

*The Syllabic Structure of Estonian Hexameter  
at the End of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century – the First Half  
of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century\**

1. Introduction: sources and starting points.

The aim of this paper is to study the syllabic structure of the dactylic hexameter in Estonian poetry before the Soviet occupation. The method of this work is the comparative-statistical analysis, as it was developed within Russian formalism and structuralism. It is grounded in the method generated by Andrey Bely, which, in turn, was based on Nikolay Novosadsky's study of the rhythmical structure of Homeric hymns (Novosadsky 1900, see also Bely 1910). While Novosadsky studied quantitative verse, Bely had to create a method to analyze syllabic-accentual meters. Novosadsky treated hexameter in its ideal form as a dactylic meter, the deviation of which are spondaic feet; for Bely the syllabic-accentual verse is in its ideal model a configuration of stressed and unstressed syllables which can be replaced by a sequence of unstressed syllables; for instance in iambic tetrameter, instead of an iambic foot, a pyrrhicius can occur. Thus, his main focus was on deviations from the ideal model (for instance, the incidence of unstressed syllables on strong positions, but also to the contrary, the incidence of stressed syllables on weak positions). In the case of syllabic-accentual verse, this method has been mostly used to study the distribution of stresses in a verse line. In the case of accentual-syllabic and quantitative-syllabic forms, the disposition of the problem has been different – for the most part, variations of syllabic structure have been analyzed, but in these forms the fluctuation of syllables is to a certain extent allowed with metrical rules and therefore not deviations, but the scope of

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variations and the rules of deep structures are studied. Accordingly, for instance, in dactylic hexameter every foot consists of at least two syllables, but in the first five feet the metrical rules also allow three syllables. In describing the syllabic variety the number and placement of spondaic or contracted feet is taken into account. Attention is paid, first of all, to verse line as a whole and thus to the formation of rhythm in a line as a result of disposition of syllables of different syllabic structure; which rhythmical patterns are the most common; which rhythmical patterns are avoided, etc. The focus is not as much on the primary rhythm or the alternation of stressed and unstressed or heavy and light syllables, but on the secondary rhythm or the incidence of alternation of different feet (for instance, the incidence of contracted or resolved feet in quantitative-syllabic verse). Mikhail Gasparov distinguishes between alternating secondary rhythm, when, for instance, feet which tend to have a stress in the strong positions and feet which tend to avoid any stresses are placed by turns, and the framing rhythm, when the first and the last foot are marked (see also Gasparov 1993: 87). In addition, the distinction should be made between progressive and regressive types of secondary rhythm; furthermore, there are different combined types, for instance, progressive or regressive alternation, etc.

This paper comprises both analysis of the secondary rhythm of the earlier Estonian hexameter, and a more detailed treatment of syllabic variations based on analysis of verse lines as integers. In the case of the latter the analysis derives from the methods used by David Chisholm to study German hexameter (e.g., Chisholm 1995), where 16 regular, that is, with the dactylic fifth foot, rhythmical variations have been delineated. Exceptions and violations of metrical rules, which, as it happens, are quite frequent in the initial period of Estonian hexameter, will be discussed separately.

Let us start with a short overview of the incidence of dactylic hexameter in the earlier period of Estonian literature. Hexameter occurs both in stichic composition and together with its derivate – pentameter in the original poetry as well as the translated poetry. Due to the fact that five authors – Jaan Bergmann, Villem Ridala, Jaan Lõo, Jaan Jõgever and Anna Öpik have at least partially

translated Homer's epics, the total count of Estonian hexameters is quite high, as it is evident from the following table:

**Table 1.** The incidence of hexameters in the pre-war Estonian poetry

<b>Author</b>	<b>No. of verses</b>
Betti Alver	6
Jaan Bergmann	2,708
Matthias Johann Eisen	1,053
Erni Hiir	146
Iseõppinud Ladinlane	121
Jaan Jõgever	10,562
Jaan Lõo	15694
Lydia Koidula	9
Friedrich Kuhlbars	175
Andreas Kurrikoff	2,034
Ants Oras	36
Hans Pöögelmann	46
Villem Ridala	837
Gustav Suits	109
Karl Eduard Sööt	60
Juhan Sütiste	139
Henrik Visnapuu	147
Anna Öpik	6,212
Total	40,048

Hence, the database of the Estonian hexameter includes more than 40,000 verses, but is not complete or final. Random hexameters which occurred, for instance, in heterometrical poems or in free verse as single verse lines have been excluded, and, in all probability, there are still hexametrical poems in Estonian to be found, for

instance, from manuscripts and from the texts of less recognized authors.

