Generalized Anacrusis in the Meter of *Beowulf**

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This paper proposes a modified version of anacrusis which applies to a verse-initial element in order to make the verse more manageable by a finite set of verse types. The type-dependent application of the restricted anacrusis originally proposed by Sievers (1885) and adherently employed by Bliss (1958), Cable (1974), Russom (1987) and Hutcheson (1995) not only is unwarranted but also yields a statistical anomaly in some identifiable pairs of verse types. It is demonstrated that there is no obvious reason for such limitation on its application and that the correlation between relative complexity and actual frequency of lift-initial verse types exhibits a pattern incompatible with that of dip-initial verse types. To account for such problems. it is argued that the application of anacrusis be extended to all verse types in such a way that both lift-initial and dip-initial verse types are legitimate candidates for its application. Such extension is further justified by the frequency pattern in light verses.

1. Introduction

Anacrusis or *auftakt* refers to the addition of one or two extra syllables at the beginning of a line. The syllables are "extrametrical" in that they do not count as legible elements for scansion. In other words, they are invisible as far as scansion or metrical analysis is concerned. The primary motivation for positing the initial extrametrical element is that without it aberrant and isolated metrical patterns can be dispensed with. Consider the following verse in *Beowulf*.[1,2]

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[1] The term *verse* refers to the major metrical constituent of a line often dubbed as *half-line*.

[2] The number in the square brackets indicates the line number and the on-verses and off-verses are represented by the following *a* and *b*, respectively.

(1)	geswāc	æt	sæcce	[2681a]
	failed	in	battle	'shattered in battles'

The verse consists of five syllables and with metrical stress specified it has the metrical composition given in (2).[3]

(2) W S W S W

If all syllables in the verse are metrically visible and of equal metrical relevance, then we end up creating a verse type that is not attested in *Beowulf*. Not a single instance of a verse type with the metrical contour such as in (2) occurs in the total 6,364 verses of *Beowulf*. On the other hand, if we disregard the first unstressed syllable (*ge-*), then the verse fits into a well-attested type, the actual instances of which amount to over 300. Consequently, anacrusis not only saves a group of verses from anomaly but also makes any attempt to define all attested verses with a finite set of metrical patterns more attainable.

For all the alleged benefits of positing anacrusis, not all scholars agree with its role and significance in the metrical analysis of *Beowulf*. Some (Bliss 1958, Cable 1974, Russom 1987, Fulk 1992, Hutcheson 1995) employ their own version of anacrusis as one of the well-motivated metrical accommodations in the analysis of metrical variation.[4] Others (Keyser 1969, Hoover 1985, Kendall 1991, Golston and Riad 1996), however, dismiss anacrusis as a legitimate metrical convention largely based on indeterminancy in its application and distributional anomalies among verse types.[5]

The present paper proposes an extended version of anacrusis and demonstrates that a number of problems with restricted anacrusis can readily be accounted for in the modified anacrusis.

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[3] The symbol S represent a metrically strong position and W a metrically weak position.

[4] Particularly, scholars proposed diverse application patterns regarding extrametrical elements. Bliss (1958) employed anacrusis relatively sparingly whereas Russom (1987) suggested more lenient application allowing extrametricality on lexical words. In spite of all the differences, their anacrusis can be considered as restricted compared with the one to be proposed in the present paper.

[5] For the invalidity of arguments raised by Hoover (1985) and Kendall (1991) against anacrusis, refer to Suzuki (1995).

2. Basic Types and Metrical Complexity

Drawing upon the seminal work by Sievers (1885, 1905), Bliss (1958) put forward four basic types, which define major normative metrical patterns in the meter of *Beowulf*.

