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15.0 OBJECTIVES

After completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- define 'scansion'
- identify the elements related to scansion in poetry

15.1 WHAT IS SCANSION?

The metrical structure of a poem is analysed and shown visually through scansion. English prosody's scansion technique, which was adapted from the traditional approach of studying ancient Greek and Roman

quantitative verse, uses a set of symbols to show how a poem is structured - specifically, the main foot style, the number of feet per line, and the rhyme system. Scansion aims to heighten the reader's awareness of the various ways that rhythmic elements in poetry convey meaning. Variations in a poem's metrical structure are frequently important to understanding its content.

The graphic, musical, and acoustic varieties of English scansion are the three main categories. In graphic scansion, the most popular kind of scansion, the main symbols are:

Symbol	Name of the symbol	Purpose
/	The acute accent	Metrically stressed syllable
U or ×	The brave	Metrically weak syllable
	A single line	Division between feet
	A double line	Caesura or pause in the line
^	A rest	A syllable metrically expected but not actually present.

With the use of these symbols, graphic scansion first marks the accented syllables before moving on to the unaccented ones in accordance with the natural rhythm of speech. However, it is unable to capture the tiny differences in language, making it a greatly simplified analysis.

15.2 PURPOSE OF SCANSION

A reader can comprehend a poem more fully by understanding the poetic form's structure. This prosody or poem analysis also enables the reader to:

- By breaking a line into feet and observing the syllabic structure of each foot, you can determine the metre of a poem.
- Using the line's length in feet, determine the sort of line.
- Recognize the role that a poem's rhythm has in enhancing its meaning.
- Draw out the free verse and blank verse's natural rhythm.
- Determine the appropriate way to read a poem out loud.

15.2.1 Steps in Scanning a Line

1. Read it aloud
2. Pick out and mark one stress in each polysyllable.
3. Decide which monosyllables are stressed: nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs yes; conjunctions, prepositions, articles no; pronouns only through contrast

4. Mark the slacks
5. Consider ways to divide the preliminary line of marks into feet, checking that the substitutions are plausible and that the line has the right number of feet.
6. Decide whether any stresses are promoted

- **Check Your Progress I**

1. Define the term Scansion.

2. Discuss the Scansion's symbol.

3. Write a brief note on the purpose of Scansion

4. What are the steps of Scansion?

15.3 METERS

There are basically four types of meters. They are as following:

1. Syllable–stress or accented syllabic metres
2. Strong–stress metres
3. Syllabic metres
4. Quantitative metres

15.3.1 Syllable–stress or accented syllabic metres

A foot is the smallest measure of metre used in poetry. A foot is a grouping of phonetically stressed and unstressed syllables in prosody. The following examples show the four main feet used in English poetry:

Meter	Pattern	Examples
Iambic	U /	About, Betray, Canoe, Erode, Robust
Trochee	/ U	Garden, Highway, Tiger, Raven
Anapaest	U U /	Augustin, Bernadine, Christiane, Disagree, Disconnect
Dactyl	/ U U	Abacus, Abelow, Accident, Admiral, Biblical

In addition to the four primary feet—the spondee (/ /) and the Pyrrhus (U U)—appear as replacements in a poem sequence.

Poetic metre is created by the repetition of metrical feet across a line of poetry. Greek suffixes are used to specify a poetic meter's length.

One Foot	Monometer
Two Feet	Dimeter
Three Feet	Trimeter
Four Feet	Tetrameter
Five Feet	Pentameter
Six Feet	Hexameter
Seven Feet	Heptameter
Eight Feet	Octameter

15.3.2 Strong-stress Metres

Strong-stress poetry in Old and Middle English preceded the syllable-stress metre. Because of this, the strong-stress metres are frequently referred to as the "native" metres, and they are unique to the Germanic languages (such as German, English, Dutch, Swedish, etc.). Each line of strong-stress poem contains a predetermined number of stresses. However, the unstressed syllables may differ considerably. Both William Langland's vision poem *Piers Plowman* and the Old English epic poem *Beowulf* (C. 1000) make use of strong-stress metre. The following is the sample of Strong-stress Meters:

/ / / /

In a somer sesun // whon softe, was the sonne

/ / / /

I schop me in-to a schroud // a schein as I were;

/ / / /

In habite of an hermite // un-holy of werkes
 / / / /
 Wende I wydene in this world // wondres to here.

The four lines above each have a middle pause (II) or caesura. Two syllables are stressed on either side of the caesura. Alliteration is used in this paragraph to add emphasis.

The following nursery rhyme also uses strong-stress.