Regretfully, there is not any whole-data analysis of the metrical repertoire of the period under observation. Researchers who have executed statistical analysis, have confined themselves to either the selective statistics (Peep 1969: 433–434) or intentionally studied only canonical texts (like, for instance, Jaak Põldmäe; see 1971). Therefore, we can only assess that the dactylic hexameter is probably the most common ternary meter during the period studied, as for the entire metrical repertoire, when we take into account the total number of verse lines, it could have been in third place after the trochaic tetrameter and iambic pentameter. However, this hypothesis needs to be verified.

This statistical analysis encompasses 500 verse lines from every author whose extant texts provide such an amount of hexameter: Bergmann, Kurrikoff, Eisen, Ridala, Lõo, Jõgever and Öpik. Samples from the rest of the authors include all existing lines (see Tab. 1).

## 2. Dactylic hexameter in Estonian poetry: origin and types

The earliest known dactylic hexameter in Estonian was published in 1813, when Peter Heinrich von Frey brought examples of different verse meters in his paper on Estonian poetry (1813). For the elegiac distich he presented the following couplet:

Palju kül, mis innime jõuab: oh! et nüüd keik joud ka  
Wallitseks ennese peäl', ikka veel parremaks saaks!

Already in this short example we can see several difficulties proceeding from the nature of the Estonian prosody, precursing those which future hexametrists would have to face. First of all, in Estonian the accent is fixed on the first syllable; as a result, for Frey every trisyllabic word is a dactyl, while a disyllabic word is mainly a spondee and monosyllables function as ancipitia. Another, more significant difficulty, which is also demonstrated in this distich, relates to the problem of spondees: just like, for instance, in Russian or German, in Estonian it is hard to constitute accentual spondees, as

well. There are two main options to overcome this difficulty in accentual-syllabic hexameter: the avoidance of spondees, resulting in prevalingly dactylic rhythm; or the use of disyllabic words, the consequence of which is that most spondees are substantially trochees. At the same time, more form-conscious authors have used two monosyllables instead, to give the second syllable more weight in order to function as a spondee. In quantitative hexameter, the second option is excluded, unless the second syllable of the disyllabic word is at least of the second duration, thus carrying a secondary stress.

Hexameter was introduced into Estonian fiction by Friedrich Robert Faehlmann (first examples presented to the public were examples created for the speech “Estonian prosody” held in 1840 in The Learned Estonian Society, see Põldmäe 1978: 10). The basic principles of versification are the same as in Frey’s verse: a trochaic word can fill the spondaic foot. Ancient caesurae within the third or the fourth foot are not followed, instead the diaeresis after the third foot prevails. In pentameter, the second half verse is correctly dactylic, in the first half verse often trochees instead of spondees occur.

