1. Definition of the word “onomatopoeia”
Etymology: Late Latin, from Greek onomatopoiia, from onomat-, onoma name + poiein to make
Meaning:
1. the naming of a thing or action by a vocal imitation of the sound associated with it
2. the use of words whose sound suggests the sense
(source: http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=onomatopoeia)

2. Onomatopoeia in the larger context of figures of speech
In European languages figures of speech are generally classified in five major categories:
(1) figures of resemblance or relationship (e.g., simile, metaphor, kenning, conceit, parallelism, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, and euphemism);
(2) figures of emphasis or understatement (e.g., hyperbole, litotes, rhetorical question, antithesis, climax, bathos, paradox, oxymoron, and irony);
(3) figures of sound (e.g., alliteration, repetition, anaphora, and onomatopoeia);
(4) verbal games and gymnastics (e.g., pun and anagram); and
(5) errors (e.g., malapropism, periphrasis, and spoonerism). Figures involving a change in sense, such as metaphor, simile, and irony, are called tropes.
(Source: entry “speech, figure of” in the Britannica. Copyright © 1994-2001 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.)

3. Categories

3.1 Form

3.1.1 Word class

3.1.1.1 Noun
(page 8 / chapter 1) There was a rush to buy the cook drinks, and hear more details

3.1.1.2 Adjective
(124/8) Whatever happened was so quickly Harry didn’t catch it, but a scream of rage from the Irish crowd, and Mostafa’s long, shrill whistle blast, told him it had been a foul.

3.1.1.3 Adverb
Mr Malfoy didn’t dare say anything. He nodded sneeringly to Mr Weasly,

3.1.1.4 Verb
(112/8) ‘So that’s a house-elf?’ Ron muttered. ‘Weird things, aren’t they?’

3.1.2 Variation in words

3.1.2.1 capital letters suggesting importance and loudness:
(129/8) ‘IRELAND WIN!’ shouted Bagman,
3.1.2.2 multiple vowels to show the word is expressed longer than usual:
(120/8) ‘Theeeeeeeeey’re OFF!’ screamed Bagman.
3.1.2.3 repetition of initial letter to imitate stammering:
(154/9) ‘M-m-master…’ Winky stammered, looking up at Mr Crouch, her eyes brimming with tears. ‘M-m-master, p-p-please…’
3.1.2.4 exchanging letters to imitate an accent:
(130/8) ‘Vell, ve fought bravely,’ said a gloomy voice behind Harry (...). ‘Vell, it vos very funny’, said the Bulgarian Minister, shrugging.

3.1.3 Onomatopoeic names

Charlie Weasly (to weasel out – avoid doing something, involving cleverness) is a wizard.
Rita Skeeter (suggesting quickness. Skeet shooting – Tontaubenschießen) is a reporter for the daily prophet, can turn into a beetle to hide and is not a sympathetic person.
Professor Dumbledore (suggesting slowness and clumsiness) is about 150 years old.
Winky (wink – zwinkern) is a house elf. A popular example: “zipper”

3.2 Function

3.2.1 Suggestive rather than Imitative
(383+84/20) And in no time at all, hundreds upon hundreds of pairs of feet could be heard, passing the tent,
(390/20) The horntail didn’t seem to want to take off, she was to protective of her eggs. Though she writhed and twisted, furling and unfurling her wings and keeping those fearsome yellow eyes on Harry, she was afraid to move too far from them ... but he had to persuade her to do it, or he’d never get near them ... the trick was to do it carefully, gradually ...

There are better examples in literature of more sophisticated writers. In the suggestive onomatopoeia the onomatopoeic effect is on a different level. Not (only) a single word is onomatopoeic but for example the rhythm and rhyme of a sentence.

Tennyson makes us feel the heaviness of a drowsy summer day by using a series of “in” sounds in the wonderfully weighted lines:
The moan of doves in immemorial elms, And murmuring of innumerable bees.
(Source: http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/lit_terms/onomatopoeia.html)

Another example from the same author:
“...I chatter over stony ways, In little sharps and trebles, I bubble into eddying bays, I babble on the pebbles.”

2
3.2.2 Auditory
(16/1) For a few seconds, Frank could hear nothing but the fire *crackling*.

vs. 3.2.3 Non Auditory (describing the ‘sound’ of something non-auditory)
(121/8) the leprechauns watching from the side-lines had all risen into the air again, and formed the great, *glittering* shamrock.
(388/20) he seemed to be looking at everything around him through some sort of *shimmering*, transparent barrier, like a heat haze,

3.2.2.1 Animal sounds (Though here used as non animal sounds)
(9/1) ‘I always thought he had a nasty look about him, right enough,’ *grunted* a man at the bar.
(110/8) ‘Did sir just call me Dobby?’ *squeaked* the elf curiously,
(116/8) and then (Ludo) spoke over the *roar* of sound that was now filling the packed stadium;

3.2.2.2 Everyday sounds
(131/8) “Harry’s hands were numb with *clapping*.
(122/8) ‘They are going to *crash!*’ screamed Hermione next to Harry.

3.2.2.3 Machine sounds
e.g. in the area of automobiles, “*honk*” for the horn or “*vroom*” for the engine
  Note: We did not find examples in the novel but wanted to include it because it is an important part of onomatopoeia

3.2.2.4 Human sounds/expressions
(51/4) Voices could be heard from inside the blocked fireplace. ‘*Ouch!* Fred, no – go back, go back, there’s been some kind of mistake- tell George not to - *OUCH!*
  George, no there’s no room, go back quickly and tell Ron –’
(123/8) A huge *groan* rose from the Irish seats.