(3) a. Type A: [S W S W]

aldre	ðīnum	[346a]
lords	your	'to your lords'

b. Type B: [W S W S]

on	flēam	gewand	[1001b]
in	flight	went	'returned in flight'

c. Type C: [W S S W]

ðurhtēon	mihte	[1140b]
drive	be able to	'may bring about'

d. Type D: [S S W W]

wēl	līcodon	[639b]
well	pleased	'pleased very much'

e. Type E: [S W W S]

slǣpende	frǣt	[1581b]
sleeping	devoured	'devoured while sleeping'

In Bliss' system, these basic verse types are further divided into several types depending on the position of a caesura, or a division between two measures.[6] Assuming every measure has the one and only one S, there are four additional basic types as in (4).[7,8]

(4) a. Type 1A: [S || W S W]

rand	gehēawe	[682a]
shield	hew	'to cut down (a) shield'

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[6] In line with most metrical analyses (Russom 1987, Hutcheson 1995, Getty 1997), I assume a binary structure from a line down to a metrical position. A line consists of two verses and a verse of two measures and a measure of two metrical positions.

[7] Caesura is represented by the symbol ||.

[8] The postion of caesura is indicated by the number before the verse type. For example, 1A represents the metrical pattern [S || W S W].

b. Type 2A: [S W || S W]
wundum drihtne [2753b]
wounded lord's 'of (the) wounded ruler'
c. Type 2B: [W S || W S]
on hand gehwearf [2208a]
into hand came 'came into (his) hand'
d. Type 3B: [W S W || S]
on flōdes æht [42a]
in flood's possession 'into the sea's dominion'
e. Type 2C: [W S || S W]
gefēan habban [2740b]
joy have 'have joy'
f. Type 1D: [S || S W W]
hēah hlīfian [2805a]
high tower 'tower high'
g. Type 2E: [S W || W S]
uncūð gelād [1410b]
unknown region '(an) unknown region'
h. Type 3E: [S W W || S]
singāla sēað [190a]
constantly brooded 'brooded constantly'

The metrical patterns summarized in (4) serve as cannons or norms from which variant or deviant subtypes are derived. Derivation of subtypes from normative types can involve a number of metrical devices. One of such metrical accommodations focuses on the metrical relevance of verse initial syllables.[9] Some elements at the outset of a verse become irrelevant to scansion by the application of anacrusis.

(5) a. gomban gyldan [11a]
tribute pay 'pay tribute'
b. in Cāines cynne [107a]
in Cain's kin 'in (the) kin of Cain'

[9] Other notable metrical accommodations originally proposed by Sievers (1885) include resolution, expansion, and extension.

In (5a), the two words have the identical stress pattern [S W] and the verse nicely fit in the basic type 2A. Unlike (5a), (5b) contains one more syllable at the beginning and anacrusis allows the initial syllable to be invisible to metrical scansion. Thus by dint of anacrusis, the verse in (5b) can be construed as a subtype of (5a). In other words, rather than positing an ad-hoc verse type such as [W S W || S W], we can relate that particular metrical pattern to one of the normative pattern with a simple assumption that verse initial syllables are irrelevant to metrical consideration.

In addition to the metrical convenience, metrical accommodations also entail a crucial relationship between normative and variant verse types. They function as a robust mediator between a basic type and its variant types. Basic types are those which are more intimately grounded on the actual stress patterns of the language in question. And variant types derived from the basic types are those whose metrical patterns are less likely to fit in the actual stress patterns of the language. To capture such difference between basic and derived types in a formal fashion, Halle and Keyser (1971) introduced the notion of metrical complexity or tension. According to them, derived types are metrically more complex than basic types and the relative complexity between them can be empirically tested by actual frequency in a given set of data. Consequently, metrically complex types are less likely to appear than simpler types.[10] If the correlation between the basic types and their subtypes is real, one would expect the basic type A (5a) to appear more frequently than its subtype (5b). In fact, the number of the verses belonging to the subtype (5b) is noticeably smaller than that of the verses belonging to the basic type (5a): 54 vs. 1,275.[11]

Based on the traditional foot-substitution system (Sievers 1885, Bliss 1958) couched in the generative metrics (Halle and Keyser 1971, Russom 1987), we assume that there are eight basic types as in (4) and that variant types are derived from the basic types by the application of a variety of

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[10] For a formal definition of the metrical complexity, refer to Getty (1997) and Sohn (1998).