A greater number of hexameters was created by Jaan Bergmann who first translated *Batrachomyomachia* and after that five cantos of the *Odyssey*. Bergmann’s hexameter is also accentual-syllabic. He has attempted to convey the ancient caesura, solving the problem with the help of monosyllabic words. Yet the general rhythmical pattern is rather different from that of the Homeric hexameter, since the proportion of dactylic feet is much higher and word boundaries mostly coincide with the metrical boundaries inside verse. Another more important hexametrist from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is Matthias Johann Eisen, who has written an epical poem in stichic hexameters “Kõu ja pikker” [Thunder and lightning] (1885). Again, the rhythmical structure of it does not have much in common with that of Homer’s verse: most of the feet are dactylic, word boundaries tend to coincide with feet boundaries. However, the prevailing caesura is feminine caesura in the third foot, that is, he has tried to follow the ancient caesura. Similar principles have been followed also by Andreas Kurrikoff, Friedrich Kuhlbars and Georg Eduard Luiga.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there are ever more experiments with hexameter, whereby the translations of Homer's *Iliad* prevail. In the 1920s Jaan Jõgever translated 16 cantos, still in the manuscript in the Estonian Literary Museum and never published. It is written in accentual-syllabic hexameters which continue, basically, the execution of principles offered by Frey. A spondaic foot can be filled with a trochaic word. Quantity is irrelevant. Instead of the caesura, mostly diaereses occur (after the third foot or the so-called bucolic diaeresis after the fourth foot). Prosody is somewhat stricter than in Bergmann, probably because it is metrically more free (such a connection is rather common, since in order to overcome metrical constraints often solutions are sought from prosody). For instance, in Bergmann's verse the disyllabification of diphthongs is common, while in the first canto of Jõgever's translation the sixth foot (the only position in hexameter where the proper analysis of it is possible) did not have any of such cases.

Another translation of *Iliad* was attempted by Villem Grünthal-Ridala, who confined himself to the first canto. This translation is also accentual-syllabic and its versification is less polished than that of the distichs in his original poetry (which in his later works were also realized as quantitative). The first canto of *Iliad* translated by Ridala was published in 1917. In comparison with the earlier hexameters by Jaan Bergmann and Friedrich Kuhlbars, in Ridala's verse the metrical structure is more constrained: strong positions are usually filled with syllables carrying the primary stress, sometimes also with the first syllable of the second component of a compound word and occasionally with a syllable carrying the secondary stress. He admits trochees instead of spondees. Enjambement, which is usual in Homer's verse (see, for instance, Parry 1971: 251–265), is also common in Ridala's hexameter, at the same time, caesura is not regular. Word boundaries usually coincide foot boundaries, contrarily to the rhythm of the ancient hexameter, where such effect is avoided.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Estonian linguistics started to analyze the phonological structure of the Estonian language and first treatments of Estonian quantity appeared. The first to systematize length was Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann (1875), whose

approach was, however, formulated in the terms of accent with the distinction between light stresses (syllables of the first and the second duration) and heavy stresses (syllables of the third duration). As degrees of duration, quantity was first treated by Mihkel Veske (1879; see also Ehala 2003: 28), yet the understanding that quantity has no role in Estonian versification persisted for decades. We do not know who was the first to regard the Estonian *regisong* as quantitative, but such approach evolved probably in the 1910s and possibly in works by Johannes Aavik (see Põldmäe 1978: 16). It is all the more remarkable that we can find quantitative verse already in Villem Ridala's first poetry collection "Villem Grünthal's songs" published in 1908. These are, however, not hexameters, but Aeolic verses: Sapphic, Alcaic and Asclepiadean stanzas. It is difficult to establish when the first quantitative hexameter was created in Estonian, due to the existence of unpublished translations. One of the most curious examples of the latter is the full translation of *Iliad* by a lawyer and a poet Jaan Lõo which, until now, has not been published in print<sup>1</sup>. Differently from the above-mentioned authors, Lõo pursues quantitative verse, he also tries to achieve a Homeric contrast between word and foot boundaries. To a certain extent, his principles of versification remind of the rules of the *regisong*: light syllables carrying primary stress are avoided in principitia, at the same time, light final syllables are allowed there. Yet unlike in *regisong*, where this opportunity is mainly used in verse-end, we can see strong positions filled with light non-initial syllables elsewhere in verse line; the phonetic constitution of a word is thereby irrelevant. Trochaic spondees are completely avoided. Word stress is rather irrelevant, except in verse-ends, where a disyllabic word is usually placed, resulting in accentual cadence.