Note: the four last sub-categories are all auditory and imitative.
Sound or Onomatopoeic Words

Exercise No. 1 - Matching Exercise

Unfortunately the onomatopoeic words don’t quite fit into the sentences. Please rearrange them and fill the gaps with the correct items.

1) The snake lifted its ugly triangular head and (a) **booming** slightly as the legs of the chair snagged on its rug. (22, l.19)

2) ‘Did sir just call me Dobby?’ (b) **ooohed** and **aaaaahed** the elf curiously from between its fingers. Its voice was higher than Dobby’s had been. (110, l. 22)

3) Ludo whipped out his wand, directed it at his own throat and said ‘Sonorus!’ and then spoke over the roar of sound that was now filling the packed stadium; his voice echoed over them, (d) **hissed** into every corner of the stands. (115/116, l. 3)

4) ‘Look at the referee!’ she said, (e) **streaming**. Harry looked down at the pitch. Hassan Mostafa had landed right in front of the dancing Veela, and was acting very oddly indeed. He was flexing his muscles and smoothing his moustache excitedly. (125, l. 3)

5) Next moment, what seemed to be a great green-and-gold comet had come zooming into the stadium. It did one circuit of the stadium, then split into two smaller comets, each hurtling towards the goalposts. The crowd (f) **squeaked**, as though at a firework display. (118, l. 13)

6) Harry looked quickly over the top of his Omnioculars, and saw that the leprechauns watching from the side-lines had all risen into the air again, and formed the great, (g) **snapping** shamrock. (121, l. 26)

7) ‘I is not doing magic with it, sir!’ squealed Winky, tears (h) **giggling** down the sides of her squashed and bulbous nose. (151, l. 21)

8) Winky began to tremble worse than ever. Her giant eyes (i) **crunching** from Mr Diggory to Ludo Bagman, and on the Mr Crouch. (154, l. 7)

9) ‘You’ve got someone?’ shouted Mr Crouch, sounding highly disbelieving. ‘Who? Who is it?’ They heard (j) **glittering** twigs, the (k) **shrieked** of leaves and then (l) **flickered** footsteps as Mr Diggory re-remerged from behind the trees. (147/148, ll. 1f.)

10) ‘They took him into a cell near mine. He was screaming for his mother by nightfall. He went quiet in the end...except when they (m) **rustling** in their sleep.’ (575, l.7)
1) The snake lifted its ugly triangular head and (a) _________slightly as the legs of the chair snagged on its rug. (22, l. 19)

2) ‘Did sir just call me Dobby?’ (b) ____________the elf curiously from between its fingers. Its voice was higher than Dobby’s had been. (110, l. 22)

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10) ‘They took him into a cell near mine. He was screaming for his mother by nightfall. He went quiet in the end…except when they (l) ____________ in their sleep.’ (575, l. 7)
Sound or Onomatopoeic Words

Exercise No. 2 - Dictionary Exercise

The meaning of an onomatopoeic word can often be derived from the word itself. Nevertheless, there is a variety of rather difficult words. Applying them to situations is not always easy. Using a dictionary or your personal knowledge, please fill out the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Onomatopoeic word</th>
<th>Possible collocates</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thwack</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Sizzle</td>
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<td>Wheeze</td>
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<td>Hum</td>
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<td>Fizz</td>
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<td>Chirrup</td>
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<td>Slosh</td>
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<td>Shush</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crinkle</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Now, please do the same for nouns that are connectable to onomatopoeic words. For most of them, there are more collocates than only one. Try to find as many as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Onomatopoeic word: Possible collocates (add the meaning)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hands</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sound or Onomatopoeic Words

Exercise No. 3 - Correction Exercise

Please find and correct the onomatopoeic items that have been spelled incorrectly.

1) Next moment, what seemed to be a great green-and-gold comet had come zomming into the stadium. (118/ 8/ l. 7)

2) And something vast, green and glidderin erupted from the patch of darkness Harry’s eyes had been struggling to penetrate: it flow up over the treetops and into the sky. (144/ 9 /l.18)

3) Winkey began to tremble worse than ever. Her giant eyes fiklered from Mr Diggory to Ludo Bagman, and on to Mr Crouch. (154/9/l.6)

4) ‘Huh?’ said Ron, staring open-mouthed at the Veela, who had now lined up along one side of the pitch. Hermione made a loud todding noise. (117/8/l.27)

5) Standing at the sink, filling the kettle, he looked up at the Riddle House and saw lights glibbering in its upper windows. (12/1/l.5)

6) ‘Ready when you are, Ludo,’ said Fudge comfortably. Ludo sipped out his wand, directed it at his own throat and said ‘Sonorus!’ and then spoke over the roar of sound that was now filling the packed stadium. (115/8/l. 29)

7) ‘Do not lie to me!’ hissed the second voice. ‘I can always tell, Wormtail! You are regretting that you ever returned to me. I revolt you. I see you flinch when you look at me, feel you shotter when you touch me…’ (16/1/l.8)

8) But he grinned happily as Troy and Quigley lifted the Cup into the air and the crowd below thundered their approval. Harry’s hands were numb with clubbing. (130/8/l.10)
Sound or Onomatopoeic Words

Exercise No. 4 - Fill the gaps

Grunted — crash --- rush — clatter --- spluttering — buzzing — rummaging
groan – dull – crackling – snapped – shot – knocking

9) There was a __________ to buy the cook drinks, and hear more details.  
(8/ 1 / l. 27)

