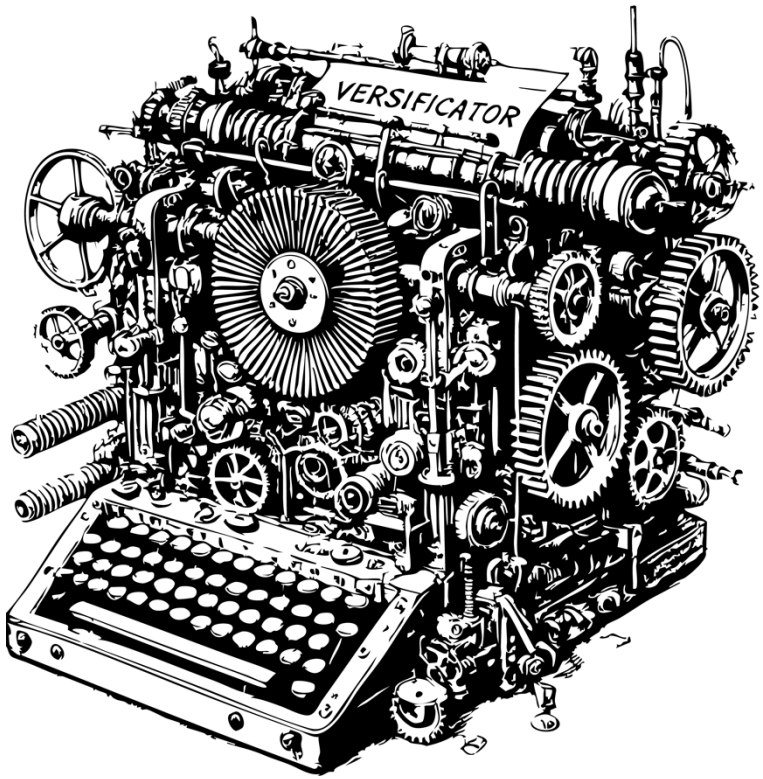
VERSIFICATOR

VOCAL QUINTET



JUAN S. VASSALLO

2021–2024

Performance notes

Three types of musical material are used in this piece: (1) vowels, (2) consonants and (3) words.

(1) Vowels: A total of 11 vocalic sounds notated in IPA symbols:

/i/ as heed
/ɪ/ as hid
/e/ as made
/ɛ/ as head
/æ/ as cat
/ɑ/ as spa
/ɔ/ as dog
/o/ as hope
/u/ as prune
/ʊ/ as put
/ʌ/ as love

(2) Consonants: 25 consonant sounds notated in IPA symbols:

/p/ as pay (voiceless bilabial plosive)

/b/ as bay (voiced bilabial plosive)

/m/ as may (voiced bilabial nasal)

/t/ as tie (voiceless alveolar plosive)

/d/ as die (voiced alveolar plosive)

/n/ as no (voiced alveolar nasal)

/k/ as cake (voiceless velar plosive)

/g/ as go (voiced velar plosive)

/ŋ/ as sing (voiced velar nasal)

/f/ as fee (voiceless labiodental fricative)

/v/ as vow (voiced labiodental fricative)

/s/ as so (voiceless alveolar fricative)

/z/ as zoo (voiced alveolar fricative)

/θ/ as thigh (voiceless dental fricative)

/ð/ as they (voiced dental fricative)

/ʃ/ as show (voiceless postalveolar fricative)

/ʒ/ as jacques (voiced postalveolar fricative)

/tʃ/ as church (voiceless palatoalveolar affricate)

/dʒ/ as judge (voiced postalveolar affricate)

/l/ as lie (voiced alveolar lateral)

/ɹ/ as rye (voiced alveolar approximant)

/j/ as yes (voiced palatal approximant)

/w/ as weigh (voiced labialvelar approximant)

/h/ as hay (voiceless glottal fricative)

/r/ as rápido (Spanish) (voiced alveolar trill)

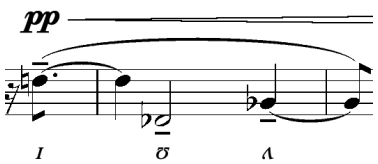
(3) Stochastic imaginary words: non-lexical vocables. E.G.:

pedobor tetrasupraious telepalaeor preteredious,

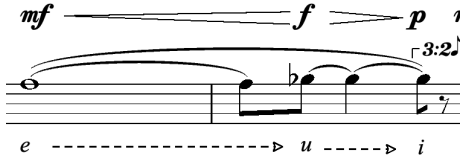
idiostentomy extraminand hyperprostomy unioctavand.

Vowels[1] should be clearly articulated on the indicated pitch and sustained for the complete duration of the note. Subtle differences between similar phonemes -e.g., /ɑ/ and /ʌ/ or /ɔ/ and /o/ should be emphasized. A dashed arrow indicates a transition between two, otherwise, they should be sustained for the duration of the note.

(sustained)



(transition to one another)



According to the type of voicing -voiced or voiceless- and manner of articulation -plosives or other-, **consonants** can be sung pitched or not. When pitched, they are to be sung in the notated pitch for the corresponding duration, sustaining its articulatory configuration.

In some cases, a figure has been added above that should give a reference for the shape of lips when pronouncing that consonant and subsequents, until a different figure indicates a different shape. A dashed line between two figures indicates a transition between lip shapes, but the consonant sound remains the same. When indicated, a consonant with non-notated lip shape vowel above should use the lip shape of a neutral vowel /ə/ (schwa):

[1] In case of doubt on the pronunciation of any sound -consonant or vowel-, please refer to www.internationalphoneticalphabet.org.

= simil /ə/

= simil /u/

= closed mouth, simil /m/

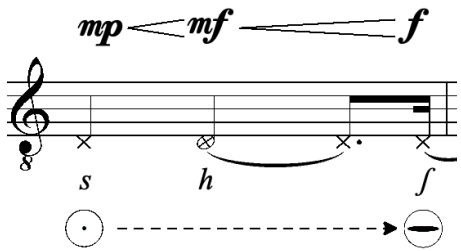
= wide open simil /a/

= simil /i/

= simil /v/ or /f/

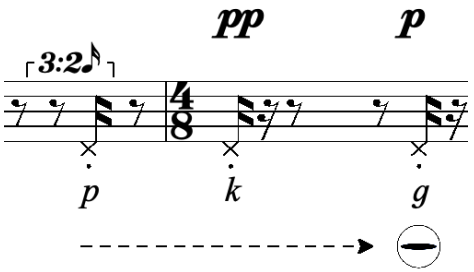
Unvoiced fricative sustained sounds are notated with an ‘x’ (s’s, f’s, h’s), etc.- and are to be sung with no pitch, sustaining the correspondent articulatory configuration. An accent on the sounds /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ indicates that the t and d in each case should be clearly articulated.

E.G., fricative sounds, with indication of transitive lip shape:



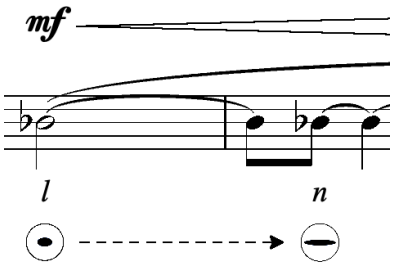
Plosives (voiced and unvoiced) are sung as percussive staccatos with ‘x’ noteheads -b´s, g´s, p’s, k’s, t’s and d’s. In order to create some degree of difference between voiced and unvoiced sounds, it is recommended to add some air to voiced sounds (b, g and d), and articulate unvoiced sounds (p, k and t) almost as clicks. Other strategies for differentiating them are also possible, although it´s understood that they will sound very similar.

E.G., plosives, with indication of transitive lip shape:



Other consonants such as **nasals, lateral, approximants** and **trills** should be sung on its notated pitch, sometimes, the lip shape symbols is provided, otherwise they should be sung using a neutral lip shape.

E.G., nasals, lateral, approximants and trills, with indication of transitive lip shape:

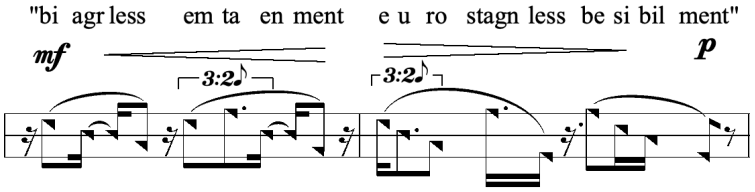


General character marks: For each section, some indication of character has been added. These are somewhat evocative but not totally descriptive, thus are generally open to interpretation for each ensemble.

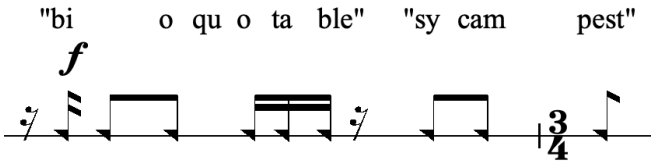
Whispers: Should be uttered as stage whispers, a slightly voiced sound halfway between whispering and speech. Rhythm is not exact.

Spoken: Should be uttered with theatrical voice, the rhythm is approximate. Two types of spoken voice are required: In the first one, three staff lines indicate an overall prosody or intonation contour. In the second one, a type of monotonic or robotic spoken is required. An indetermined middle-register pitch should be chosen and sustained over the whole passage.

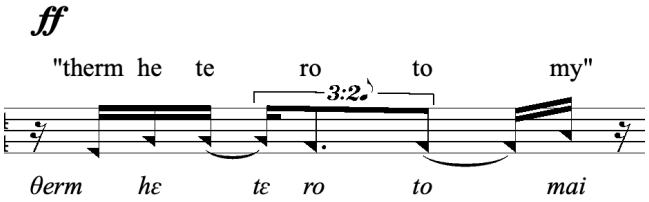
spoken with three lines indicating
overall prosody contour (low, middle, high)



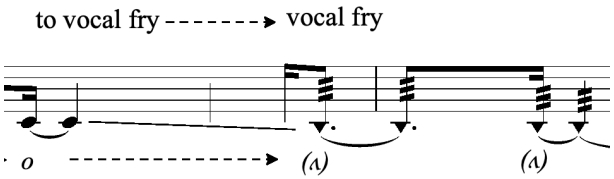
monotonic spoken



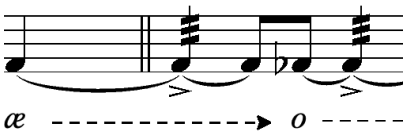
Sprechgesang: Halfway between spoken and sung. Pitch and rhythm are only approximate.



Vocal fry: The pitch is relative and should be around the lowest reachable part of the register. In some cases, a dashed arrow indicates a gradual transition into it.



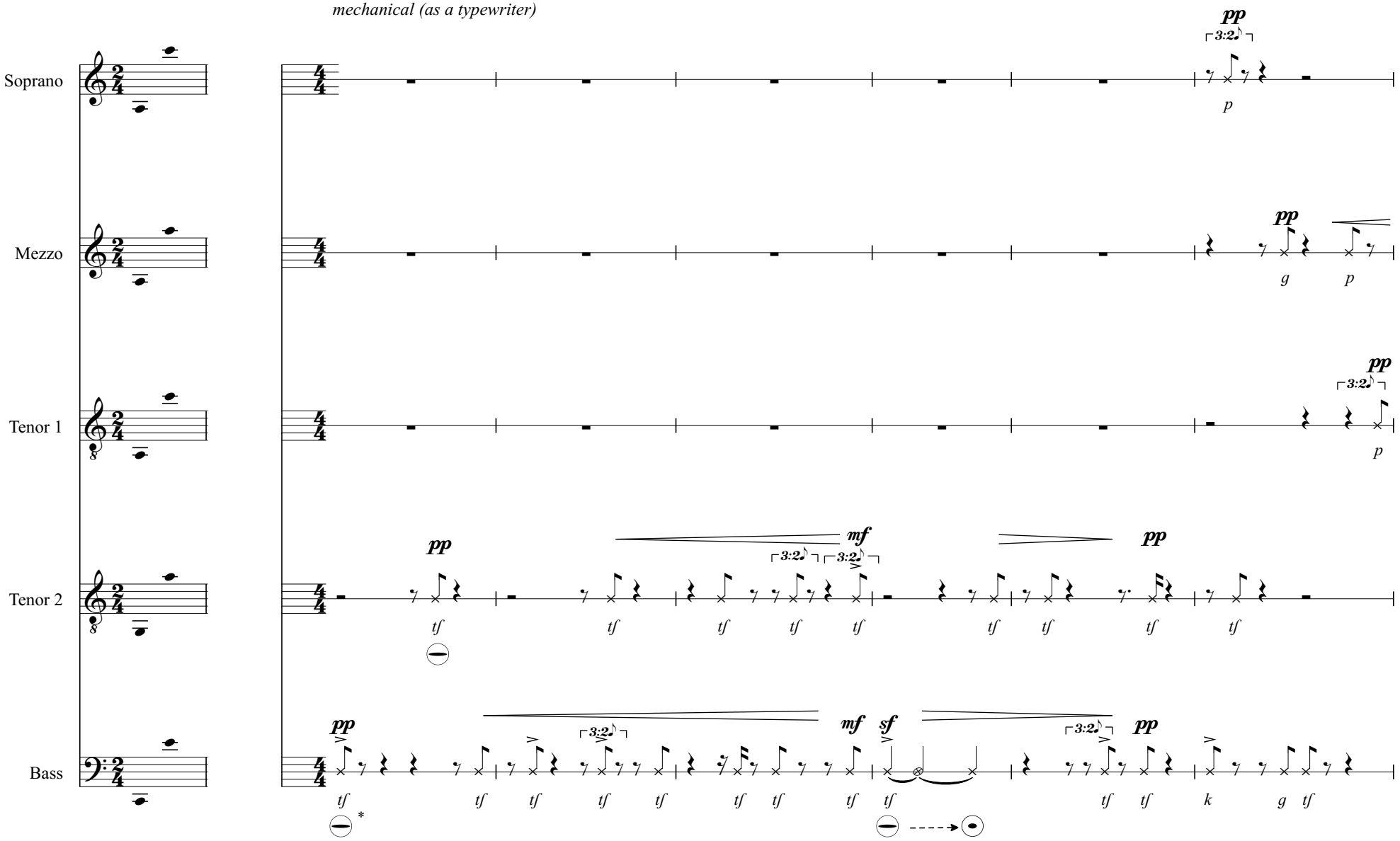
Glottal trill: A type of glottal vibrato over an indicated note.