It may well be that the author of the first published quantitative hexameter in Estonian is Gustav Suits, whose principles have much in common with Lõo's rules. Nevertheless, Suits is not as free both prosodically and metrically and therefore his hexameter appears to

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<sup>1</sup> The online publication, however, can be found at the website *Estonian verse* (<http://www.ut.ee/verse/index.php?m=authors&aid=9&obj=works&awid=118>).

be much more elaborated. Just like in Lõo's verse, Suits has certain inconsistencies in determining the weight of syllables. Non-initial syllables, which are closed with consonant clusters, are always treated as heavy, as are the non-initial syllables, containing a diphthong. Sometimes, but not as a rule, a syllable is also closed with an initial consonant of the following word; obviously, in this case we are dealing with the direct influence of ancient prosody. Also, a light syllable is sometimes admitted in a strong position.

The third more significant author of quantitative hexameter in the period under observation is Villem Ridala whose poetry book "Tuules ja tormis" [In wind and storm] (1927) contains rhymed elegiac distichs. His verse is somewhat different from that of the above-mentioned authors. First of all, his main attention is on filling the strong positions with an initial syllable of the second or the third duration, while quantity of non-initial syllables is disregarded. At the same time, similarly to Suits, he occasionally allows light syllables in strong positions.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century accentual-syllabic hexameter continued to be written in parallel with quantitative hexameter, but it started to apply conscious quantitative effects, compare, for instance, hexameters by Henrik Visnapuu or the licences provided by the rules of quantitative hexameter, seen, for instance, in hexameters by Erni Hiir.

### 3. Number of syllables in verse line

In the first stage of the analysis the incidence of lines with different syllable count was calculated. The results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** The incidence of hexameters with different syllable count (%%)

Author	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Alver	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	83.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Bergmann	0.0%	1.0%	7.0%	34.2%	57.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Eisen	0.0%	0.6%	4.4%	34.8%	59.8%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Hiir	0.0%	1.4%	8.9%	43.8%	45.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Iseõppinud Ladinlane	0.0%	1.7%	3.3%	17.4%	77.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%



## LOTMAN

Author	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Jõgever	0.6%	4.4%	24.2%	44.6%	26.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Lõo	0.6%	3.2%	14.6%	45.0%	35.4%	0.8%	0.2%	0.2%
Koidula	0.0%	0.0%	44.4%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Kuhlbars	0.0%	0.6%	1.1%	14.2%	84.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Kurrikoff	0.0%	0.2%	3.2%	19.0%	77.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Oras	0.0%	8.3%	16.7%	44.4%	30.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pöögelmann	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	47.8%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Ridala (Iliad)	0.4%	1.0%	1.4%	21.6%	75.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%
Ridala (original poetry)	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	24.8%	73.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Suits	1.8%	2.7%	18.2%	38.2%	39.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Sõõt	0.0%	0.0%	15.0%	23.3%	60.0%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Sütiste	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	9.4%	88.4%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Visnapuu	0.0%	3.4%	12.2%	29.7%	53.4%	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
Õpik	0.6%	10.0%	32.8%	40.6%	16.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	0.3%	2.8%	11.9%	33.6%	51.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%

The results of the analysis reveal that the syllable count of most hexameters ranges from 15–17 syllables, which was quite expected, considering the dactyllicity of Estonian hexameter. There are some authors who consciously attempt to decrease the syllable count in verse: as to quantitative hexameter, such authors are Lõo and Suits, and in accentual-syllabic hexameter this is done with the help of trochaic feet by Jõgever and especially Õpik. The 17-syllabic lines prevail, making up 51% of the entire material. The shortest lines consist of 13 syllables; such verses are extremely rare, appearing only in 0.3% of the cases. The analyzed material does not contain any 12-syllabic verses, where all the feet are contracted.

There are also clear violations of the metrical structure of hexameter. Let us note that, as a rule they are rather towards the bigger, not smaller syllable count. There are four instances where the verse line contains 20 syllables (according to the metrical scheme, the maximum count is 17 syllables).