10) Wormtail, who had been __________ incoherently, feel silent at once. Frank could hear nothing but the fire ______________.  (16/ 1 / l.22)

11) And then the chair was facing Frank, and he saw what was sitting on it. His walking stick fell to the floor with a ________.  (22/ 1 / l.21)

12) ‘They’re going to ________ I!’ screamed Hermione next to Harry. She was half-right – at the very last second Viktor Krum pulled out of the dive and spiralled off. (122/ 8 / l. 30)

13) Harry got back into his bunk with his head __________. He knew he ought to feel exhausted; it was nearly three in the morning, but he felt wide awake – wide awake and worried. (160/ 9 / l.28)

14) ‘Leprechauns!’ said Mr Weasley, over the tumultuous applause of the crowd, many of whom were still fighting and __________ around under their chairs to retrieve the gold. (118/8/l. 26)

15) Lynch, however, hit the ground with a ________ thud that could be heard throughout the stadium. A huge ________ rose from the Irish seats. (123/8/l. 3)

16) ‘Which of you did it?’ he __________, his sharp eyes darting between them. ‘Which of you conjured the Dark Mark?’ (146/9/l. 15)

17) The Beaters on both sides were acting without mercy: Volkov and Vulchanov in particular seemed not to care whether their clubs made contact with Bludger or human, as they swung them violently through the air. Dimitrov ________ straight at Moran, who had the Quaffle, nearly __________ her off her broom. (126/8/l. 5)

10) The villagers exchanged dark looks. ‘I always thought he had a nasty look about him, right enough,’ __________ a man at the bar. (9/1/l. 13)
Sound or Onomatopoeic Words

Exercise No. 5 – Digging for Onomatopoeia

Read the examples below from the novel and name as many onomatopoeic words as you can find. This should be easy. State their meaning. If you do not know the meaning, use a dictionary. As we are dealing with onomatopoeia, use your imagination to find out the meaning or maybe the context will help you as well.

Chapter 1:
(11, ll. 21ff) They knew that old Frank was devoted to the house and grounds, and it amused them to see him limping across the garden, brandishing his stick and yelling croakily at them. Frank on his part believed the boys tormentured him (…)
(12, ll. 3ff) Standing at the sink, filling the kettle, he looked up at the Riddle House and saw lights glimmering in its upper windows. Frank knew at once what was going on. The boys had broken into the house again, and judging by the flickering quality of the light, they had started a fire. (…) nevertheless, although it was very dark, he remembered where the door into the hall was, and he groped his way towards it, his nostrils full of the smell of decay (…)
(12+13) and started to climb the stairs, blessing the dust which lay thick upon the stone, because it muffled the sound of his feet and stick.

Chapter 12:
(190, ll. 1ff) Through the gates, flanked with statues of winged boars, and up the sweeping drive the carriages trundled, swaying dangerously in what was fast becoming a gale. Leaning against the window, Harry could see Hogwarts coming nearer, its many lighted windows blurred and shimmering behind the thick curtain of rain. Lightning flashed across the sky as their carriage came to a halt before the great oak front doors (…) Harry, Ron, Hermione and Neville jumped down from their carriage and dashed up the steps too, looking up only when (…)
(190+91) A large, red, water-filled balloon had dropped from out of the ceiling onto Ron’s head, and exploded. Drenched and spluttering, Ron staggered sideways into Harry, just as a second water bomb dropped (…) People all around them shrieked and started pushing each other (…) Professor McGonagall, deputy headmistress and Head of Gryffindor house, had come dashing out of the Great Hall; she skidded on the wet floor and grabbed Hermione around the neck to stop herself falling. ‘Ouch – sorry, Miss Granger – ‘ ‘That’s all right, Professor!’ Hermione gasped, massaging her throat. (…) ‘Not doing nothing!’ cackled Peeves, lobbing a water bomb at several fifth-year girls, who screamed and dived into the Great Hall.
(192, ll. 1 ff) Peeves stuck out his tongue, threw the last of his water bombs into the air, and zoomed off up the marble staircase, cackling insanely. (…) Harry, Ron and Hermione slipped and slid across the Entrance Hall and through the double doors on the right, Ron muttering furiously under his breath as he pushed his sopping hair off his face. The Great Hall looked its usual splendid self, decorated for the start-of-term feast. Golden plates and goblets gleamed by the light of hundreds and hundreds of candles, floating over the tables in mid-air. The four long house tables were packed with chattering students. (…) ‘Good evening,’ he (Nick) said, beaming at them. ‘Says who?’ said Harry (…)
Solution:

Chapter 1:
(11, ll. 21ff) They knew that old Frank was devoted to the house and grounds, and it amused them to see him limping across the garden, brandishing his stick and yelling croakily at them. Frank on his part believed the boys tormented him (…)
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Sound or Onomatopoeic Words

Exercise No. 6

State the meaning of the following onomatopoeic items using your memory, imagination, a dictionary or the context (if the item is taken from the novel, the page number plus line appears after the example). Can you find onomatopoeic translations into German as well? Often, they are quite similar. Can you put them into the categories which we introduced to you?