/ / / /
Jack and Jill // went up the hill,
 / / /
To fetch a pale // of water,
 / / / /
Jack, fell down, and // broke his crown
 / / /
And Jill // came tumbling after.

Three and four tensions are alternately placed in the lines above.

15.3.3 Syllabic Metres

The stresses and pauses vary in syllabic metres. However, the number of syllables in each line does not change. Syllabic metres predominate in poetry written in Romance languages, which include French, Italian, and Spanish. Latin, the language of ancient Rome, was the source of these languages. However, in English, the syllable count alone does not provide much rhythmic attraction to most listeners.

15.3.4 Quantitative Metres

The time it takes us to utter a syllable is referred to as quantity in this context. The length of time we pronounce the vowel at the syllable nucleus is a byproduct of this. For instance, there are several ways to say "sweet rose," you can shorten or prolong the vowel sound however you like. However, this variety would make it difficult for the poet and you, the reader, to communicate. Now, if you compare Sanskrit or Hindi to English, you'll discover that neither language allows you to freely alter the length of the vowel sound or the number of syllables. They are predetermined by the Sanskrit and Hindi linguistic systems.

Due to their intense inflection, quantitative metres predominated in Greek and Latin poetry. (To inflect a word is to change its form at the end according to its peculiar, case, mood, tense and number. For instance, we can say that “child” and “boy” inflect differently in the plural.) Because those languages allowed the alternation of long vowels in the roots and short ones in the inflections, the inflection encouraged the development of long, slowly paced lines. In contrast to German, English, which lost the majority of its inflections in the 15th century, is less amenable to the quantitative metres.

Check Your Progress II

1. What are the different types of Meters.

2. List down the various types of feet in Scansion.

3. What do you mean by accented syllabic metres?

4. Discuss Quantitative Metres.

15.4 PRACTICE

i) The Iambic metre:

U / U /

With rav/ished ears

U / U /

The mon/arch hears

U / U /

Assumes / the God

U / U /

Affects / to nod

U / U / U /

And seems / to shake / the spheres. (- Dryden)

ii) The Trochaic Metre

/ U / U / U / U

May thou/ month of/ rosy/ beauty,

/ U / U / U / U

Month when/ pleasurc/ is a/ duty,

/ U / U / U / U

Month of/bees and/ month of/ flowers,

/ U / U / U / U

Month of/ blossom/ laden/ bowers.

iii) The Anapaestic Metre

U U / U U / U U /

I am mon/arch of all/ I survey,

U / U U / U U /

My right/ there is none/ to dispute;

U U / U U / U U /

From the cen/tre all round/ to the sea

U U / U U / U U /

I am lord/ of the bird/ and the brute

iv) The Dactylic Metre

/ U U / U U

Touch her not scornfully

/ U U / U U

Think of her mournfully.

/ U U / U U

Gently and humanly;

/ U U / U U /

Not of the remains of her

/ U U / U U

Now is pure womanly.

• **Check Your Progress III**

1. The curfew tolls the knell of parting day, The lowing herds wind slowly
o'er the lea.

(Iambic --Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard")

2. The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold And his cohorts were
gleaming in purple and gold.

(Anapestic --Lord Byron, "The Destruction of Sennacherib")

3. "There they are, my fifty men and women." (Trochaic --Robert
Browning, "One Word More")

4. "Éve, with her basket, was Deep in the bells and grass." (Dactylic --
Ralph Hodgson, "Eve")

5. Trochee trips from long to short From long to long in solemn sort
Slow spondee stalks; strong foot yet ill able Ever to run with the dactyl
trisyllable. Iambics march from short to long. With a leap and a bound the
swift anapests throng. (Metrical Feet by Samuel Coleridge)

6. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour Draws on apace. Four happy days bring in Another moon; but, O, methinks, how slow This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires, Like to a stepdame, or a dowager. . . .
(Iambic Pentameter)

7. Thy way not mine, O Lord However dark it be; Lead me with thine own hand Choose out the path for me.(Iambic)

8. Dreadful gleams, Dismal screams, Fires that glow, Shrieks of woe, Sullen moans, Hollow groans. (Trochaic - A. Pope)

9. Tell me not in mournful numbers Life is but an empty dream; For the soul is dead that slumbers, And things are not what they seem
(Trochaic - A.W. Longfellow)

10. How fleet is the glance of the mind Compared with the speed of its flight! The tempest itself lags behind And the swift winged arrows of light (Anapaestic)

15.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you learnt about the basics of the scansion of the poetry and its purpose. In addition to this, you also had an exposure of learning different types of Meters and Feet followed my extensive practice. And to master the scansion, further you need to practice more and consult a dictionary whenever you need to.