As to the average syllable count in hexameters of different authors, the lowest count per line is in these authors who have

translated ancient epics (Lõo, Jõgever, Oras and Öpik). To the contrary, the highest syllable count is in the hexameters of original poets Alver, Kuhlbars and Sütiste. However, there are exceptions in both cases: Iseõppinud Ladinlane and Villem Ridala overcome the median, while Suits, being an original poet, does not quite reach it.

#### 4. Secondary rhythmicity

The following table demonstrates, how much and in which feet the analyzed authors allow contracted or disyllabic feet.

**Table 3.** Contractions in hexameter

Author	1. foot	2. foot	3. foot	4. foot	5. foot
Bergmann	11.2%	4.6%	14.2%	21.0%	0.2%
Kurrikoff	6.4%	5.4%	7.8%	5.2%	1.2%
Kuhlbars	5.7%	0.6%	5.1%	5.7%	0.0%
Eisen	13.6%	6.0%	18.8%	7.0%	0.2%
Häär	16.4%	2.1%	36.3%	8.9%	0.7%
Iseõppinud Ladinlane	6.6%	3.3%	5.8%	9.1%	1.7%
Ridala ( <i>Iliad</i> )	9.8%	5.2%	4.4%	5.0%	2.6%
Ridala (original poetry)	10.6%	3.5%	8.0%	4.9%	1.3%
Lõo	35.4%	15.6%	14.6%	17.8%	2.2%
Jõgever	33.4%	17.4%	25.2%	30.4%	0.8%
Suits	25.5%	23.6%	18.2%	16.4%	3.6%
Visnapuu	16.2%	4.7%	33.8%	6.8%	0.7%
Sütiste	1.4%	0.7%	8.0%	1.4%	0.7%
Öpik	29.4%	18.8%	55.0%	35.0%	0.4%
Total	19.4%	9.6%	20.2%	16.2%	1.1%

The main difference from the ancient hexameter is the low count of contractions – in the Greek hexameter the number of contractions in some positions exceeds 40%, and in Latin hexameter in the fourth position of some authors is as much as 90%. In Estonian authors this figure rarely goes above 20%. Only the number of contractions in Anna Õpik's verse comes close to the data of the ancient hexameter. The biggest number of contractions is, as a rule, in the first or in the third foot, sometimes also in the fourth foot, but in the studied authors never in the second foot.

The other difference is that secondary rhythmic is only starting to evolve: unlike Greek and Latin hexameter, there are no clear tendencies yet. In Greek hexameter authors show similar dissimilative rhythm, where the number of contractions is the highest in the first two feet (see, for instance, Gasparov 1997: 236–237). The typical secondary rhythm of Latin hexameter, has a progressive, rising character (*ib.* 240), which has no counterpart in earlier Estonian hexameter. Nevertheless, some more preferred rhythmical models can still be detected. First, there is a rhythmical model where the low number of contractions in the second foot contrasts the higher number of contractions in the first foot, while the number of contractions is even higher in the third and the fourth foot. Such dissimilative rhythm is typical, for instance, to Matthias Johann Eisen, Anna Õpik, Erni Hiir and Henrik Visnapuu, in whose hexameter the contractions peak in the third foot. The so-called falling rhythm, where the biggest number of contractions is in the beginning of verse, but onward drops with every foot, is typical to Gustav Suits. But the data characterizing the incidence of contractions are different in every author. For instance, Jaan Jõgever's rhythmical pattern approaches the tendencies of the so-called framing rhythm. However, there are several authors (for instance, Kurrikoff, Kuhlbars and Lõo) in whose case the secondary rhythmic has not shaped out yet.

In the next stage of analysis verse lines are studied as integers. The notation presented by David Chisholm (1996) is utilized, where 1 marks contracted or disyllabic foot, while 2 marks dactylic, that is, trisyllabic foot. He distinguishes 16 rhythmical variations, which have been presented in Table 8 (in the case of these variations the penultimate foot is always dactylic).