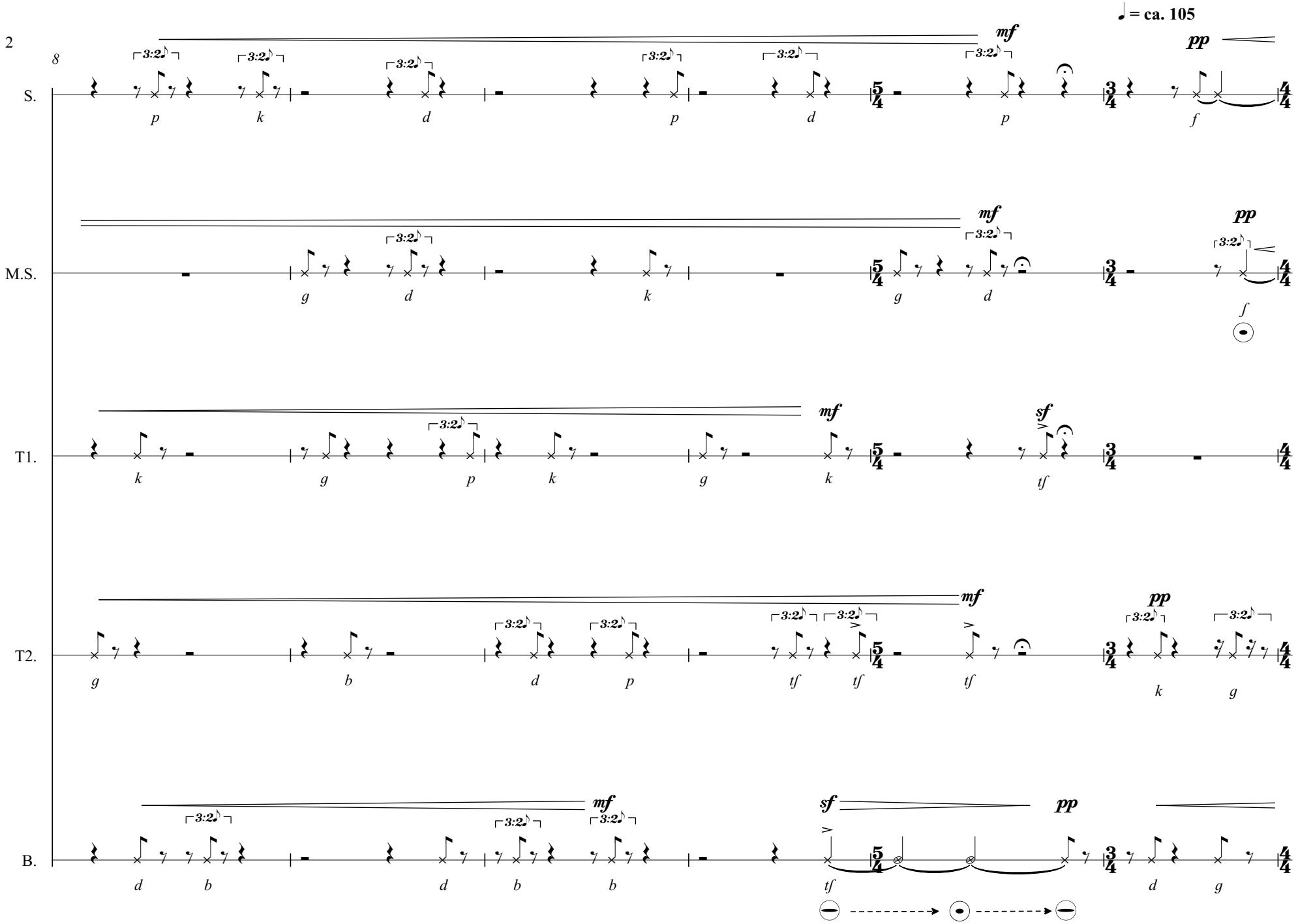
VERSIFICATOR

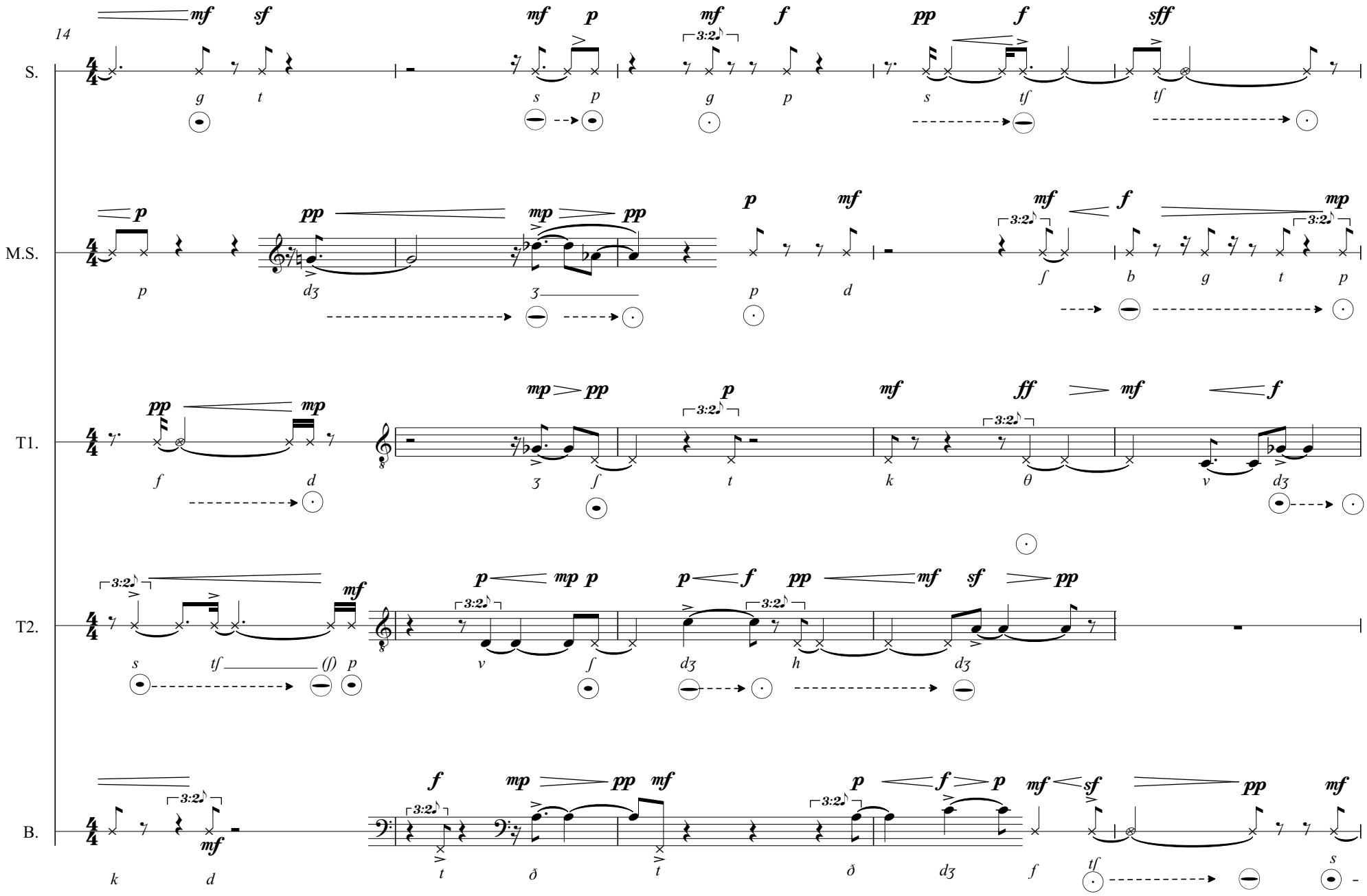
Dedicated to the Vocal Ensemble "Tabula Rasa"