[11] The precise number of verses scanned as involving anacrusis varies from scholar to scholar depending upon their assumption on the application of anacrusis. No scholars, however, have employed anacrusis in such a way that the incidence of the subtypes is greater than one tenth of the basic type.

metrical accommodations. Since they require some kind of metrical maneuver to be scanned properly, subtypes are considered as metrically more complex than basic types. Such relative complexity, functioning consciously or unconsciously in the composition of a poem, governs the poet's choice of a particular metrical pattern. As a result, subtypes would appear less frequently than their basic types.

3. Restricted Anacrusis

In all analyses (Sievers 1885, Bliss 1958, Cable 1974, Russom 1987, Kendall 1991, Hutcheson 1995) in which anacrusis plays a significant role in identifying verse types, the extrametrical prelude is strictly restricted to verse types with intial S. The basic types with initial S (i.e. Type A, D and E). In principle, there seems to be no obvious reason for the limited application of anacrusis. In fact none of the previous approaches has explored the reason why anacrusis should occur in lift-initial verse types.[12] They simply assume that anacrusis is sensitive to the types and relevant to verse type with initial lift. One possible reason for imposing such a restriction on the application of anacrusis is that in verses with initial dip some ambiguity may be inevitable. Lift-initial verses, being marked by a metrically strong position, unambiguously demarcate its beginning whereas dip-initial verses, with one or more initial dips, may cause the application of anacrusis to become less conspicuous. Consider the following pair.

(6) a.	in	Cāines	cynne				[107a]
	in	Cain's	kin				'in (the) kin of Cain'
b.	ðā	was	eft	swā	ǣr		[642a]
	then	was	again	as	before		'then again as before was'

In (6a) the application of anacrusis is well-motivated. If we take the first unstressed syllable as extrametrical, then the rest of the verse fits into the basic type 2A. Or if we include the first syllable in our scansion, then we have an unmetrical verse type.[13]

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[12] The term *lift* means a metrically strong position and *dip* a metrically weak position.

[13] Syllables to which anacrusis is applied are represented in angled brackets.

(7) a. [<W> S W || S W]
b. [W S W || S W]

The choice between (7a) and (7b) seems quite obvious. It would be resonable to scan the verse as metrical with the help of anacrusis than to add an additional ad-hoc, isolated metrical pattern. The situation is not the same with verses with dip-initial verses. Like lift-initial verses, there are two options available for the scansion of dip-initial verses. But the choices themselves are not identical.

(8) a. [<W> W S || W S]
b. [W W S || W S]

The verse can be scanned either as 2B with anacrusis or as 2B with an additional initial unstressed syllable. Unlike (7b), a significant number of the verse type appears in *Beowulf*. Thus with dip-initial verses, the choice is between two legitimate verse types whereas with lift-initial verses it is between metrical and unmetrical verse types. In brief, undesirable indeterminancy would be inevitable if anacrusis applied to unstressed initial syllable of dip-initial verse types. One way of getting rid of potential indeterminacy concerning its application is to restrict anacrusis to unambiguous cases, that is, lift-initial verse types.

Such restriction on the application of anacrusis leads to two major problems. One is its unwarranted restriction. As noted before, aside from some possible ambiguity on its application, there is no prima facie reason to assume that anacrusis is type-dependent. Under type-sensitive anacrusis, the definition anacrusis would be as follows:

(9) Restricted Anacrusis
An initial unstressed syllable of lift-initial verse types is invisible to meter.

In a sense the condition on the application of anacrusis weakens the validity of the process itself. The sole function of anacrusis is fudging some verses to make them more metrical than they are. Then why does it have to apply to lift-initial verse types? Even for dip-initial verse types, as shown in (8), anacrusis has the effect of enhancing metricality, making a subtype more like its basic type. Thus, by imposing such a condition on

anacrusis, we limit ourselves, without any sound reason, to particular instances of metricality-enhancing effect of anacrusis. The dichotomy regarding the application of anacrusis is not only uncalled-for, but also too binding to capture its unifying effect.