**Table 4.** 16 regular syllabic variations of hexameter

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
111121	111221	112121	112221	121121	121221	122121	122221
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
211121	211221	212121	212221	221121	221221	222121	222221

**Table 5.** The incidence of syllabic variations in hexameter (%%)

Author	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Alver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	83
Bergmann	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	7	0	0	1	2	3	10	15	58
Eisen	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	11	0	0	1	4	1	15	4	60
Häär	0	0	0	0	1	6	0	10	0	1	0	1	1	27	7	46
Iseõppinud Ladinlane	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	0	1	0	2	1	4	7	77
Jõgever	0	1	1	2	2	5	7	14	0	2	3	7	4	10	12	26
Koidula	0	0	0	0	0	33	11	22	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	22
Kuhlbars	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	1	4	5	84
Kurrikoff	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	5	0	6	3	77
Lõo	0	1	1	3	1	2	5	22	0	1	1	8	1	7	8	35
Õpik	1	0	1	1	5	10	4	7	4	6	2	5	10	20	8	16
Oras	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	8	3	8	6	3	17	19	31
Pöögelmann	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	26	17	48
Ridala ( <i>Iliad</i> )	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	8	0	0	0	5	0	4	4	75
Ridala (original poetry)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	0	0	0	3	0	8	4	73
Sööt	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	2	0	0	2	5	5	7	8	60
Suits	1	0	0	2	1	4	5	11	1	3	2	14	1	7	5	39
Sütiste	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	88
Visnapuu	0	1	0	0	0	7	1	6	1	1	0	2	3	20	1	53

The most frequent variations are 122221, 121221, 122121, 212221, 221121, 221221, 222121 and predominantly 222221, that is, combinations where the trisyllabic feet prevail. These results are consistent with the previous stages of analysis which confirm the dactyllicity of the Estonian hexameter in the earlier period. All 16 regular variations are represented, as to the forms where the fifth foot is disyllabic, there are only eight different variants.

Different authors have different preferences. There are authors whose verse does not show much variety (see, for instance, Kuhlbars, who has only six different variations, whereas 84% of the verses are of the same rhythmical pattern, or Sütiste, in whose verse the number of different variations is only four, while 88% are of the same pattern). There are also authors whose rhythmical picture is rather varying. Such authors are, for instance, Lõo, who has 14 variants and only 35% of his verses are with the pattern 222221, that is, the most common pattern in other authors; Gustav Suits, who has 17 variations; or Anna Öpik, who has 15 different variations, the most common not 222221 (16%), but the symmetrical 221221 (20%).

In addition to the 16 regular forms, in Kurrikoff's, Oras's, Ridala's, Sõõt's, Suits's and Visnapuu's verse several variations with the contracted fifth foot occurred (111211, 122211, 222111, 222211, 221211, 212211). Variations shaped 111111, 112111, 121111, 121211, 211111, 211211 and 212111 did not occur, that is, such variations where the contracted feet prevail and the fifth foot is disyllabic.

At the same time the analyzed material included a number of irregular variations, where both violations against the number of feet in line occurred (22221, 12221, 21221, 1221221, 2222221, 2112221), as well as where violations against the syllabics of a verse foot occurred (122231, 122321, 123221, 132321, 222131, 222321, 223121, 223221, 232221, 322121, 322221, 321221).

## 5. Metrical deviations

Although, generally speaking, the syllabics of the Estonian hexameter is regulated with the same rules as the ancient hexameter,

more freedom is evident in earlier Estonian hexameter: we come across both tetrasyllabic and monosyllabic feet, analogically with the Estonian *regisong*. The syllabic structure is violated primarily with the following errors:

1. The wrong number of syllables in a foot, for instance, tetrasyllabic feet in hexameter, see, for instance:

x o o x o o o x o o x o o x o o x o

kostsivad penikoorma maad läbi määratu männiku nõnda  
(M. J. Eisen, *Kõu ja pikker* [Thunder and lightning] 2.68)

or

x o o o x o o x o o x o x o o x o

Pisukesteks tükkideks raius ja sõrme suuruseks tegi,  
(M. J. Eisen, *Kõu ja pikker* 2.132);

unstressed additional syllable in the beginning or the end of a line (that is, a verse with anacrusis or a dactylic ending), see an example of a verse with anacrusis:

o x o o x o o x o o x o o x o o x o

aminthlane, kui kuna sul ehitand olen templi ma meelsa  
(*Ilias* 1.39, tlk Jaan Lõo)

and examples of hexameter with dactylic ending:

x o o x o o x o x o o x o o x o o

küngaste haudunud vahed, tolmunud teeharud-rästikud  
(Henrik Visnapuu *Äike* [Thunderstorm])

x o x o o x o x o o x o o x o o

Sangar nii sõnas, meelt veendis oma venna ta tõisiti  
(*Ilias* 7.120, tlk Jaan Lõo).

2. The wrong number of feet. There can be less than six feet, see, for instance, a five-footed hexameter in Jaan Lõo's sample:

x o o x o x o o x o o x o

Atreusipoeg sest sai vihaseks, kohe tõuisis,  
(*Ilias* 1.387, tlk Jaan Lõo)

or more than six, see a seven-footed hexameter:

x o o x o o x o o x o o x o o x o o x o

Tal inimpõlve ju kaks olivad kadunud sureliste ju meeste,  
(*Ilias* 1.250, tlk Jaan Lõo)

The percentage of mistakes depends on an author. There are writers who break the metrical rules more freely (for instance Jaan Lõo, in whose sample about 2% of the lines contain some kind of error), but there are also rather strict authors (for instance, there were no deviations from the metrical pattern in Anna Öpik's sample). However, it has to be said that the number of flawed verses was not big enough in any author to affect the general rhythmical tendencies.

## 6. Summary

While there were also poets who are more spondaic (trochaic) than the others, the statistical analysis revealed the overall tendency to dactyllicity. What is more varying is the secondary rhythmic: preferences of the authors of the studied period were rather different.

The analysis showed that differences in syllable count in this era do not depend on date of creation nor esthetic orientation of a writer: there are no clear-cut distinctions between traditionalist and modernist poets. The versification system has no particular role as well: quantitative verse can have a rather high average syllable count (for instance, in Ridala's hexameter), but also a rather low count (Lõo), see also the different rhythm of accentual-syllabic hexameters by Sütiste and Öpik. The comparison of original and translated poetry did not reveal any firm regularities: for instance, the translated hexameters by Ridala and Iseõppinud Ladinlane have a higher syllable count, but by Lõo and Öpik a lower count, while Bergmann's data are quite average. Also, the number of syllables does not depend on composition: lower syllable count characterized both Öpik's stichic hexameter and Oras's elegiac distichs; higher syllable count is typical to the stichic verse by Iseõppinud Ladinlane and Juhan Sütiste. Thus, the number of syllables tends to depend rather on an author's individual preferences, not structural constraint (for

instance, versification system), time of composition, author's esthetic orientation or erudition, etc.

At the same time, verse technique appears to be a factor in preferences for the type of secondary rhythm. The authors of accentual-syllabic hexameter (Eisen, Öpik, Visnapuu) tended to prefer dissimilative rhythm, while Ridala, Suits and Lõo, who wrote quantitative verse, accumulated the contractions in the beginning of verse line.

The analysis of verse lines as integers showed that all studied authors have similar preferences for the variation with the maximum allowed syllable count, in which the first five feet are dactylic. This rhythmical type is especially prevailing in Ridala's, Sütiste's and Kuhlbars's hexameter. Only Öpik prefers the symmetrical variation, where the third foot is disyllabic. Of the studied authors is, however, quite different is the variability: there are authors who prefer 4–6 stereotypical patterns (for instance, Sütiste and Kuhlbars), but there are also authors with a diversified rhythmical repertoire (Lõo, Suits and Öpik).

Both on the level of verse line, and also verse foot occur violations of the metrical rules of hexameter: there are feet or verses with too little or too high a syllable count, there are also additional syllables in the beginning or end of the line. The metrical errors are typical to the period of formation of a meter; in the canonical hexametrical texts created in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (for instance, the new translations of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*) such violations are rare.

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