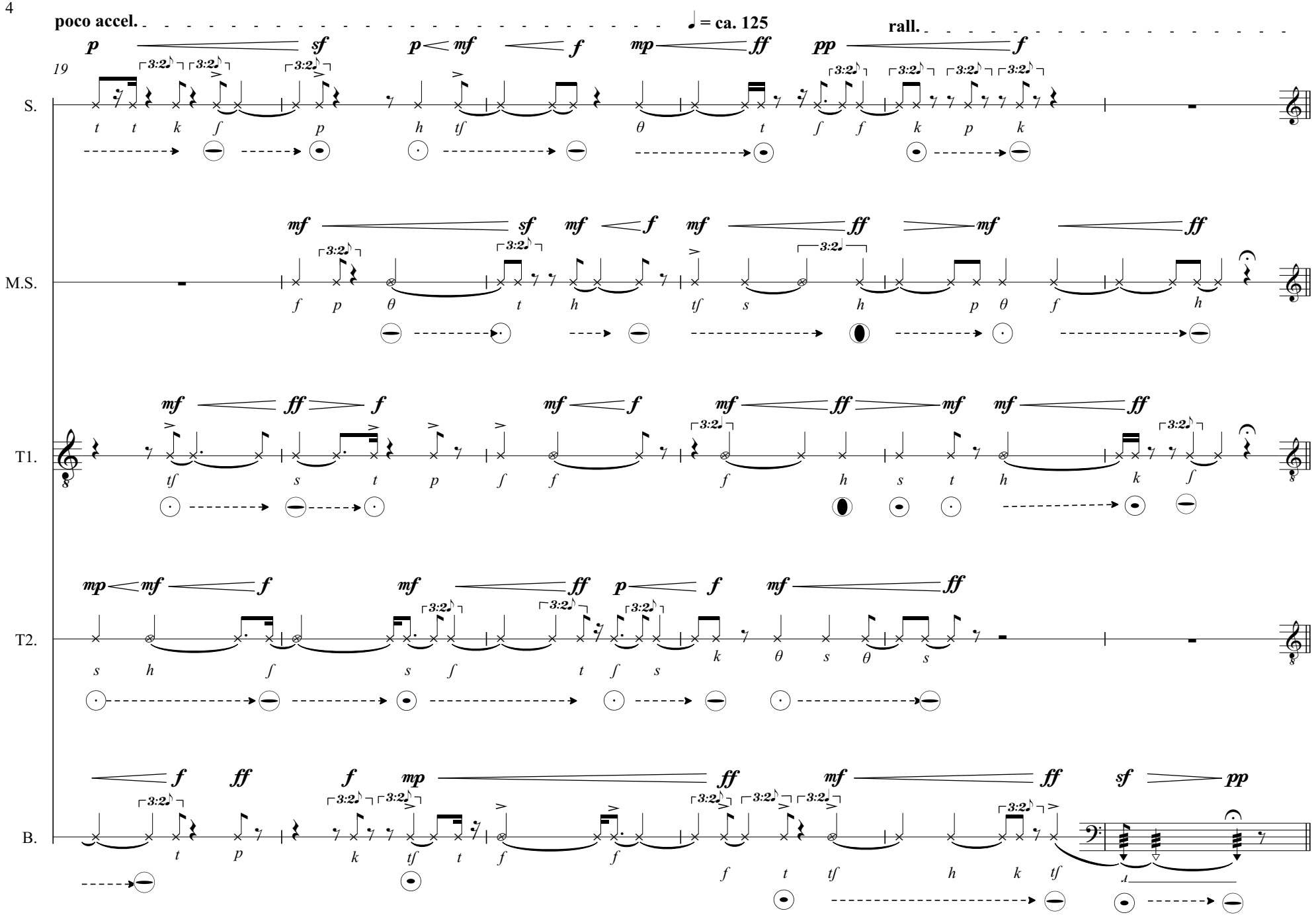
Juan S. Vassallo

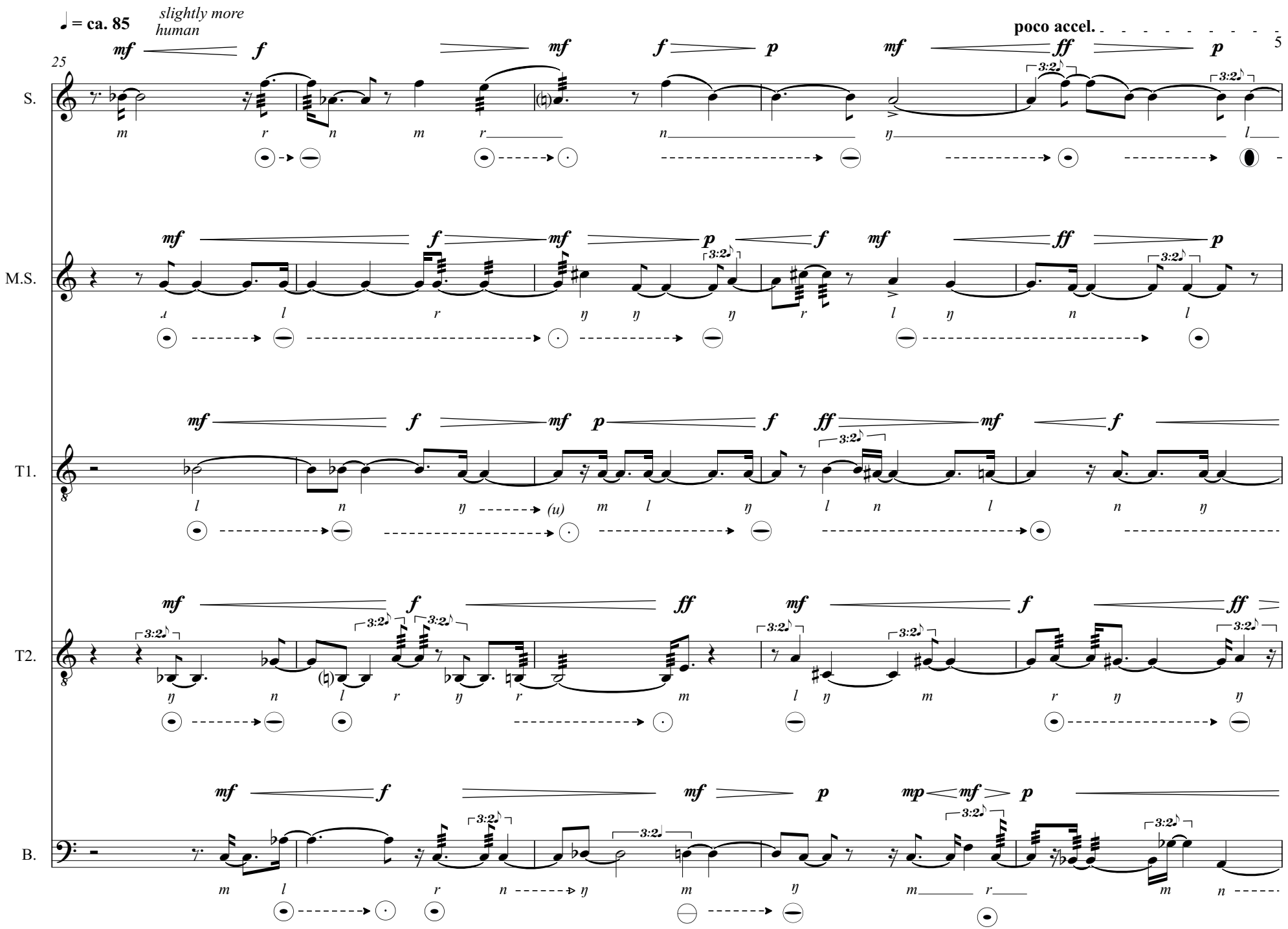


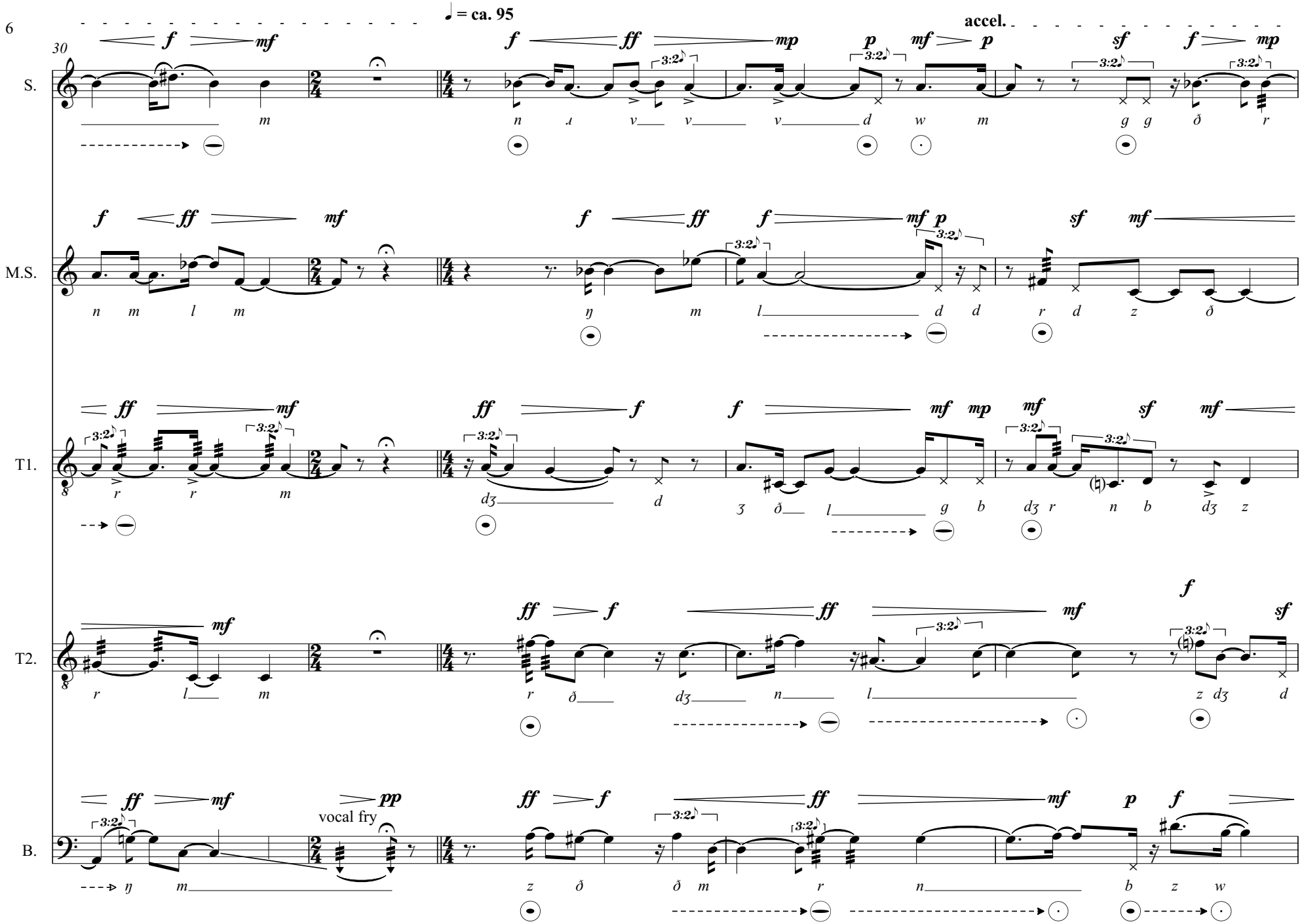
*: lip shapes should be sustained until a new one is indicated or until a dashed arrow starts a transition from one to another

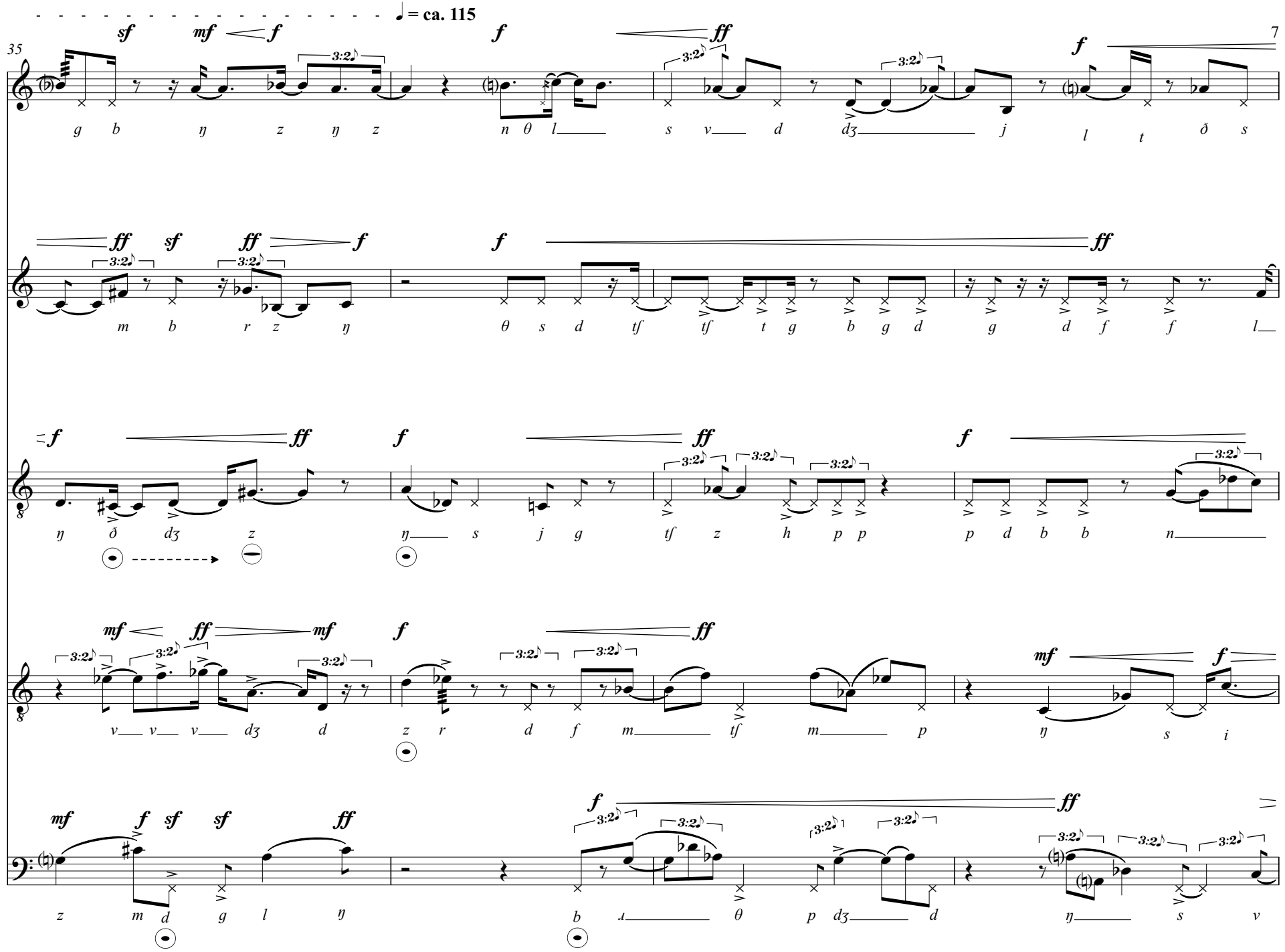

♩ = ca. 105
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
mf
pp
sf
3:2
p k d p d p f
g d k g d f
k g p k g k tf
g b d p tf tf tf k g
d b d b b tf d g

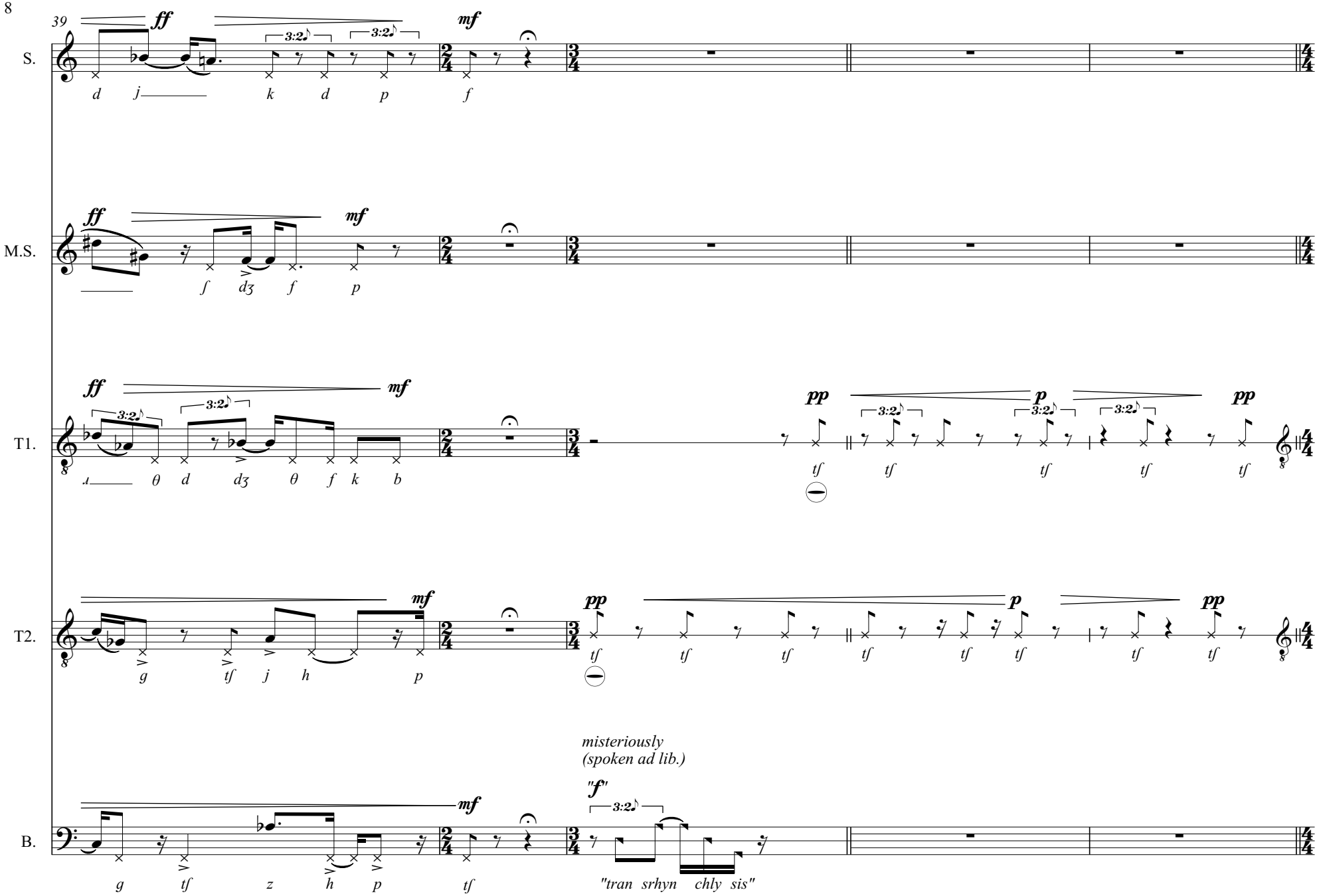

14
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.


poco accel.
♩ = ca. 125
rall.
19
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.


♩ = ca. 85
slightly more human
poco accel.
5
25
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
mf
f
p
ff
mp
3:2


♩ = ca. 95
accel.
30
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
vocal fry


♩ = ca. 115
35
7
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.