Another problem with restricted anacrusis is that it results in some unexpected statistical asymmetry between lift-initial types and dip-initial types. As mentioned before, being more metrically complex, variant verse types are less likely to appear than their basic types. Let us first consider the frequency of the basic and variant types of A:[14,15]

(10) Verse Types A[16]

Verse Type	Pattern	Incidence
1A	[S || W S W]	418
1A1	[S || **W** W S W]	111
1A2	[S || **W W** W S W]	4
2A	[S W || S W]	1,275
2A1	[S W (**W**) || S W (**W**)]	115
2A2	[S W **W** || S W **W**]	1

The representative example for each verse type is given below.[17]

(11) 1A: geong in geardum [13a]
young in courtyard 'young in (the) courtyard'

1A1: wind **o**fer ïðum [1907a]
wind over waves '(the) wind over (the) waves'

[14] The number after the type indicated the number of the syllable(s) added to the basic type.

[15] The classification of verse types is based on Vickman (1990) and Sohn (1998). All other metrical accommodations such as resolution and extension which are irrelevant to the current discussion are suppressed.

[16] Extra syllables added to the basic type are indicated in boldface. Parenthesized syllables in 2A1 in the table mean that either one of them may appear but not both at the same time.

[17] The syllable(s) in boldface indicate an additional syllable(s).

1A2: Brūh **ðenden** ðū mōte [1177b]
use while you can 'Use while you can'

2A: syles fēore [3013b]
his life '(with) his (own) life'

2A1: weardo**de** hwīle [105b]
inhibited time 'lived (for some) time'

2A2: fyrdsea**ru** fūsli**cu** [232a]
armor ready '(battle)-ready armor'

As surmised from the frequency difference in the table (10), the addition of a syllable(s) to the basic type 1A and 2A makes their subtypes more complex. The subtype 1A1 contains one more extra syllable than its basic type 1A. The subtype 1A2 contains one more syllable than 1A1 and two more syllables than the basic type 1A. Metrical complexity increases as the number of extra syllables increases. This increasing complexity is in turn reflected on the actual instances of each subtype. Thus the more extra syllables are added, the less likely the subtype to occur. Let us consider the verse type D which begins with a lift.

(12) Verse Types D

Verse Type	Pattern	Incidence
1D	[S || S W W]	522
1D1	[S **W** || S W W]	148
1D2	[S **W** || S W W **W**]	3

1D: lēof lēod-cynnig [54a]
dear king of a people '(the) king beloved by (his) people'

1D1: mis**te** mercelses [2439a]
missed mark 'missed (the) mark'

1D2: swe**fan** sibbege**driht** [729a]
sleep kinsmen 'the band of kinsman sleeping'

Similar to the pattern found in type A subtypes, type D subtypes show the decreasing frequency as the number of syllables added to the basic type increases. Let us consider the last lift-initial verse type.

(14) Verse Types E

Verse Type	Pattern	Incidence
2E	[S W || W S]	106
2E1	[S W || **W** W S]	7
3E	[S W W || S]	380
3E1	[S W W || **W** S]	51

2E: ondslyht āgeaf [2929b]
onslaught gave 'struck back'

2E1: hond sweng ne oftēah [1520b]
hand swing not held back 'did not withhold (the) swing of (his) hand'

3E: swōgende lēg [3145b]
roaring flame '(the) roaring flame'

3E1: ānfealdne geðōht [256a]
plain thought 'plain thouhgt'

Here again, we find that the correlation between the incidence and the number of an extra syllable(s) holds. With lift-initial verse types, basic types are those which occur the most frequently and their subtypes tend to occur less frequently in proportion to the number of syllables added. If we assume that each addition of an extra syllable to the basic types incurs more complexity, then the prediction made by Halle and Keyser (1971) is born out. The basic types, being prototypes requiring no additional metrical device, are the least complex and, thus, the most frequently attested metrical patterns.

Keeping in mind that with lift-initial verse types (A, D and E) basic types are more frequently attested than their subtypes with an extra syllable(s), let us consider the dip-initial verse types (B and C).