1. grunted (9, l. 16)
2. tumbling (15, l. 12)
3. howl (-)
4. shudder (16, l. 11)
5. clumsy (16, l. 22)
6. caw (-)
7. hissed (22, l. 19)
8. clatter (22, l. 23)
9. swung (24, l. 14)
10. squeaked (110, l. 22)
11. quivering (110, ll. 24/25)
12. muttered (112, l. 25)
13. beep (-)
14. sneeringly (115, l. 21)
15. gliding (116, l. 24)
16. plop (-)
17. shredding (117, l. 26)
18. tutting (118, l. 1)
19. rummaging (118, l. 28)
20. shuddering (121, l. 14)
21. oink (-)
23. dull (123, l. 3)
24. groan (123, l. 5)
25. screech (-)
26. twiddled (123, l. 15)
27. clutching (124, l. 15)
28. giggling (125, l. 3)
29. beep (-)
30. glittering (144, l. 18)
31. boing (-)
32. snapped (146, l. 16)
33. scruffy (147, l. 19)
34. ribbit (-)
35. squashed (151, l. 21)
36. flinched (153, l. 22)
37. buzzing (160, l. 31)
38. click (-)
39. wobbled (200, l. 26)
40. swipe (714, l. 5)
41. clunk (739, l. 11)
Examples of onomatopoeic words in Harry Potter IV – The Goblet of Fire by J.K. Rowling (paperback edition, 796 pages)

8 rush
9 grunted
10 stabbed
11 croakily
12 glimmering
   flickering
   groped tappen
13 muffled gedämpft sprechen
14 Quidditch
15 tumbling
16 shudder schaudern, schütteln
   clumsy
   sputtering zischen, spritzen, stottern
   crackling
19 hissing
   slippery
20 hissing
22 crackling
   hissed
tatter klappern, rasseln
24 slipped
   swung
50 AAAAAAARRRRRIGH
51 OUCH
109 clambered (mühsam) klettern
110 squeaked
   quivering
111 muffled
112 muttered murmeln, brummen
115 sneeringly höhnisch, spöttisch
   whipped peitschen, schlagen
116 roar
   screamed
   clapped
   wiped wischen
   roared
   gliding
117 chasing
eyells
   shredding zerteilen, -schneiden, -kleinern
118 tutting
   zooming
ts ts ts (tut tut)
   split
   oooohed
   aaaaaahed
shimmering
rummaging  herumstöbern, -wühlen

119 Aaaaaaand
120 whistle
  Theeeeeeeeey’re OFF!
  flashed
121 TROY SCORES!
  shuddering
  cheers  Hurra-Rufe, Jubel-Rufe
  glittering
122 crash
123 dull  schwerfällig, langsam
  groan  ächzen
  twiddled  tüddeln
124 clutching  greifen, packen
  shrill
125 giggling
  slap
  kicked
126 shot
127 MORAN SCORES!
128 shrieked  kreischen, schreien
129 IRELAND WIN!
  swarm
130 Vell, ve ... Vell, it vos
131 clapping
142 spring
  pop
143 catches
144 halt
  glittering
145 moaned  Stöhnen, Ächzen, Raunen
  flashes
146 shaky
  snapped
147 scrubby  schrubben, scheuern
148 crunching
149 trampling
150 sobs
  I-I-I is not
151 squashed  zerdrücken, -malmen, -quetschen
153 flinched  zurückzucken, -schrecken
154 flickered  flackern
  M-m-master
  stummered
157 rip  reißen
159 hollow
160 buzzing  summen, surren, schwirren, brausen, brummen
161 snores
Several articles from the Encyclopaedia Britannica 2001 DVD-Edition
(relevant information we used or intended to use is distinguished by bold letters)

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Historical attitudes toward language page 6

speech, figure of
Any intentional deviation from literal statement or common usage that emphasizes, clarifies, or embellishes both written and spoken language. Forming an integral part of language, figures of speech are found in primitive oral literatures, as well as in polished poetry and prose and in everyday speech. Greeting-card rhymes, advertising slogans, newspaper headlines, the captions of cartoons, and the mottoes of families and institutions often use figures of speech, generally for humorous, mnemonic, or eye-catching purposes. The argots of sports, jazz, business, politics, or any specialized groups abound in figurative language.

Most figures in everyday speech are formed by extending the vocabulary of what is already familiar and better known to what is less well known. Thus metaphor (implied resemblances) derived from human physiology are commonly extended to nature or inanimate objects as in the expressions "the mouth of a river," "the snout of a glacier," "the bowels of the earth," or "the eye of a needle." Conversely, resemblances to natural phenomena are frequently applied to other areas, as in the expressions "a wave of enthusiasm," "a ripple of excitement," or "a storm of abuse." Use of simile (a comparison, usually indicated by "like" or "as") is exemplified in "We were packed in the room like sardines." Personification (speaking of an abstract quality or inanimate object as if it were a person) is exemplified in "Money talks"; metonymy (using the name of one thing for another closely related to it), in "How would the Pentagon react?"; synecdoche (use of a part to imply the whole), in expressions such as "brass" for high-ranking military officers or "hard hats" for construction workers.

Other common forms of figurative speech are hyperbole (deliberate exaggeration for the sake of effect), as in "I'm so mad I could chew nails"; the rhetorical question (asked for effect, with no answer expected), as in "How can I express my thanks to you?"; litotes (an emphasis by negation), as in "It's no fun to be sick"; and onomatopoeia (imitation of natural sounds by words), in such words as "crunch," "gurgle," "plunk," and "splash."