39
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
misteriously
(spoken ad lib.)
"tran srhyn chly sis"

♩ = ca. 115

this section should sound as scattered words

44

S. *ppp < pp* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp < mf* *p < mf*

i *n* *h** *s* *n* *h* *y* *s* *y* *n*

M.S. *ppp* *pp* *p* *mp* *sf* *pp < p* *mf* *mp* *p < mf > p*

sung like a toy

a r s *h k* *s a r* *k* *l* *"su prhin chy"*

T1. *p* *pp < p > pp* *p < mf* *pp* *mp* *pp < mp* *p < f*

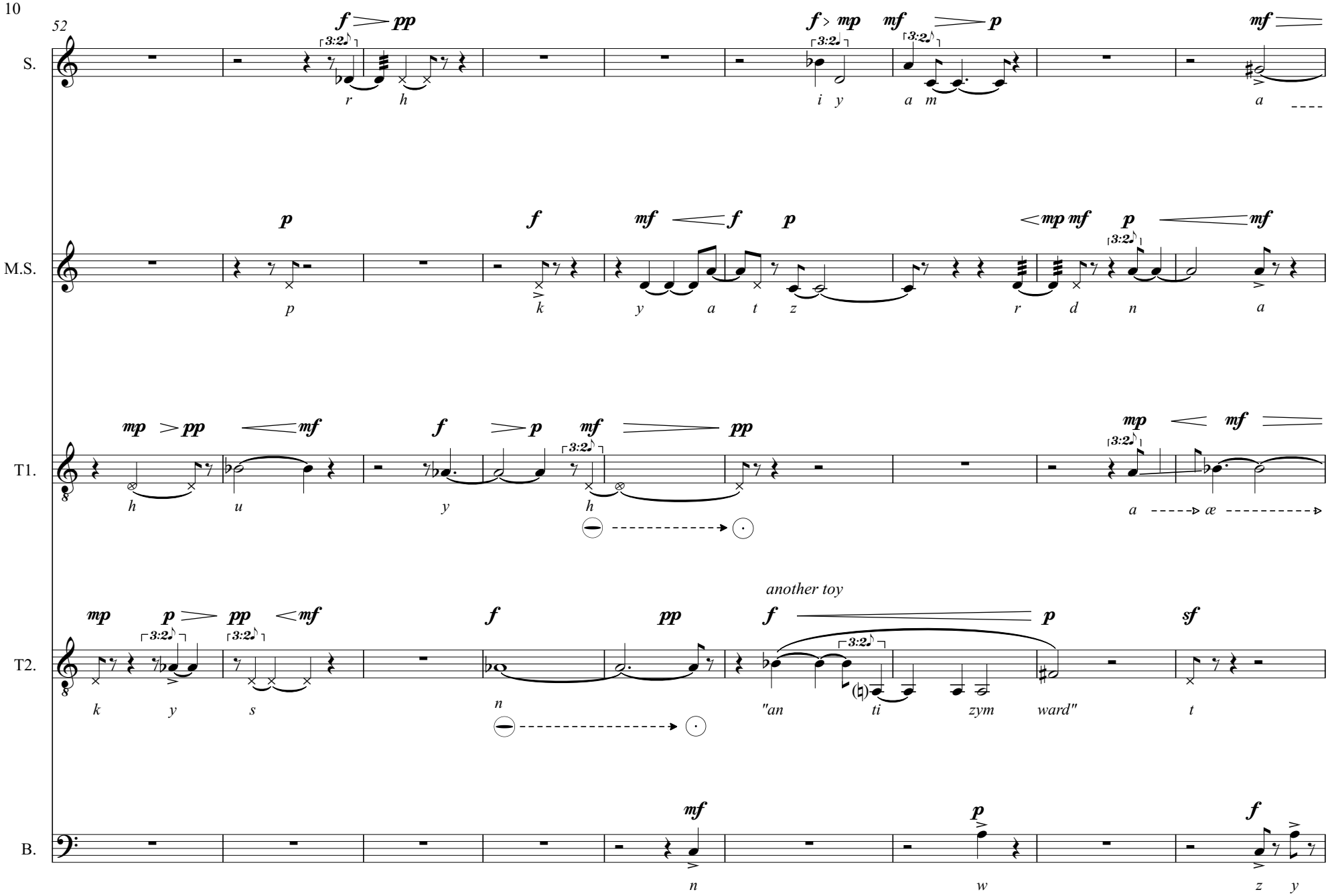
n *l y* *s* *y* *s u r*

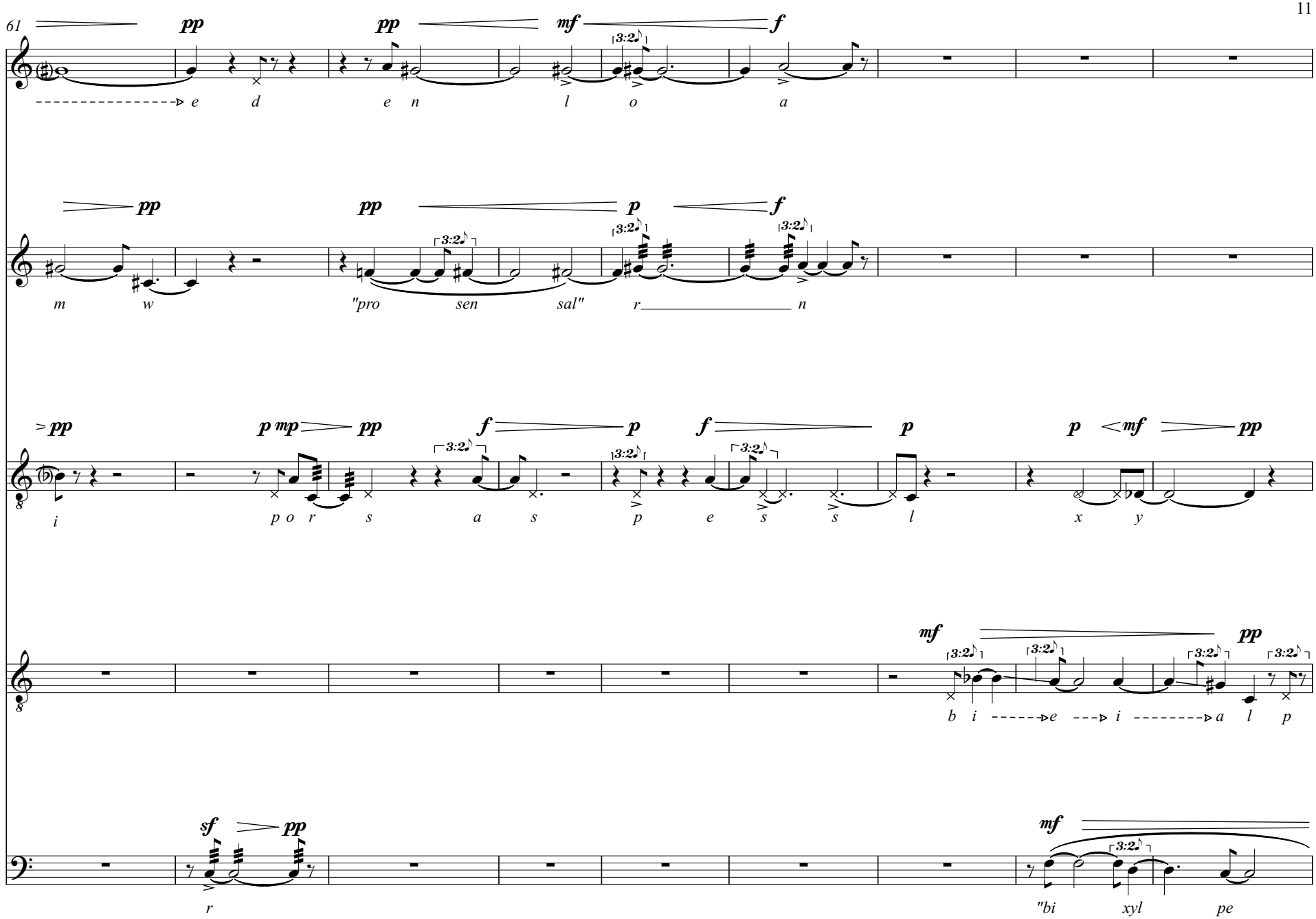
T2. *pp < p* *pp* *p < mf* *p* *pp < mp* *pp* *pp* *ppp*

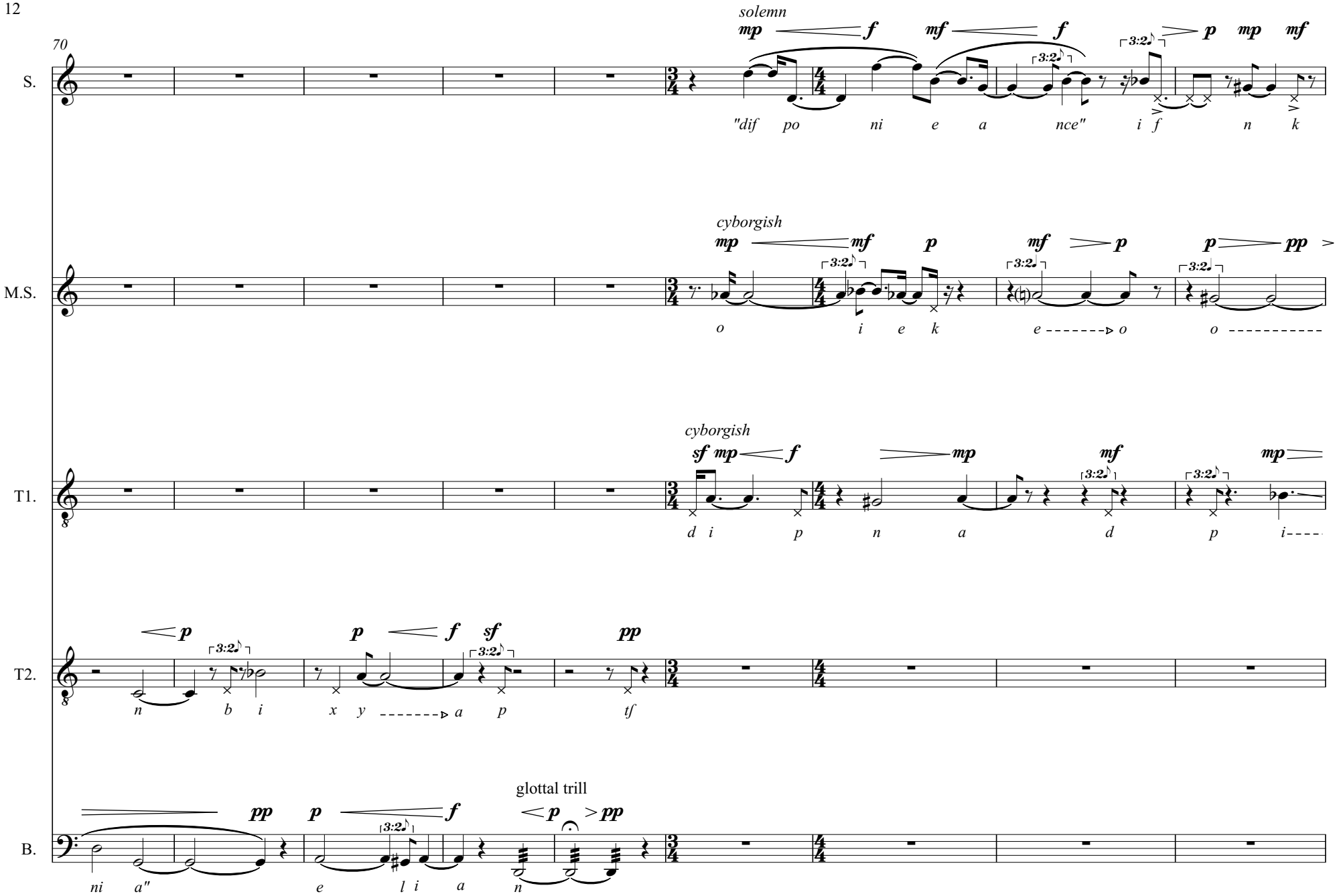
t r y *t* *r* *n h* *s u p h*

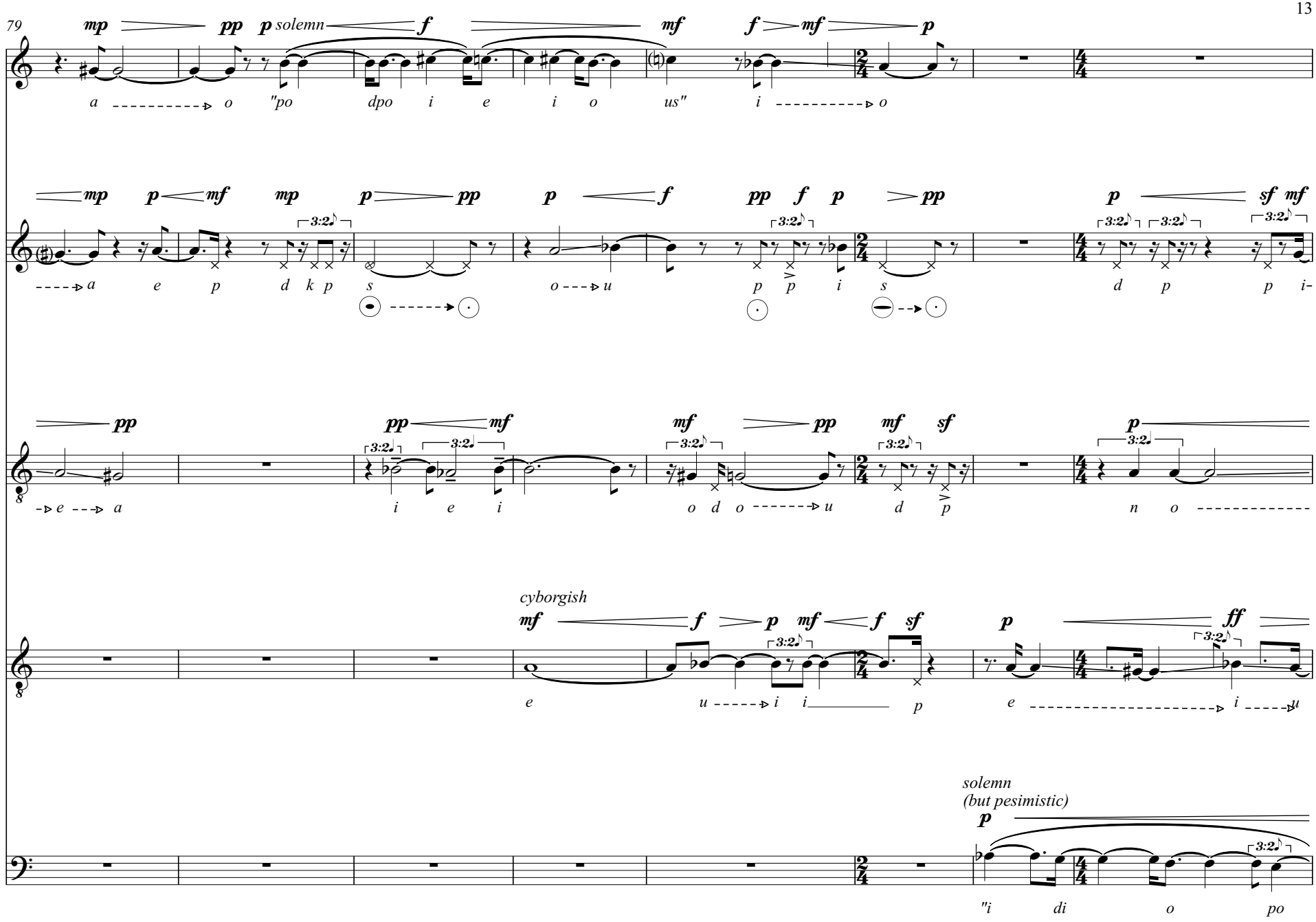
B.