15.6 KEY WORD

Assonance	repetition or a pattern of similar sounds, especially vowel sounds. A partial rhyme in which the vowel sounds are the same, but the consonant sounds are different.
Alliteration	The repetition of consonant sounds in a series of words.
Antithesis	A rhetorical device in which sharply contrasted ideas are linked in parallel words or phrases.
Caesura	a natural pause or break in a line of verse, usually occurring near the middle of the line.
Consonance	repetition of similar consonant sounds, especially at the ends of words.
Couplet	Two rhyming lines of verse. Shakespeare's sonnets always end with a couplet; his earlier plays are full of them. In the later plays, they are used mostly for special effects, comic effects, and final flourishes.
Elision	The omission of a part of a word (usually one syllable) to make pronunciation easier or to achieve a rhythmic effect.
End-Stopped Line	A line of poetry in which the idea is complete and which ends with a punctuation mark reveals a strong correlation of thought and feeling.
Enjambed Line or Run-On Line	A line of poetry in which the sense of the sentence or clause is not completed (as in an end-stopped line) but which continues into a succeeding line – allowing thoughts to continue from line to line, rather than finishing a thought per line.
Feminine ending	An extra, unstressed syllable at the end of a line (which would ordinarily end with a stressed syllable). Many feminine endings in a row often

	reveal tentativeness, a contrast between thought and feeling.
Masculine ending	an extra stressed syllable at the end of a line.
Oxymoron	A poetic device in which two words of opposite meaning are brought together in an emphatic way.
Parenthetical Phrase	A phrase which is secondary to the main thought, and dependent on it, so that it must be uttered with less emphasis in order for the main thought to be clear. Mark parentheses around it in your script.
Prose	Generally, any written or spoken expression that is not in poetic, rhythmic patterns. Usually, prose appears on the page with an even right margin. Shakespeare uses it in informal situations.
Pun	A pun plays with a works that has two or more meanings in order to twist the sense. Puns are not always funny.
Quatrain	A stanza or poem with four lines, with many possible rhyme schemes.
Rhetoric	The art of discourse and persuasion; skill in the use of language.
Versification	the system of rhyme and meter in a poem

15.7 BOOKS SUGGESTED

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❖ Answer

1.

u / u / u / u / u /
 The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
 u / u / u / u / u /
 The lowing herds wind slowly o'er the lea.

2.

u u / u u / u u / u u /
The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold
u u / u u / u u / u u /
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.

3.

/ u / u / u / u / u
 "There they are, my fifty men and women."

4.

/ u u / u u
 "Éve, with her basket, was
 / u u / u u
 Deep in the bells and grass."

5.

/ u / u / u /
Trochee trips from long to short
 u / u / u / u /
From long to long in solemn sort
 / / / / / / / / u
Slow spondee stalks; strong foot yet ill able
 / u u / u u / u u / u u
Ever to run with the dactyl trisyllable.
 u / u / u / u /
lambics march from short to long.
 u u / u u / u u / u u /
With a leap and a bound the swift anapests throng.

6.

u / u / u/ u / u /

Now, fair / Hippo / lyta, / our nup/ t(ia)l hour

/ / u/ / / u / / /

Draws on / apace. / Four hap / py days / bring in

u / u / u / u / u /

Anoth /er moon; / but, Ó, / methinks, / how slow

/ / / / / / u / u /

This old / moon wanes! / She lin / gers my /desires

/ u u / / u u / u /

Líke to / a step/ dame, or / a dow/ ager. . . .

7.

U / U / U /

Thy way/ not mine, / o Lord,

U / U / U /

Howev/er dark/ it be;

U / U / U /

Lead me / with thine / own hand,

U / U / U /

Choose out/ the path/ for me.

8.

/ u /

Dreadful gleams,

/ u /

Dismal screams,

/ u /

Fires that glow,

/ u /

Shrieks of woe,

/ u /

Sullen moans,

/ u /

Hollow groans,

9.

/ u / u / u / u

Tell me/ not in /mournful/ numbers

/ u / u / u /

Life is /but an /empty /dream;

/ u / u / u / u

For the/ soul is /dead that/ slumbers,

/ u / u / u /

And things/ are not /what they/ seem.

10.

u / uu / uu /

How fleet /is the glance/ of the mind

u / u u / uu /

Compared /with the speed/ of its flight!

u / uu / uu /

The tem/pest itself/ lags behind

u u / uu / uu /

And the swift /winged ar/rows of light