Almost all the figures of speech that appear in everyday speech may also be found in literature. In serious poetry and prose, however, their use is more fully conscious, more artistic, and much more subtle; it thus has a stronger intellectual and emotional impact, is more memorable, and sometimes contributes a range and depth of association and suggestion far beyond the scope of the casual colloquial use of imagery.
In European languages figures of speech are generally classified in five major categories: (1) figures of resemblance or relationship (e.g., simile, metaphor, kenning, conceit, parallelism, personification, metonymy, synecdoche, and euphemism); (2) figures of emphasis or understatement (e.g., hyperbole, litotes, rhetorical question, antithesis, climax, bathos, paradox, oxymoron, and irony); (3) figures of sound (e.g., alliteration, repetition, anaphora, and onomatopoeia); (4) verbal games and gymnastics (e.g., pun and anagram); and (5) errors (e.g., malapropism, periphrasis, and spoonerism). Figures involving a change in sense, such as metaphor, simile, and irony, are called tropes.

All languages use figures of speech, but differences of language dictate different stylistic criteria. In a culture not influenced by classical Greece and Rome, some figures may be absent; irony is likely to be confined to fairly sophisticated cultures. Japanese poetry is based on delicate structures of implication and an entire vocabulary of aesthetic values almost untranslatable to the West. Arabic literature is rich in simile and metaphor, but the constructions used are so different from those familiar in the West that translation requires much adaptation. This condition is also true of the oral literatures of Africa and of the written literatures deriving from them.

One of the most powerful single literary influences upon world cultures has been the Bible. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are rich in simile, metaphor, and personification and in the special figure of Hebrew poetry, parallelism.

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Onomatopoeia

the naming of a thing or action by a vocal imitation of the sound associated with it (such as buzz or hiss). Onomatopoeia may also refer to the use of words whose sound suggests the sense. This occurs frequently in poetry, where a line of verse can express a characteristic of the thing being portrayed. In the following lines from Sylvia Plath's poem "Daddy," the rhythm of the words suggests the movement of a locomotive:

An engine, an engine Chuffing me off like a Jew.A Jew to Dachau, Auschwitz, Belsen.
The following lines from "The Brook" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson are another example:
I chatter over stony ways, In little sharps and trebles, I bubble into eddying bays, I babble on the pebbles.

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Greek and Roman antiquity

[...]Much of Greek philosophy was occupied with the distinction between that which exists "by nature" and that which exists "by convention." So in language it was natural to account for words and forms as ordained by nature (by onomatopoeia--i.e., [...] from prosody

The 18th century

Early in the 18th century, Pope affirmed, in his Essay on Criticism (1711), the classic doctrine of imitation. Prosody was to be more nearly onomatopoetic; the movement of sound and metre should represent the actions they carry:

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence, The sound must seem an Echo to the sense: Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows, And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows; But when loud surges lash the sounding shoar, The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar. When Ajax strives
some rock's vast weight to throw. The line too labours, and the words move slow. Not so, when swift Camilla scourc the plain, Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.

In 18th-century theory the doctrine of imitation was joined to numerous strictures on "smoothness," or metrical regularity. Theorists advocated a rigid regularity; minor poets composed in a strictly regular syllable-stress verse devoid of expressive variations. This regularity itself expressed the rationalism of the period. The prevailing dogmas on regularity made it impossible for Samuel Johnson to hear the beauties of Milton's versification; he characterized the metrically subtle lines of "Lycidas" as "harsh" and without concern for "numbers." Certain crossovers of metrical opinion in the 18th century, however, moved toward more theoretical stances. Joshua Steele's Prosodia Rationalis (1779) is an early attempt to scan English verse by means of musical notation. (A later attempt was made by the American poet Sidney Lanier in his Science of English Verse, 1880.) Steele's method is highly personal, depending on an idiosyncratic assigning of such musical qualities as pitch and duration to syllabic values; but he recognized that a prosodic theory must take into account not merely metre but "all properties or accidents belonging to language." His work foreshadows the current concerns of the structural linguists, who attempt an analysis of the entire range of acoustic elements contributing to prosodic effect. Steele is also the first "timer" among metrists; that is, he bases his scansions on musical pulse and claims that English verse moves in either common or triple time. Modern critics of musical scanners have pointed out that musical scansion constitutes a performance, not an analysis of the metre, that it allows arbitrary readings, and that it levels out distinctions between poets and schools of poetry.

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by imitation of natural sounds) or as arrived at arbitrarily by a social convention. […]

from prosody

The 19th century

With the Romantic movement and its revolutionary shift in literary sensibility, prosodic theory became deeply influenced by early 19th-century speculation on the nature of imagination, on poetry as expression--"the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," in Wordsworth's famous phrase--and on the concept of the poem as organic form. The discussion between Wordsworth and Coleridge on the nature and function of metre illuminates the crucial transition from Neoclassical to modern theories. Wordsworth (in his "Preface" to the Lyrical Ballads, 1800) followed 18th-century theory and saw metre as "superadded" to poetry; its function is more nearly ornamental, a grace of style and not an essential quality. Coleridge saw metre as being organic; it functions together with all of the other parts of a poem and is not merely an echo to the sense or an artifice of style. Coleridge also examined the psychologic effects of metre, the way it sets up patterns of expectation that are either fulfilled or disappointed:

As far as metre acts in and for itself, it tends to increase the vivacity and susceptibility both of the general feelings and of the attention. This effect it produces by the continued excitement of surprise, and by the quick reciprocations of curiosity still gratified and still re-excited, which are too slight indeed to be at any one moment objects of distinct consciousness, yet become considerable in their aggregate influence. As a medicated atmosphere, or as wine during animated conversation; they act powerfully, though themselves unnoticed. Where, therefore, correspondent food and appropriate matter are not provided for the attention and feelings thus roused, there must needs be a disappointment felt; like that of leaping in the dark from the last step of a staircase, when we had prepared our muscles for a leap of three or four.