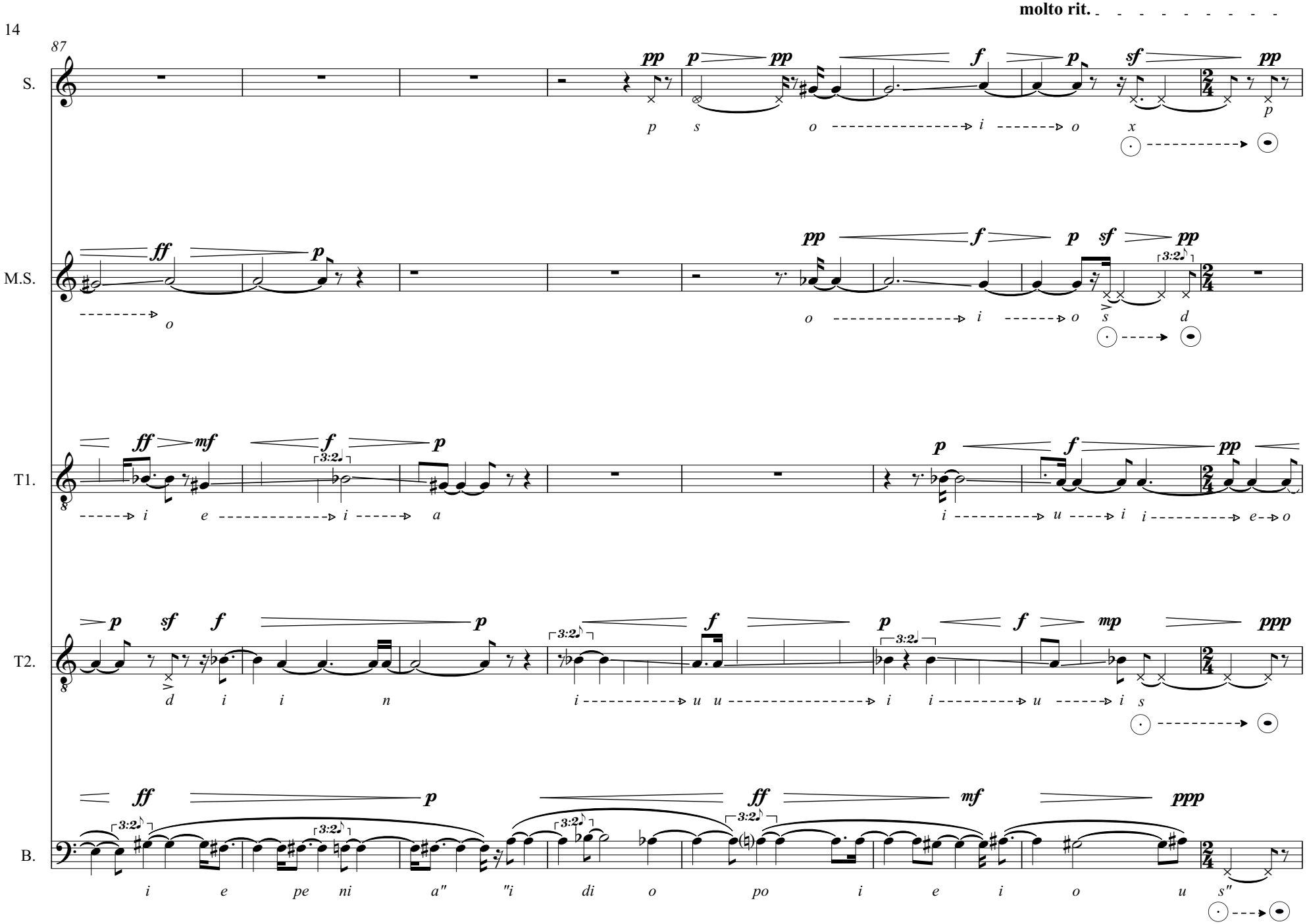
* Every consonant in this section should be articulated with a neutral lips shape except when indicated by a specific shape symbol

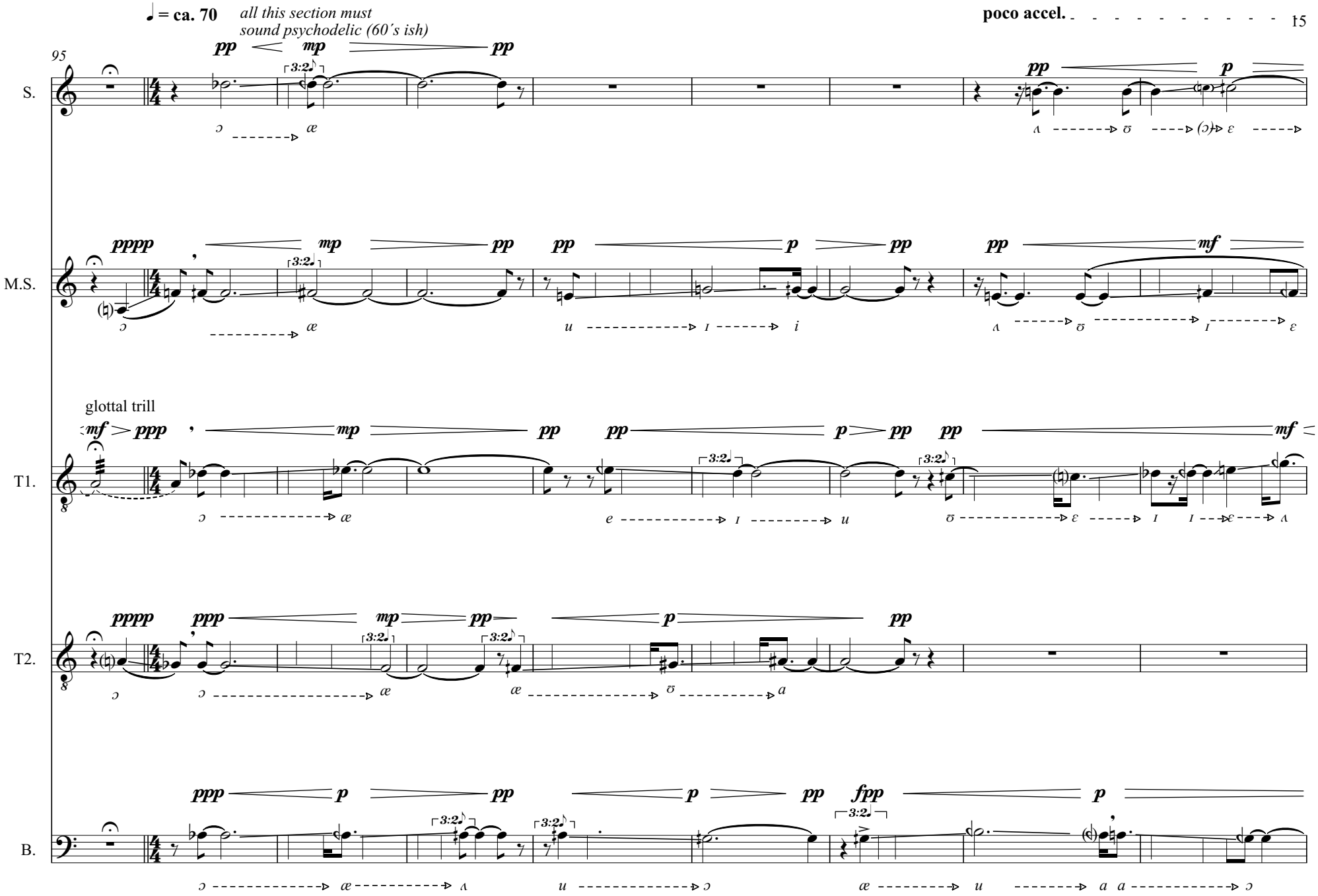

52
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
another toy
"an ti zym ward"

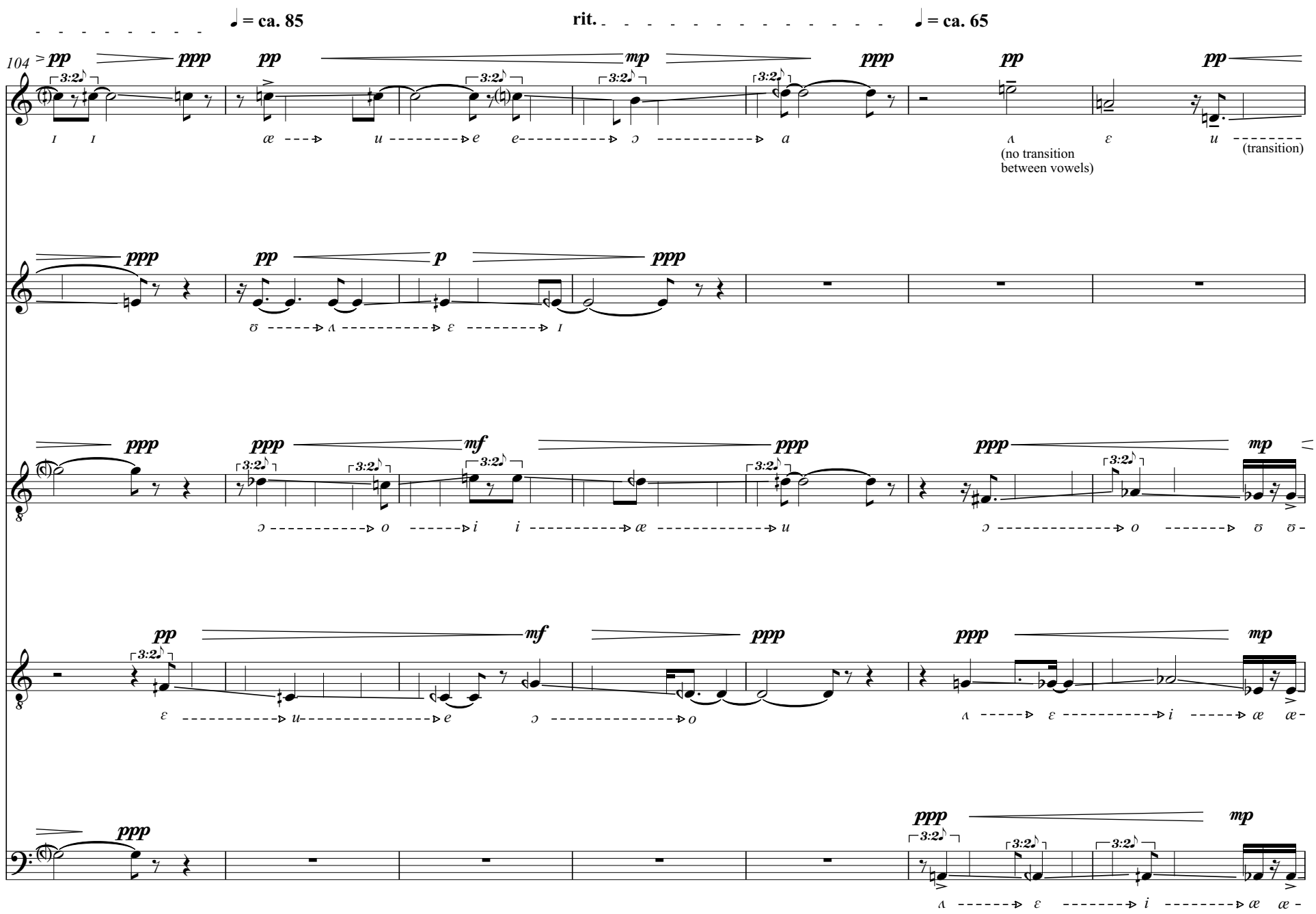

61
S.
pp
pp
mf
f
e d e n l o a
M.S.
pp
pp
p
f
m w "pro sen sal" r n
T1.
pp
p mp
pp
f
p
f
p
p
mf
pp
i p o r s a s p e s s l x y
T2.
mf
pp
b i e i a l p
B.
sf
pp
mf
r "bi xyl pe


70
S.
solemn
mp f mf f p mp mf
"dif po ni e a nce" i f n k
M.S.
cyborgish
mp mf p mf p p pp
o i e k e o o
T1.
cyborgish
sf mp f mp mf mp
d i p n a d p i
T2.
p p f sf pp
n b i x y a p tf
B.
pp p f glottal trill p pp
ni a" e l i a n

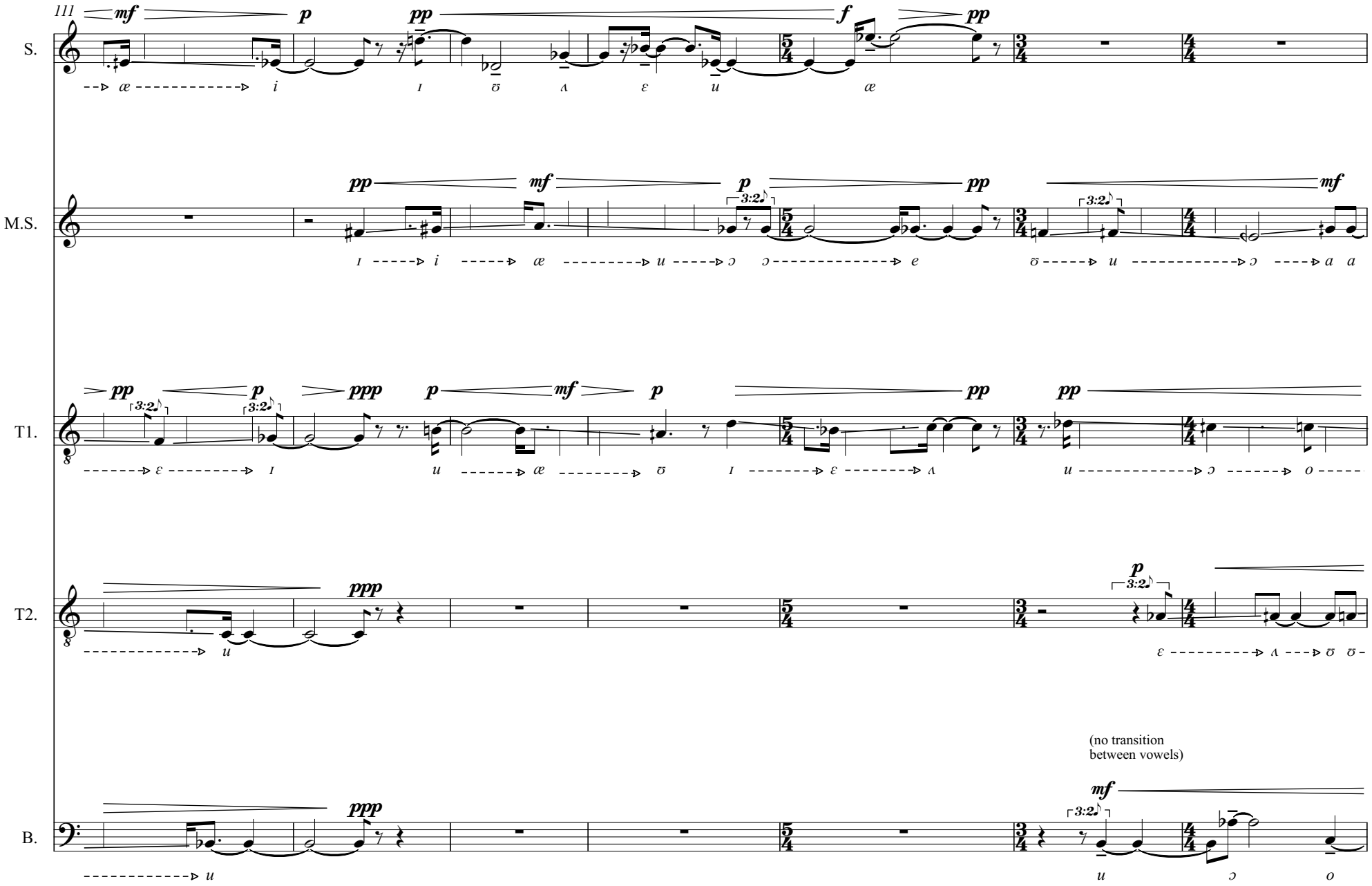

79
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
solemn
cyborgish
solemn
(but pesimistic)
"po dpo us" "i di o po


molto rit.
87
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
p s o i o x p
o i o s d
i e i a i u i i e o
d i i n i u u i i u i s
i e pe ni a" "i di o po i e i o u s"

