

SUMMARY

'On the relationship between rhyme, syllable boundaries and alliteration in Icelandic poetry'

Keywords: dróttkvætt, rhyme, alliteration, syllable

In this article, it is maintained that the unit of all Icelandic (in-)rhyme is the stressed syllable followed by an alliterating sound. This gives rhyming units like the following (rhyming units indicated by boldface and the syllable boundary by a period): *só.lu* : *stó.li*, *ge.ta* : *le.tri*. It is maintained that this is a useful model for describing rhyme in dróttkvætt. It is shown that some peculiarities of rhyme in dróttkvætt, pointed out earlier by Kristján Árnason, can be explained by maintaining that the alliterating sound in rhyme (the first consonant after the syllable boundary) has the same properties as ordinary alliterating sounds. What is gained by this approach is the possibility of relating the rhyme of dróttkvætt and alliteration to the unit of the syllable as defined by linguists, a unit that also appears to be useful in the account of vowel quantity in modern Icelandic, for instance.