Biographia Literaria, XVIII (1817)

Romantic literary theory, although vastly influential in poetic practice, had little to say about actual metrical structure. Coleridge described the subtle relationships between metre and meaning and the effects of metre on the reader's unconscious mind; he devoted little attention to metrical analysis. Two developments in 19th-century poetic techniques, however, had greater impact than any prosodic theory formulated during the period. Walt Whitman's nonmetrical prosody and Gerard Manley Hopkins' far-ranging metrical experiments mounted an assault on the traditional syllable-stress metric. Both Whitman and Hopkins were at first bitterly denounced, but, as is often the case, the heresies of a previous age become the orthodoxies of the next. Hopkins' "sprung rhythm"--a rhythm imitating natural speech, using mixed types of feet and counterpointed verse--emerged as viable techniques in the poetry of Dylan Thomas and W.H. Auden. It is virtually impossible to assess Whitman's influence on
the various prosodies of modern poetry. Such American poets as Hart Crane, William Carlos Williams, and Theodore Roethke all have used Whitman's long line, extended rhythms, and "shaped" strophes.

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from prosody

The 20th century

Since 1900 the study of prosody has emerged as an important and respectable part of literary study. George Saintsbury published his great History of English Prosody during the years 1906-10. Sometime later, a number of linguists and aestheticians turned their attention to prosodic structure and the nature of poetic rhythm. Graphic prosody (the traditional syllable and foot scansion of syllable-stress metre) was placed on a securer theoretical footing. A number of prosodists, taking their lead from the work of Joshua Steele and Sidney Lanier, have recently attempted to use musical notation to scan English verse. For the convenience of synoptic discussion, modern prosodic theorists may be divided into four groups: the linguists who examine verse rhythm as a function of phonetic structures; the aestheticians who examine the psychologic effects, the formal properties, and the phenomenology of rhythm; the musical scanners, or "timers," who try to adapt the procedures of musical notation to metrical analysis; and the traditionalists who rely on the graphic description of syllable and stress to uncover metrical paradigms. It is necessary to point out that only the traditionalists concern themselves specifically with metrical form; aestheticians, linguists, and timers all examine prosody in its larger dimensions.

Modern structural linguistics has placed the study of language on a solid scientific basis. Linguists have measured the varied intensities of syllabic stress and pitch and the durations of junctures or the pauses between syllables. These techniques of objective measurement have been applied to prosodic study. The Danish philologist Otto Jespersen's early essay "Notes on Metre" (1900) made a number of significant discoveries. He established the principles of English metre on a demonstrably accurate structural basis; he recognized metre as a gestalt phenomenon (i.e., with emphasis on the configurational whole); he saw metrics as descriptive science rather than prescriptive regulation. Jespersen's essay was written before the burgeoning interest in linguistics, but since World War II numerous attempts have been made to formulate a descriptive science of metrics.

It has been noted that Coleridge defined metrical form as a pattern of expectation, fulfillment, and surprise. Taking his cue from Coleridge, the British aesthetician I.A. Richards in Principles of Literary Criticism (1924) developed a closely reasoned theory of the mind's response to rhythm and metre. His theory is organic and contextual; the sound effects of prosody have little psychologic effect by themselves. It is prosody in conjunction with "its contemporaneous other effects"—chiefly meaning or propositional sense—that produces its characteristic impact on our neural structures. Richards insists that everything that happens in a poem depends on the organic environment; in his Practical Criticism (1929) he constructed a celebrated "metrical dummy" to "support [an] argument against anyone who affirms that the mere sound of verse has independently any considerable aesthetic virtue." For Richards the most important function of metre is to provide aesthetic framing and control; metre makes possible, by its stimulation and release of tensions, "the most difficult and delicate utterances."

Other critics, following the Neo-Kantian theories of the philosophers Ernst Cassirer and Susanne Langer, have suggested that rhythmic structure is a species of symbolic form. Harvey Gross in Sound and Form in Modern Poetry (1964) saw rhythmic structure as a symbolic form, signifying ways of experiencing organic processes and the phenomena of nature. The function of prosody, in his view, is to image life in a rich and complex way. Gross's theory is also expressive; prosody articulates the movement of feeling in a poem. The unproved assumption behind Gross's expressive and symbolic theory is that rhythm is in some way iconic to human feeling: that a particular rhythm or metre symbolizes, as a map locates the features of an actual terrain, a particular kind of feeling.

The most sophisticated argument for musical scansion is given by Northrop Frye in his influential Anatomy of Criticism (1957). He differentiates between verse that shows unmistakable musical quality and verse written according to the imitative doctrines current in the Renaissance and Neoclassic periods. All of the poetry written in the older strong-stress metric, or poetry showing its basic structure, is musical poetry, and its structure resembles the music contemporary with it.

The most convincing case for traditional "graphic prosody" has been made by the American critics W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley. Their essay "The Concept of Meter" (1965) argues that both
the linguists and musical scanners do not analyze the abstract metrical pattern of poems but only interpret an individual performance of the poem. Poetic metre is not generated by any combination of stresses and pauses capable of precise scientific measurement; rather, metre is generated by an abstract pattern of syllables standing in positions of relative stress to each other. In a line of iambic pentameter

Preserved in Milton's or in Shakespeare's name . . .

the "or" of the third foot is only slightly stronger than the preceding syllable "ton's," but this very slight difference makes the line recognizable as iambic metre. Wimsatt and Beardsley underline the paradigmatic nature of metre; as an element in poetic structure, it is capable of exact abstraction.