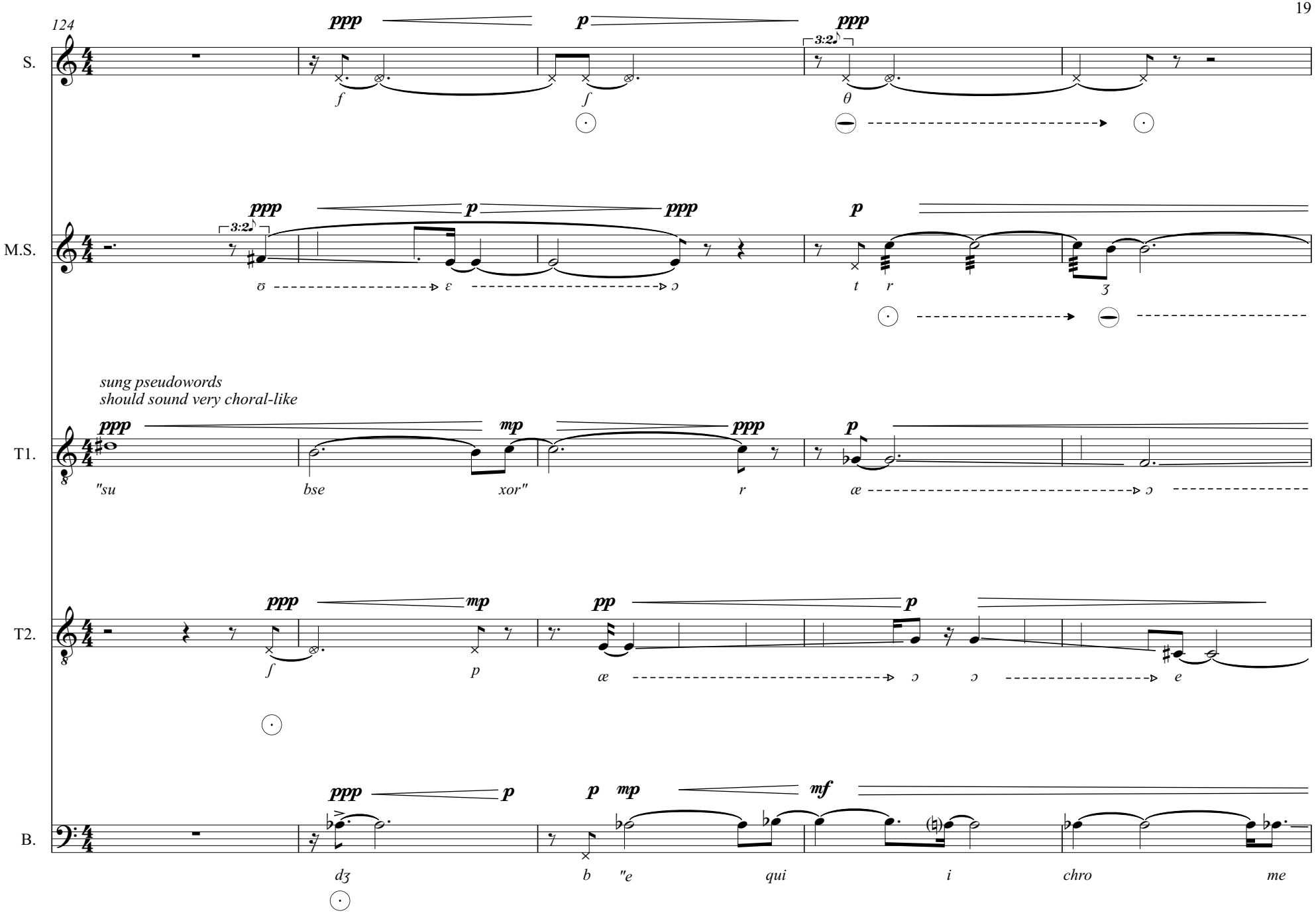

♩ = ca. 70
all this section must sound psychodelic (60´s ish)
poco accel.
95
S.
M.S.
glottal trill
T1.
T2.
B.


♩ = ca. 85
rit.
♩ = ca. 65
104
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
pp
ppp
mp
p
mf
3:2
ɪ ɪ
æ u e e ɔ a
ʌ ɛ u
(no transition between vowels)
(transition)
ʊ ʌ ɛ ɪ
ɔ o i i æ u
ɔ o ʊ ʊ
ɛ u e
ɔ o
ʌ ɛ i æ æ
ʌ ɛ i æ æ

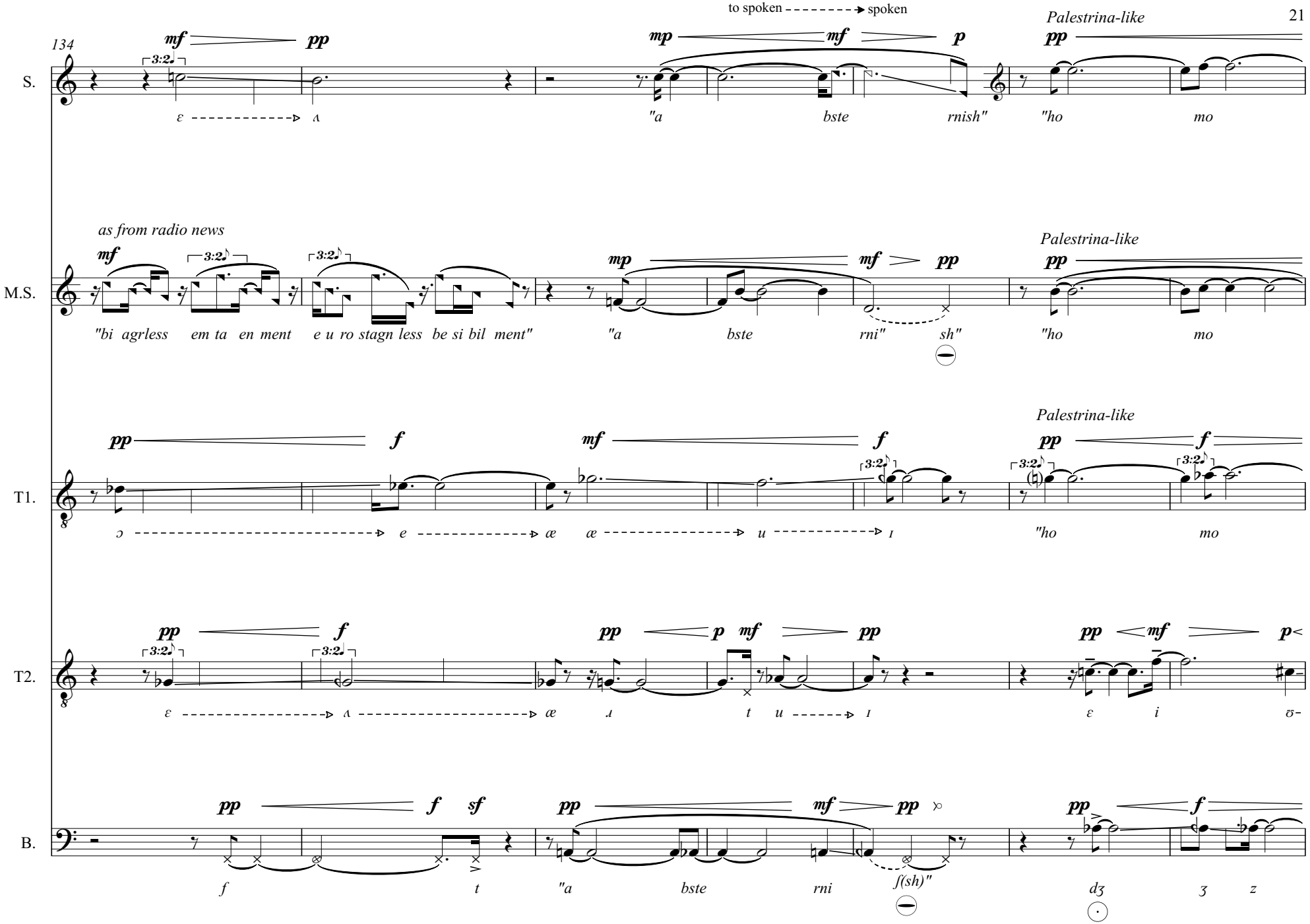
poco accel.

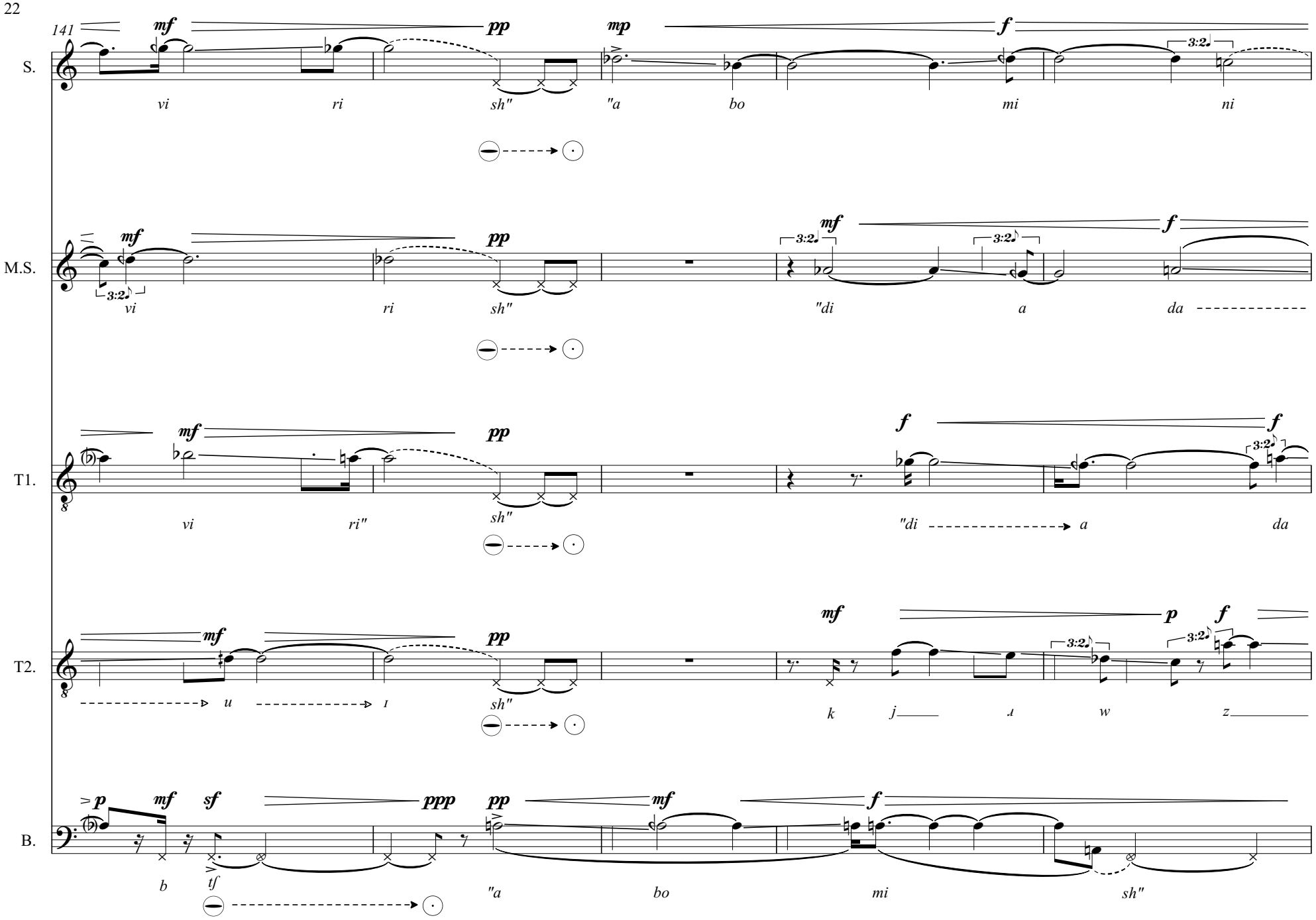


♩ = ca. 90
molto rit.
♩ = 95
118
S.
M.S.
ppp
ε ɪ
(no transition
between vowels)
mf
f
pp
mf
f
ppp
T1.
ε ε ʌ ʊ ʊ ɔ o ε ε ɪ u æ
3:2
mf
pp
mf
f
mf
ppp
T2.
u ɔ ʊ o ʊ ʌ u æ æ ε ɪ
3:2
glottal
trill
vocal
fry
f
pp
mf
f
mf
ppp
f
mf
ppp
B.
ε ʌ ʊ ʊ ɔ o ε ɪ u u æ ʌ
3:2
3:2

