee foot in 'That piece' in line (3), 'Worked bu' in line (4), 'made glad' in line (22), 'white mule' in line(28), 'nine – hund-' and '-old name' in line (33), 'some stoop-' in line (42), 'horse thought' in line (55) functions like a finishing touch for escalated and intense emotions of Duke and emphasizes the heart of the matter. The substitute of anapest in 'the approv-' in line (30) builds tension in readers' mind as it exposes snobbish nature of Duke who is trying to appear as a gentleman.

Iambic pentameter suits dramatic poetry which entails action. In the poem murder of Duke's last Duchess by him forms the core of the issue and it is conveyed in linguistic expression bearing illocutionary force. The line 'I gave commands' bears the illocutionary act of directive. As iamb suits satirical poetry and use of it in the poem promotes ridiculous nature of Duke and exposes hypocrisy surrounding his status quo.

Robert Browning employed open heroic couplet successfully in 'My Last Duchess' which reinforces semanticity. Open Heroic couplet is a rhyming couplet in Iambic pentameter which has enjambed lines i.e. run-on-lines. In run-on-lines syntactic unit that may be sentence, clause or phrase is continued from one line to next line of a poem. Run-on-lines creates suspense, surprise, curiosity, sense of urgency and boost the sense of real speech enhancing



conversational tone. Run-on-lines are used extensively bearing all the aforementioned characteristics in the poem. The following lines exemplify this. The run-on-lines from the poem- 3,4,6,7,9,10,14,15,19,20,21,22,23,24,27,28, 29,30,31,32,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40,42,43,44,46,47,48,50,51,52,53,54, etc.,

5. CONCLUSION:

Thus Iambic Pentameter is oriented to genre and subject matter magnifying the meaning conveyed in 'My Last Duchess'. Robert Browning's experiments with Iambic Pentameter, by providing substitutes of trochaic, spondee, anapest and phryric for it, strengthens the interconnection amongst metric pattern, genre and subject matter leading to profundity. The attributes of metric pattern used in the poem are physical and emotional meaning. Appropriate use of Iambic Pentameter and its substitutes in the poem maximizes meaning and ascertains that metric pattern has chosen the meaning as metric pattern, genre and subject matter are integrated.

REFERENCES:

1. Kennedy, X J and Gioia, Dana. *An Introduction to Poetry*. Longman. Ninth Ed.1998
2. Bahadur,Rai Radhika Nath Bose. *Elements of English Rhetoric and Prosody*. Huckervertty, Chatterjee & Co. Nineteenth Ed.1960 .
3. Hardison, Jr O B. *Project Muse- Prosody and Purpose in the English Renaissance*. Johns Hopkins University Press. 2019.
4. Nowotny , Winifred. *The Language Poets Use*. The Athlone Press.1996.
5. Leech, Geoffrey. *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*. Longman.1969.
6. Sidney, Sir Philip. *Apologie for Poetrie*. Cambridge University Press, 1896.
7. Short, Mick. *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose*. Routledge. 2013.
8. Chomsky, Noam and Halle, Morris. *The Sound Pattern of English*. Harper & Row. 1968.
9. Saintsbury, George. *Historical Manual of English Prosody*. Macmillan. 1926.
10. Phelps, William Lyon. *Robert Browning: How to Know Him*. Read Books Ltd. 2013.
11. Corson, Hiram. *An Introduction to The Study of Robert Browning's Poetry*. D C Heath & Company. Third Ed.1886.
12. Board of Editors. *Mirage: An Anthology of English Poetry*. Orient BlackSwan. 2020.
13. <https://archive.org>
14. <https://www.poetrynook.com>
15. <https://www.poetryexplorer.net>
16. <http://olympus.cz>
17. <https://www.docsity.com>