(16) Verse Types B

Verse Type	Pattern	Incidence
2B	[W S || W S]	11
2B1	[**W** W S || W S]	125
2B2	[**W W** W S || W S]	39
2B3	[**W W W** W S || W S]	8
3B	[W S W || S]	68
3B1	[**W** W S W || S]	358
3B2	[**W W** W S W || S]	157
3B3	[**W W W** W S W || S]	21
3B4	[**W W W W** W S W || S]	1

2B: nē lēof nē lāð [511a]
not friend not foe 'neither friend nor foe'

2B1: **ðē** him foran ongēan [2364b]
who him before against 'who against him before'

2B2: **oððæt** him eft onwōc [56b]
until him again was born 'until (to) him in turn was born'

2B3: **oððæt hy**ne ān ābealch [2280b]
until himself one enraged 'until one (man) himself enraged'

3B: ðæt mihtig God [701a]
the almighty God 'the almighty God'

3B1: **ac** se hwīta helm [1448a]
but the shining helmet 'but the shining helmet'

3B2: **ðæt hīe** him ōðer flet [1086a]
that they him another hall 'that they (for) them another hall'

3B3: **nō** **ymbe** ðā fæhðe spræc [2618b]
not about the enmity spoke 'never spoke about the enmity'

3B4: **Hwæðere** **him** on ferhðe grēow [1718b]
yet him in mind grew 'yet grew in his mind'

In type B verses, the basic type, that is, [W S || W S] appear less frequently than its subtype with one more extra syllable. On the other hand, between its subtype, the frequency of each subtype show the identical pattern with lift-initial verse types. As each subtype involves more extra syllables, its frequency decreases. Thus we are confronted with a dilemma as to how far the validity of the alleged correlation between metrical complexity and actual frequency can go. On the one hand, if we take the basic type (2B) and its subtype (2B1) into our consideration, the fact runs counter to what we expect. On the other hand, if we consider only the subtypes, then the result complies with the prediction made with lift-initial verse types.

Another dip-initial verse type (C) shows the similar pattern with respect to the difference in frequency due to the number of extra syllables.

(17) Verse Type C

Verse Type	Pattern	Incidence
2C	[W S || S W]	167
2C1	[**W** W S || S W]	262
2C2	[**W W** W S || S W]	96
2C3	[**W W W** W S || S W]	17
2C4	[**W W W W** W S || S W]	2

2C: gebūn hæfdon [117b]
settled had 'had settled (in)'

2C1: **ðær** hē fōlc āhte [522b]
where he people owned 'where he had subjects'

2C2: **ðæt** **hīe** on bā healfa [1305a]
that those on both sides 'that those on both sides'

2C3: **ðæt hē hæfde** mōd micel [1167a]
that he had courage much 'that he had great courage'

2C4: **ðonne hē on** ðæt sinc starað [1485b]
when he at the treasure stares 'when he gazes at the treasure'

As shown in (16) and (17), dip-initial verse types differ from lift-initial verse types with regard to the frequency in terms of extra syllables. The basic types are the most frequently attested type in lift-initial verse types whereas they are not in dip-initial verse types. However, the difference ends there. Among subtypes with one or more extra syllables, the incidence of each subtype decreases as the extra syllables increases. To put the situation more precisely, there are locally skewed statistics in dip-initial verse types. Such a twisted statistical result has not been unnoticed in the literature. Goldston and Riad (1995) were the first to discover the anomaly.[18]

(18) Goldston and Riad (1995 : 20)
In types B and C non-ideal types with extra stressless syllables are better attested than the ideals.

Since they point out the problem in order to emphasize the supremacy of their quantitative metrics over the prominence-based metrical analysis, Golston and Riad appear to overstate its severity.[19] As shown in (16) and (17), the problematic case is restricted to the pair of the basic type and the subtype with one extra syllable. The rest of the subtypes shows no distorted patterns regardless of whether the verse begins with a dip or lift.

Notice that even tough anacrusis applies as it stands in (9), it would not pose any problem if the notion of metrical complexity proves invalid. In fact one can dismiss the empirical value of metrical complexity and the problem pointed out in recent literature (including the present work) will vanish of itself. However, as previously mentioned, the problem is not global to the extent that no systematic prediction can be made on the correlation between

[18] The problem was also pointed out by Getty (1997).