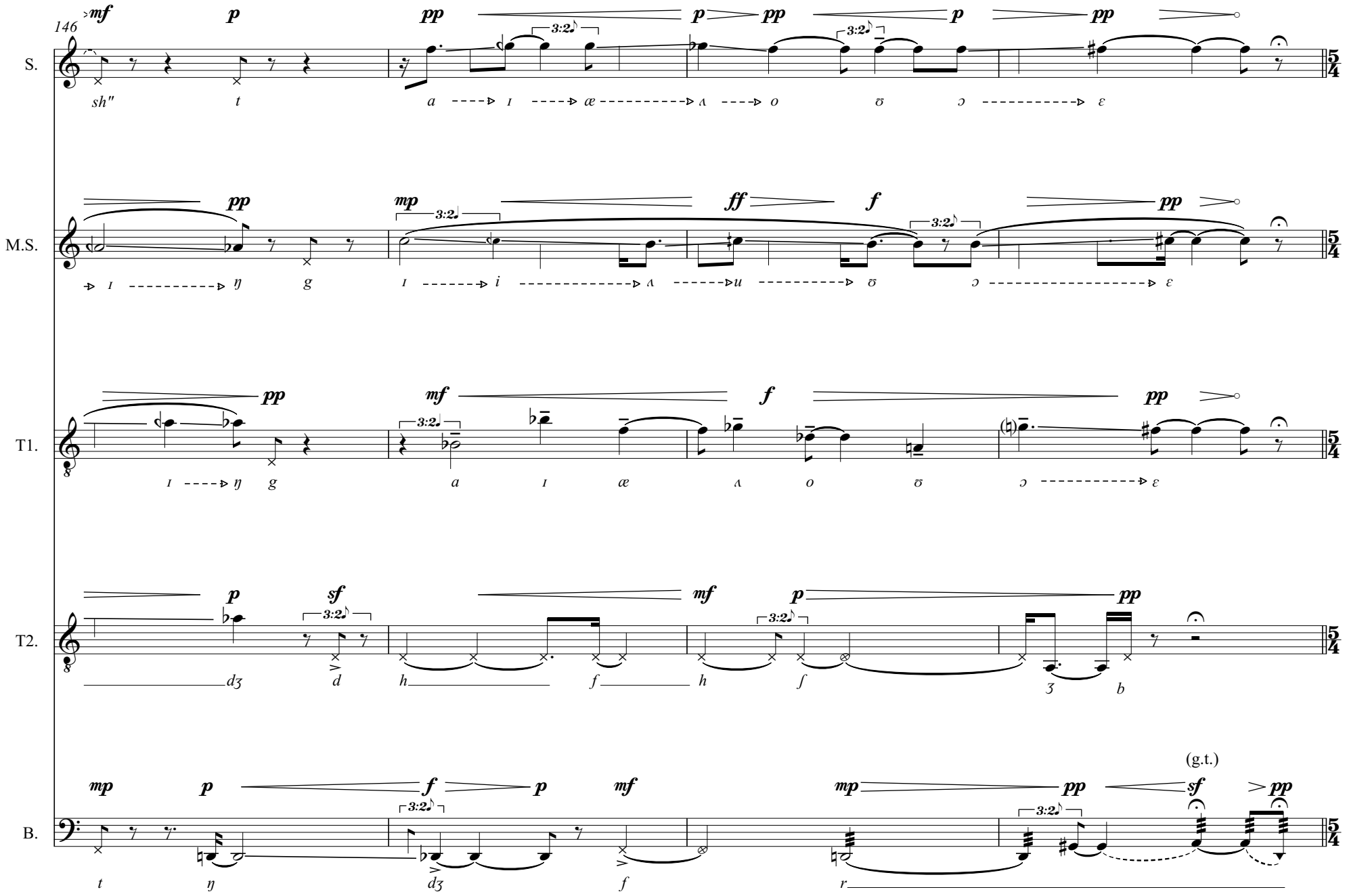

124
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
sung pseudowords
should sound very choral-like
"su
bse
xor"
r
b
"e
qui
i
chro
me

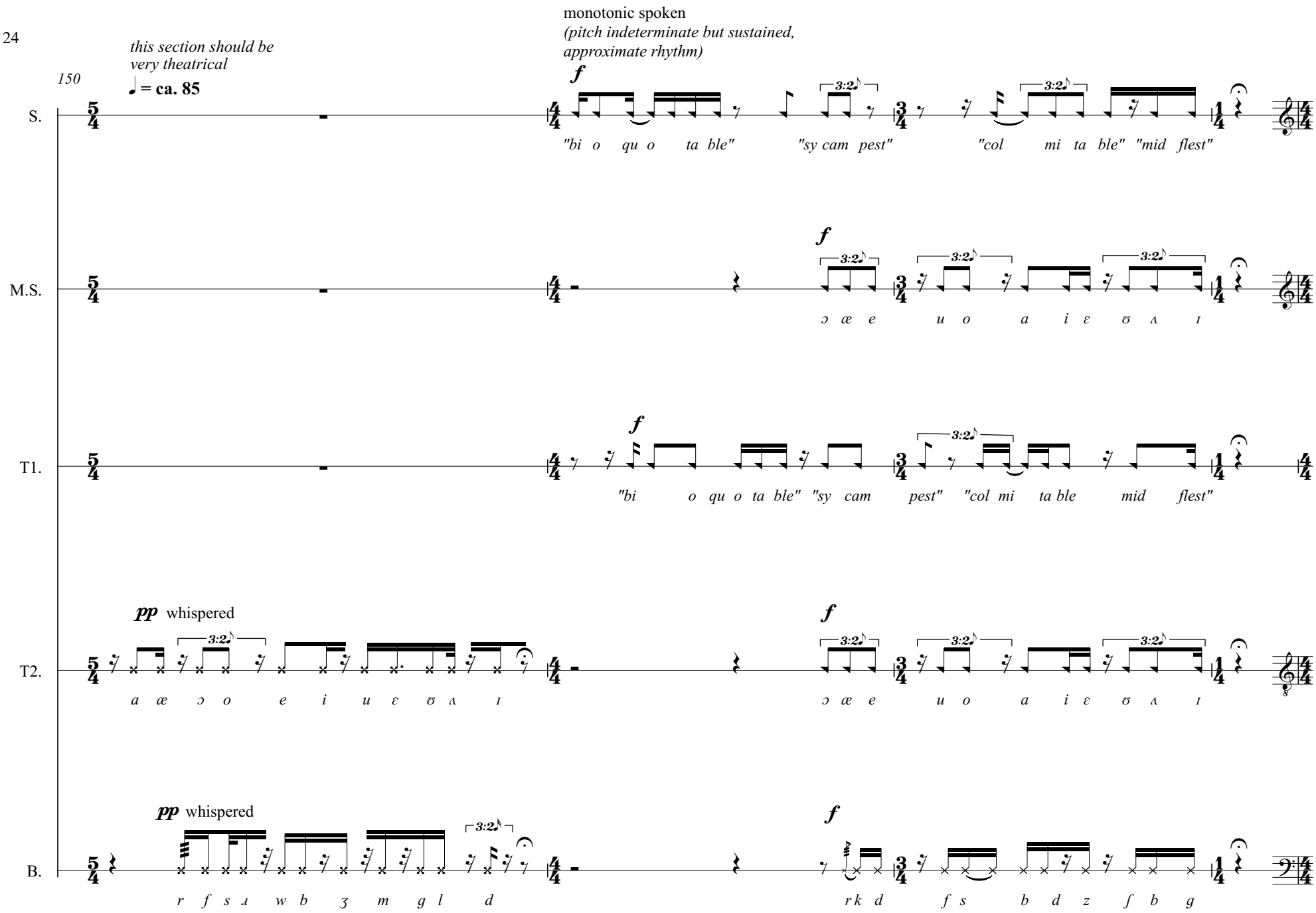
129
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
pp
mf
p
ppp
mp
f
3:2
to spoken
spoken
"e pto pa thy" ɪ "an me la ni fy"
n" ð ŋ l


134
to spoken
spoken
Palestrina-like
S.
ε
ʌ
"a bste rnish"
"ho mo
as from radio news
M.S.
"bi agrless em ta en ment e u ro stagn less be si bil ment"
"a bste rni" sh"
"ho mo
T1.
ɔ e æ æ u ɪ
"ho mo
T2.
ε ʌ æ ɹ t u ɪ ε i ʊ-
B.
f t "a bste rni f(sh)" dʒ ʒ z


141
S.
mf
pp
mp
f
3:2
vi
ri
sh"
"a
bo
mi
ni
M.S.
mf
pp
mf
f
3:2
3:2
3:2
vi
ri
sh"
"di
a
da
T1.
mf
pp
f
f
3:2
vi
ri"
sh"
"di
a
da
T2.
mf
pp
mf
p
f
3:2
3:2
u
ɪ
sh"
k
j
ɹ
w
z
B.
p
mf
sf
ppp
pp
mf
f
b
tʃ
"a
bo
mi
sh"

molto rit.




this section should be very theatrical
150
♩ = ca. 85
monotonic spoken
(pitch indeterminate but sustained, approximate rhythm)
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
pp whispered
"bi o qu o ta ble" "sy cam pest" "col mi ta ble" "mid flest"
"bi o qu o ta ble" "sy cam pest" "col mi ta ble mid flest"
a æ ɔ o e i u ɛ ʊ ʌ ɪ
r f s ɹ w b ʒ m g l d
r k d f s b d z f b g

♩ = ca. 95 *sprechgesang (approximate rhythm and pitch)*

154

S. *ff* *p*

"therm he te ro to my a fro stan pa thy" "mi cro the o ri o to my" "o ve squ a rro spa thy"

M.S. *ff* *p*

"therm he te ro to my" "a fro stan pa thy" "mi cro the o ri o to my" "o ver squ a rro spa thy"