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from prosody

Non-Western theories

The metres of the verse of ancient India were constructed on a quantitative basis. A system of long and short syllables, as in Greek, determined the variety of complicated metrical forms that are found in poetry of post-Vedic--that is, after the 5th century BC.

Chinese prosody is based on the intricate tonal system of the language. In the Tang dynasty (AD 618-907) the metrical system for classical verse was fixed. The various tones of the language were subsumed under two large groups, even tones and oblique tones. Patterned arrangements of tones and the use of pauses, or caesuras, along with rhyme determine the Chinese prosodic forms.

Japanese poetry is without rhyme or marked metrical structure; it is purely syllabic. The two main forms of syllabic verses are the tanka and the haiku. Tanka is written in a stanza of 31 syllables that are divided into alternating lines of five and seven syllables. Haiku is an extremely concentrated form of only 17 syllables. Longer poems of 40 to 50 lines are also written; however, alternate lines must contain either five or seven syllables. The haiku form has been adapted to English verse and has become in recent years a popular form. Other experimenters in English syllabic verse show the influence of Japanese prosody. Syllabic metre in English, however, is limited in its rhythmic effects; it is incapable of expressing the range of feeling that is available in the traditional stress and syllable-stress metres.

(Ha.G.)
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from semantics

Meaning in linguistics

Semantics in the theory of language

The science of linguistics is concerned with the theory of language expressed in terms of linguistic universals--i.e., features that are common to all natural languages. According to the widely adopted schema of the U.S. scholar Charles W. Morris, this theory must embrace three domains: pragmatics, the study of the language user as such; semantics, the study of the elements of a language from the point of view of meaning; and syntax, the study of the formal interrelations that exist between the elements of a language (i.e., sounds, words) themselves. Subsequently, certain authors spoke of three levels: the phonetic, the syntactic (the phonetic and syntactic together are often called grammatical), and the semantic level. On each of these levels a language may be studied in isolation or in comparison with other languages. In another dimension, the investigation might be restricted to the state of a language (or languages) at a given time (synchronic study), or it might be concerned with the development of a language (or languages) through a period of time (diachronic study).
Semantics, then, is one of the main fields of linguistic science. Yet, except for borderline investigations, the linguist's interest in semantic matters is quite distinct from the philosopher's concern. Whereas the philosopher asks the question "What is meaning?", the typical questions the linguist is likely to ask include: "How is the meaning of words encoded in a language?" "How is this meaning to be determined?" "What are the laws governing change of meaning?" and "How can the meaning of a word be given, expressed, or defined?"

A few examples will suffice to illustrate some of these problems, and to show how the linguist's approach differs from that of the philosopher. In the matter of encoding, words are arbitrary signs; to some authors, particularly to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, this feature of arbitrariness represents an essential characteristic of all real languages. Nevertheless, in all languages there are clear cases of onomatopoeia—i.e., the occurrence of imitative words, such as "whisper," "snore," "slap," and, more remotely, "cuckoo."

There are several other issues that pertain to the question of encoding. Certain languages show a marked preference for very specific words, at least in certain domains, while lacking the corresponding general terms, which are the only ones occurring in other languages. The Eskimos, for instance, have a number of words denoting various kinds of snow, but no single word for snow. Similarly, in English, although there are distinct names for hundreds of animal species, there is no name for the very familiar animal species of which the female member is called cow and the male member bull. […]

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from language

Historical attitudes toward language

As is evident from above, human life in its present form would be impossible and inconceivable without the use of language. People have long recognized the force and significance of language. Naming—applying a word to pick out and refer to a fellow human being, an animal, an object, or a class of such beings or objects—is only one part of the use of language, but it is an essential and prominent part. In many cultures men have seen in the ability to name an ability to control or to possess; this explains the reluctance, in several primitive and other communities, with which names are revealed to strangers and the taboo restrictions found in several parts of the world on using the names of persons recently dead. Lest it be thought that attitudes like this have died out in modern civilized communities, it is instructive to consider the widespread and perhaps universal taboos on naming directly things considered obscene, blasphemous, or very fearful. Indeed, use of euphemistic substitutes for words referring to death and to certain diseases actually seems to be increasing in some civilized areas.

Not surprisingly, therefore, several independent traditions ascribe a divine or at least a supernatural origin to language or to the language of a particular community. The biblical account, representing ancient Jewish beliefs, of Adam's naming the creatures of the Earth under God's guidance is well known:

So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name (Gen. 2:19).

Norse mythology preserves a similar story of divine participation in the creation of language, and in India the god Indra is said to have invented articulate speech. In the much more sophisticated debate on the nature and origin of language given in Plato's Socratic dialogue Cratylus, Socrates is made to speak of the gods as those responsible for first fixing the names of things in the proper way.

A similar divine aura pervades early accounts of the origin of writing. The Norse god Odin was held responsible for the invention of the runic alphabet. The inspired stroke of genius whereby the ancient Greeks adapted a variety of the Phoenician consonantal script so as to represent the distinctive consonant and vowel sounds of Greek, thus producing the first alphabet such as is known today, was
linked with the mythological figure Cadmus, who, coming from Phoenicia, was said to have founded Thebes and introduced writing into Greece. The Arabs had a traditional account of their script, together with the language itself, being given to Adam by God.

The later biblical tradition of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9) exemplifies three aspects of early thought about language: (1) divine interest in and control over its use and development, (2) a recognition of the power it gives to man in relation to his environment, and (3) an explanation of linguistic diversity, of the fact that people in adjacent communities speak different and mutually unintelligible languages, together with a survey of the various speech communities of the world known at the time to the Hebrews.