[19] For a detailed criticism of quantitative meter proposed by Golston and Riad (1996), refer to Sohn (2000).

the number of extra syllables and the frequency of relevant subtypes. The problem is local and restricted to an readily identifiable set of verse types: dip-initial verse types.

It is also worth mentioning that the problem could not be recognized until the notion of metrical complexity introduced as an essential part of metrics. The original proposal of the restricted anacrusis (Sievers 1885) predates the generative metrics (Halle and Keyser 1971) and the problem with relative frequency among subtypes might have escaped the scrutiny of the proponents of Sievers' system.

4. Generalized Anacrusis

The solution to the problems with restricted anacrusis appears to be very simple. But its implications are not. First, we can ascend anacrusis from a type-dependent metrical device to a type-independent metrical accommodation applying to all verse types. Second, the skewed statistics can be explained away. Third, the concept of metrical complexity can remain valid.

If we extend the application of anacrusis to dip-initial verse types (type B and C), then all the problems would disappear. Extending its application means getting rid of the unwarranted condition such that it applies exclusively to lift-initial verse types. Anacrusis applied to initial unstressed syllable irrespective of verse types. The modified anacrusis generalized to all verse types is given below.

(19) Generalized Anacrusis
An unstressed verse-initial syllable is invisible to meter.

4.1. Normal Verses

As pointed out earlier, a pair of subtypes in dip-initial verse types poses a problem with respect to the prediction based on metrical complexity. Particularly, the basic types of verse type B and C and their subtypes with one extra syllable show reverse frequency. Subtypes are more frequently attested than their basic types. Under generalized anacrusis, the first syllable of all dip-initial verse types is irrelevant to meter. The result of applying generalized anacrusis to dip-initial verse types is summarized in (20).[20]

[20] The basic types are indicated by the shade.

(20) Dip-initial Verses[21]

Pattern	Verse Type (restricted anacrusis)	Verse Type (Generalized Anacrusis)	Incidence
[<W>S || WS]	2B	*2B*1*	11
[<W>WS || WS]	2B1	*2B*	125
[<W>**W**WS || WS]	2B2	*2B1*	39
[<W>**WW**WS || WS]	2B3	*2B3*	8
[<W>SW || S]	3B	*3B*1*	68
[<W>WSW || S]	3B1	*3B*	358
[<W>**W**WSW || S]	3B2	*3B1*	157
[<W>**WW**WSW || S]	3B3	*3B2*	21
[<W>**WWW**WSW || S]	3B4	*3B3*	1
[<W>S || SW]	2C	*2C*1*	167
[<W>WS || SW]	2C1	*2C*	262
[<W>**W**WS || SW]	2C2	*2C1*	96
[<W>**WW**WS || SW]	2C3	*2C2*	17
[<W>**WWW**WS || SW]	2C4	*2C3*	2

Generalized anacrusis yields a frequency pattern that is different from the one under restricted anacrusis in two respects. First, in generalized anacrusis, with the number of extra syllables decreasing by one for each subtype, the basic types are those classified as having one extra syllable in restricted anacrusis. Second, the basic types in restricted anacrusis turns into a type with three syllables only. Given the generative metrics' assumption that less frequently attested types involve some kind of additional metrical complexity, we have to be able to explain on what grounds the verse types (*2B*1*, *3B*1* and *2C*1*) can be interpreted as metrically more complex than the new basic types. The verse types reclassified as having three syllables violate a principle better known as four-position requirement (Cable 1974, Getty 1997, Stockwell and Minkova 1997).[22] According to the principle, every verse must have at least four

[21] The number with the symbol * indicates the number of syllables needed to fill the four metrical positions. For ease of reference, the new classification under generalized anacrusis is indicated in italics.

[22] Except for Cable (1974), the four-position requirement is a derivative notion deduced from an elaborately defined hierarchical metrical structure.

syllables to fill the four positions. With the first syllable out of metrical consideration, the verse type 2B1, 3B1, and 2C1 have four syllables that can fill up four metrical positions properly. Likewise, other subtypes can easily fill up four metrical positions since they have more than four syllables. Unlike other verses, the verses with the symbol * have three syllables leaving one metrical position unfilled. Unfilled metrical positions add some degree of metrical complexity to the verses. Thus the basic types in restricted anacrusis are considered to be metrically more complex than the basic types in generalized anacrusis. All subtypes are similar in that they are more complex than the basic types. But they are different in the source of the metrical complexity. Some are more complex because syllables are lacking. Others are more complex because syllables are superfluous.

Once we adopt the generalized version of anacrusis, the skewed pattern in the actual frequency of subtypes in restricted anacrusis disappears of itself. The basic types in restricted anacrusis turn into subtypes with some metrical complexity involved and thus less frequently attested. The upshot of generalized anacrusis is that we can not only explain away anomalous frequency pattern but also maintain the validity of metrical complexity, proving its empirical prediction to be valid.

4.2. Light Verses

In *Beowulf*, there is an additional class of verses which begin with a dip. Verses that belong this class differ from the dip-initial verses we have dealt with so far in that there is only one lexical word. Traditionally dubbed as light verses, they begin with a dip and if our modification of anacrusis is correct, we expect the frequency pattern similar to that of normal verses here again.[23]

[23] The incidence is based on the classification proposed in Sohn (1999).

(21) Light Verses[24]

Verse Type	Pattern	Incidence
a	[<W>WSW]	7
a1	[<W>WWSW]	118
a2	[<W>**W**WWSW]	153
a3	[<W>**WW**WWSW]	63
a4	[<W>**WWWW**WSW]	14
d	[<W>SWW]	113
d1	[<W>WSWW]	485
d2	[<W>**W**WSWW]	109
d3	[<W>**WW**WSWW]	32
d4	[<W>**WWW**WSWW]	2

a: ðæt se mæra [2587a]
it the famous 'it the famous'

a1: **fand** ðā ðær inne [118a]
found then there inside 'the (he) found therein'

a2: **nalles** hē ðā frætwe [2503a]
not at all he the trappings 'he never (his) ornaments'

a3: **forðan ic** hine sweorde [679a]
therefor I him sword 'therefore I him by sword'

a4: **syððan hē hi**ne tō gūðe [1472a]
when he himself to battle 'when he himself for battle'

d: wið hettendum [3004a]
against enemy 'against (the) enemy'

d1: **hē** ðæm bātwearde [1900a]
he the ship-guard 'he (to) the ship-guard'

d2: **ðonne** his ðīodcyning [2579a]
than his people-king 'than its great-ruler'

[24] Contrary to what we expect, a3 appears slightly more frequently than a2.

d3: **ðē** **hine** æt frumsceafte [45a]
who him at birth 'who him at (his) birth'

d4: **ðæt** **ic** **wiðð**one gūðflogan [2528a]
that I against war-flyer 'that I against (the) war-flyer'

As in the dip-initial verses of normal verse types, the basic types for light verses are those with one extra syllable. If the first syllable of each verse is ignored by generalized anacrusis, then a1 and d1 are scanned as having four syllables with no additional metrical devices required to get them metrified. The frequency of each subtype also decreases along with the number of extra syllables added.

5. Conclusion

Restricted anacrusis, which applies to lift-initial verse types, poses a serious problem with respect to the frequency pattern predicted from relative metrical complexity. The subtypes of lift-initial verse types occur less as the number of extra syllables increases and this decreasing frequency pattern is exactly what one would expect. On the other hand, some subtypes of dip-initial verse types are more frequently attested than the basic types, showing a reverse frequency pattern and others occur less frequently as more syllables are added, in compliance with the prediction on the correlation between relative complexity and actual frequency. To account for such skewed statistics, we have modified restricted anacrusis in such a way that it applies context-freely. Our generalized anacrusis, which applies to intial unstressed syllable of ANY verse type, is argued to yield the frequency pattern for all verse types more compatible with the assumption that the metrical complexity of a verse type is proportional to its actual attestation.

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