The origin of language has never failed to provide a subject for speculation, and its inaccessibility adds to its fascination. Informed investigations of the probable conditions under which language might have originated and developed are seen in the late-18th-century essay of the German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder, "Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache" ("Essay on the Origin of Language"), and in numerous other treatments. But people have tried to go further, to discover or to reconstruct something like the actual forms and structure of man's first language. This lies forever beyond the reach of science, in that spoken language in some form is almost certainly coeval with Homo sapiens. The earliest records of written language, the only linguistic fossils man can hope to have, go back no more than about 4,000 or 5,000 years. Attempts to derive human speech from imitations of the cries of animals and birds or from mere ejaculations of joy and grief, as if onomatopoeia were the essence of language, were ridiculed for their inadequacy by the Oxford philologist F. Max Müller in the 19th century and have been dubbed the bowwow and pooh-pooh theories.

On several occasions attempts have been made to identify one particular existing language as representing the original or oldest tongue of mankind, but, in fact, the universal process of linguistic change rules out any such hopes from the start. The Greek historian Herodotus told a story that King Psammetichus of Egypt caused a child to be brought up without ever hearing a word spoken in its presence. On one occasion it ran up to its guardian as he brought it some bread, calling out "bekos, bekos"; this, being said to be the Phrygian word for bread, proved that Phrygian was the oldest language of mankind. The naïveté and absurdity of such an account have not prevented its repetition elsewhere and at other times.[…]

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3 Articles from Internet sources

onomatopoeia

One entry found for onomatopoeia.
Main Entry: onɔˈmətəˈpəiə
Pronunciation: *
ānə-ˈmə-tə-pE-ə, *
ˈmə-ˈpE-ə,
Function: noun
Etymology: Late Latin, from Greek onomatopoiia, from onomat-, onoma name + poiein to make -- more at POET
1: the naming of a thing or action by a vocal imitation of the sound associated with it (as buzz, hiss)
2: the use of words whose sound suggests the sense
- onɔˈmətəˈpəiəˌık/ˌpE-ə-tik/ or onɔˈmətəˈpəe-ˌtik/ adjective
- onɔˈmətəˈpəiəkˈdəl̬/ˌpE-ə-k(ə-)lɛ/ or onɔˈmətəˈpəe-ˌtik(ə-)lɛ\)/ˌpO-ˈe-ti-k(ə-)lɛ/ adverb

http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a word that imitates the sound it represents.
also imitative harmony
Example:
splash, wow, gush, kerplunk

Such devices bring out the full flavor of words. Comparison and association are sometimes strengthened by syllables which imitate or reproduce the sounds they describe. When this occurs, it is called onomatopoeia (a Greek word meaning name-making "), for the sounds literally make the meaning in such words as "buzz," "crash," "whirr," "clang" "hiss," "purr," "squeak," "mumble," "hush," "boom." Poe lets us hear the different kinds of sounds made by different types of bells in his famous poem "The Bells." His choice of the right word gives us the right sound when he speaks of "tinkling" sleigh bells; "clanging" fire bells; mellow "chiming" wedding bells; "tolling," "moaning," and "groaning" funeral bells.

Tennyson makes us feel the heaviiness of a drowsy summer day by using a series of "in" sounds in the wonderfully weighted lines:

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Countless examples of association of ideas and imitation of sounds may be found in this volume. Two of the most striking and dramatic are Vachel Lindsay's "The Congo" and G. K. Chesterton's "Lepanto". No poems written in our time are richer in vivid colors, galloping rhythms, and constantly varying sound effects.

http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/lit_terms/onomatopoeia.html

ONOMATOPOEIA

The formation of a word from a sound.

This is not so unusual a term among those who write about words—though linguists today often prefer others, like echoism or imitation. The Greeks had a word for it, and we have borrowed it through Latin: onomatopoia, the process of making words, which derives from onoma, a name, and poiein, to make. But we have extended the meaning beyond just making words to making words in a specific way—by echoing a sound that is linked to the thing we want to name.

English is full of such terms. Among them are repetitive childish imitations like boo-hoo, choo-choo and bow-wow, and exclamations such as argh and ouch. But there’s also a whole medley of nouns and verbs, some of them created in other languages and borrowed into English: bang, bash, bawl, beep, belch, blab, blare, bleat, blurt, bonk, bump, burble, buzz, clang, cheep, clank, clap, clatter, cuckoo ... life is too short to go right through the alphabet, but you get the idea.

It’s not only single words that can be onomatopoeic. The effect is common in poetry, as in “The moan of doves in immemorial elms / And murmuring of innumerable bees” and “I heard the ripple washing in the reeds / And the wild water lapping on the crag”, both of which are from poems by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

http://www.worldwidewords.org/weirdwords/ww-ono1.htm

Pictures used in the Presentation - URLs
**Batman/Aaargh+Crunch Sound Pictures:**
http://www.tvcrazy.net/tvclassics/wallpaper/oldshows/batman/batman-collage.jpg
http://www.tvcrazy.net/tvclassics/wallpaper/oldshows/batman/adam-west.jpg
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**Mr Weasley:**
http://www.flower-of-carnage.org/weasley/arthur_pic.gif
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**Pig:**
http://winternute.sr.unh.edu/photo/color/miscellany/images/hey-pig-piggy-pig-pig-pig-pig.jpg
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**Machine:**
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