operistic

T1. *mf* *f* *mf* *p*

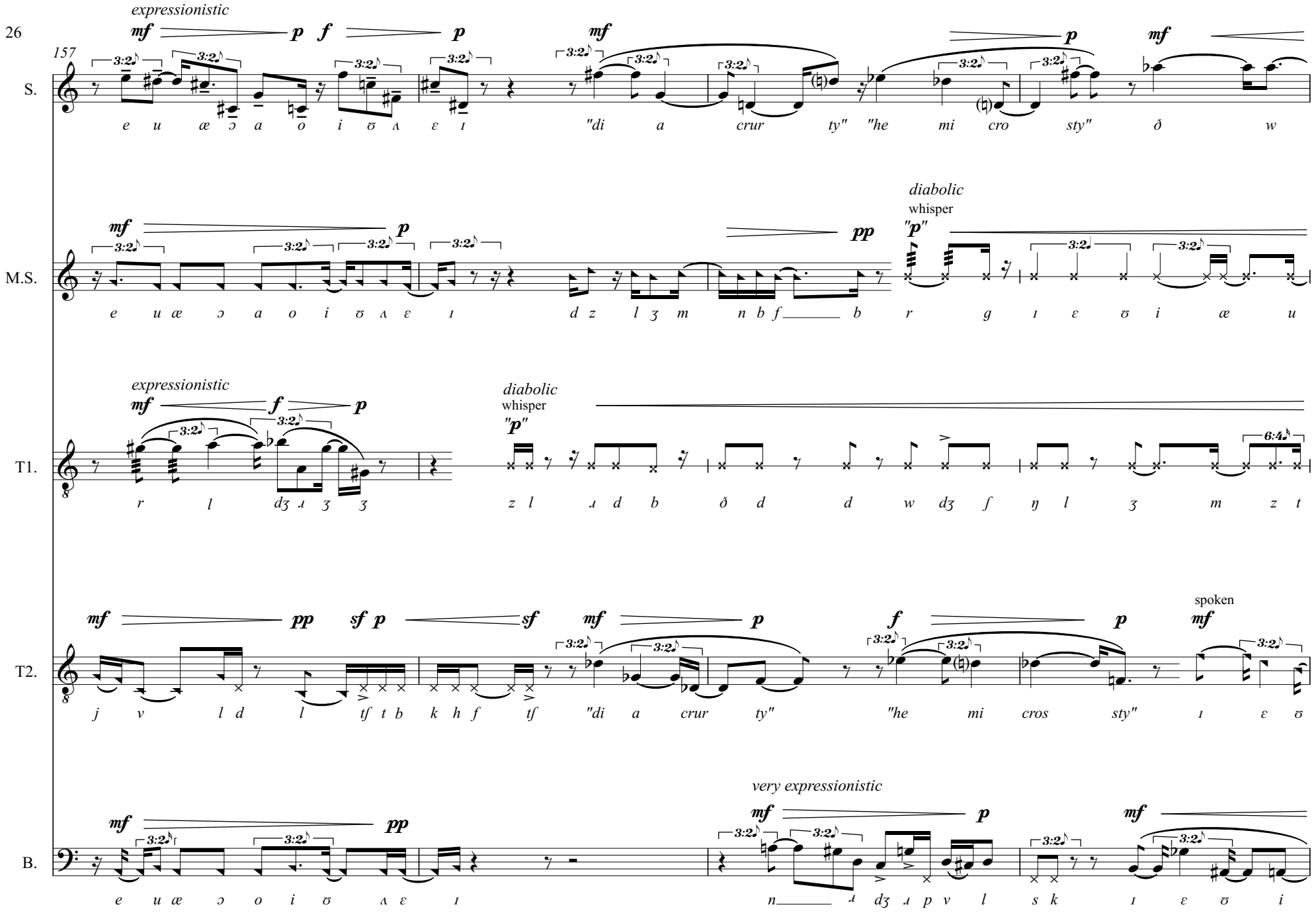
ð w ŋ p k b f k θ g

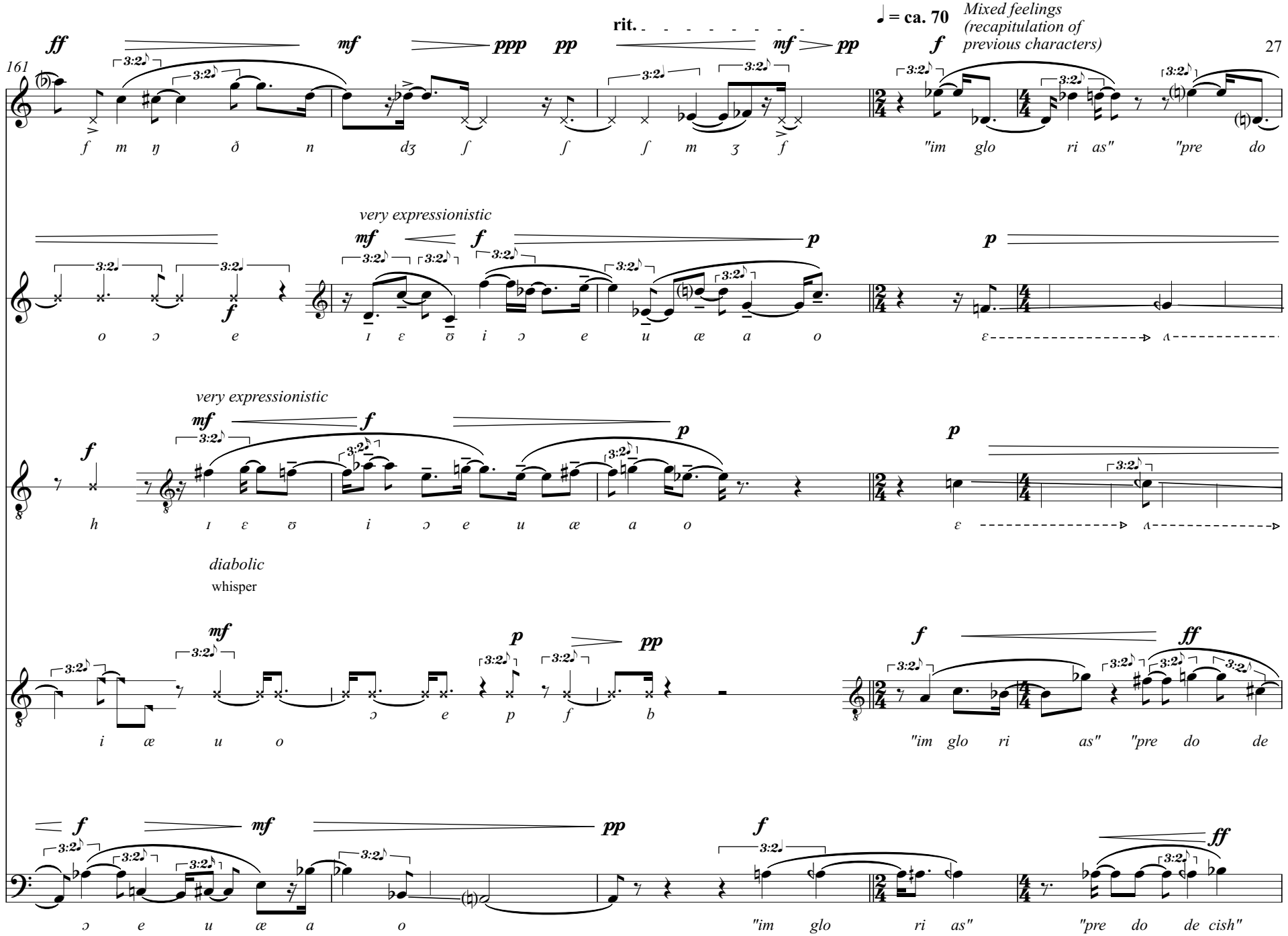
T2. *ff* *p*

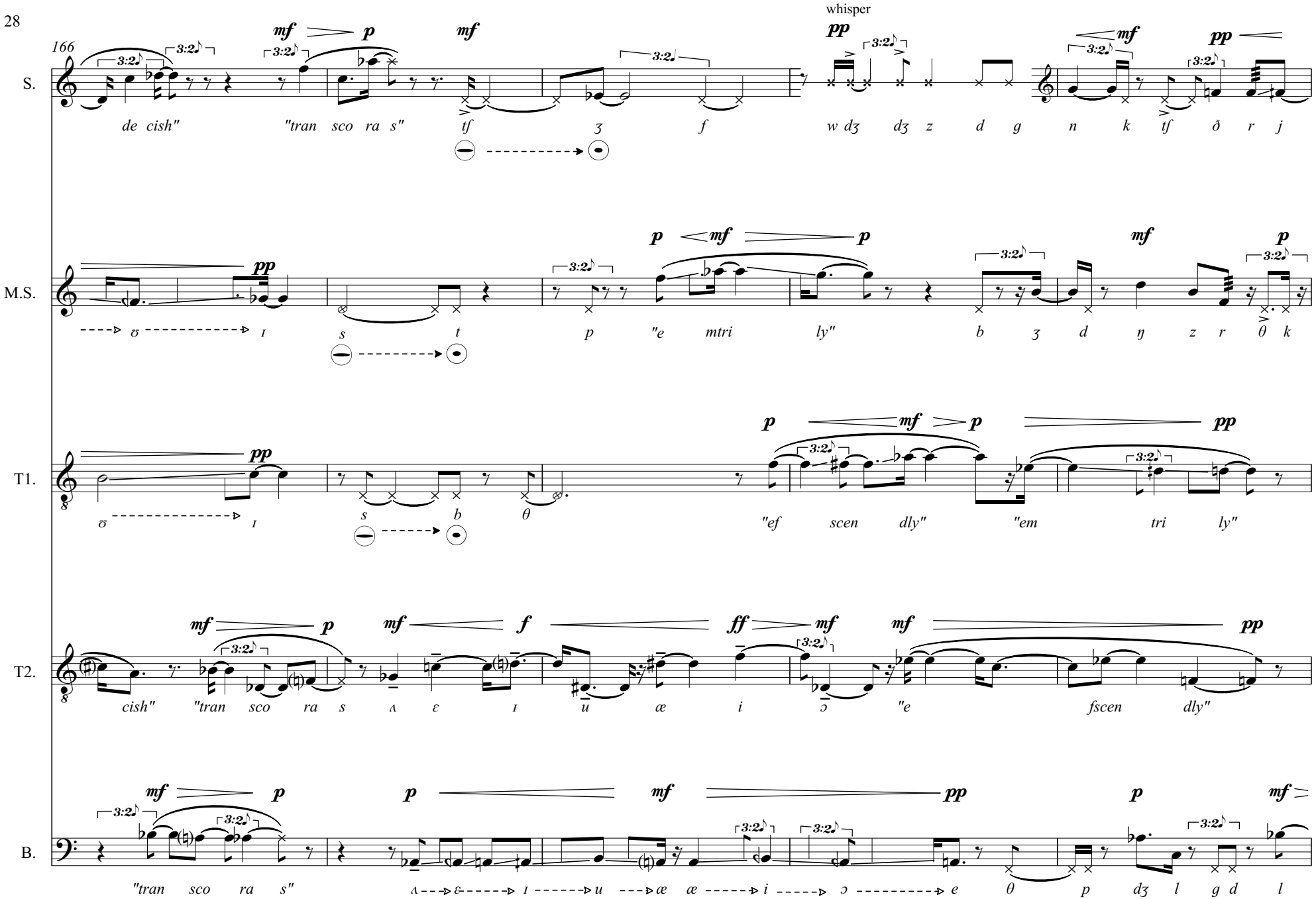
"therm he te ro to my a fro stan pa thy mi cro the o ri o to my o ver squ a rro spa thy

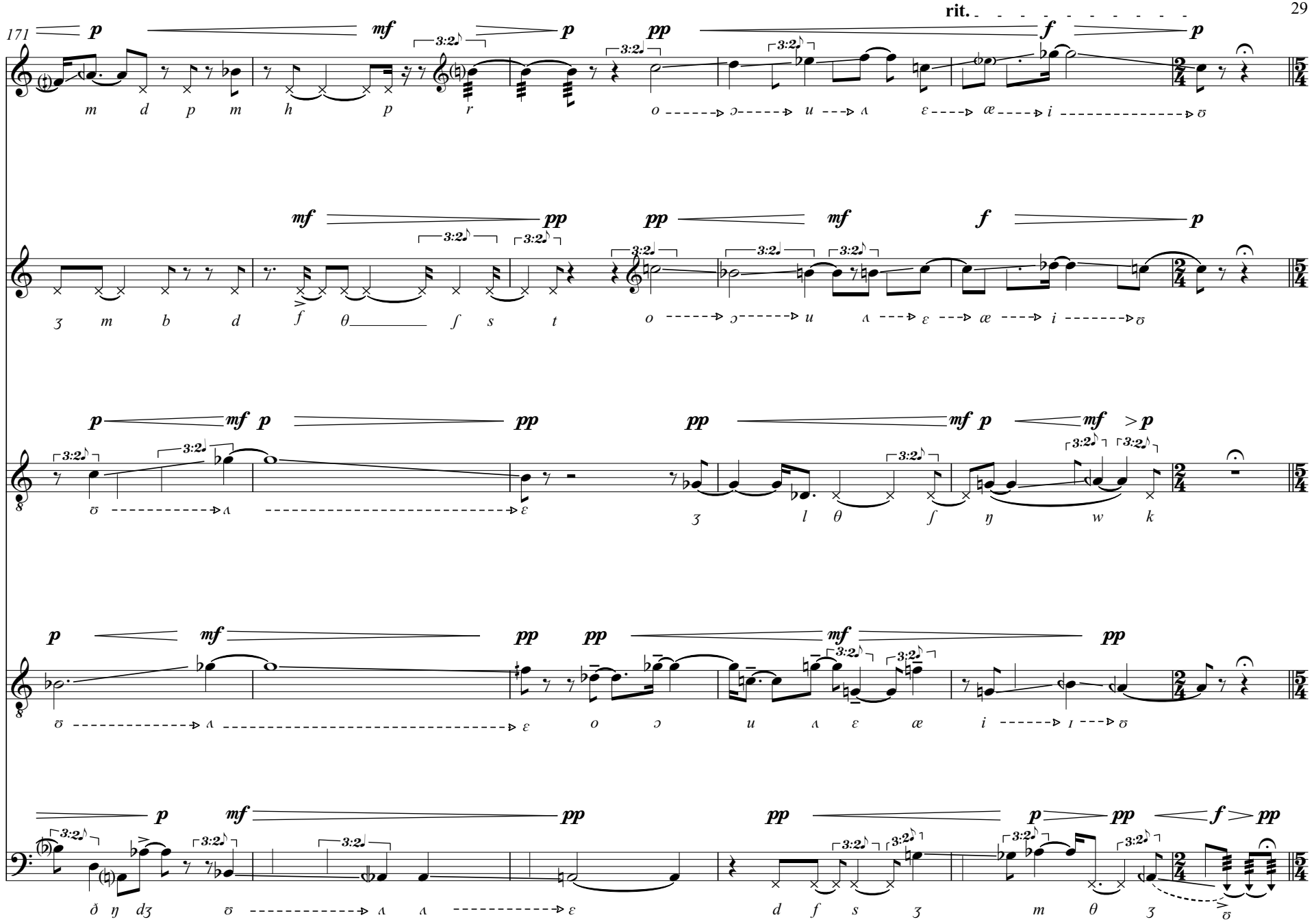
B. *ff* *p*

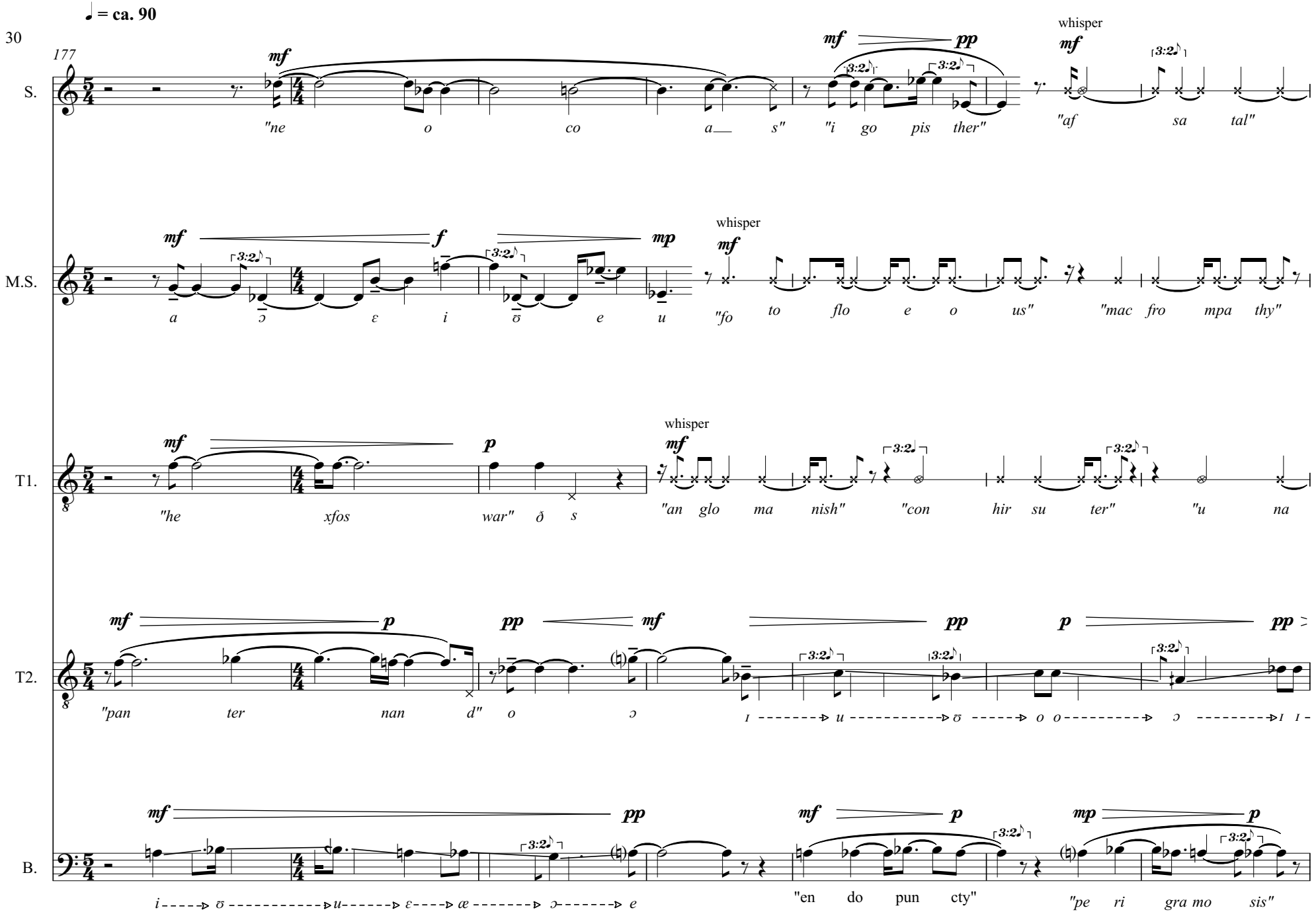
"therm he te ro to my" "a fro stan pa thy" "mi cro the o ri o to my" "o ver squ a rro spa thy"

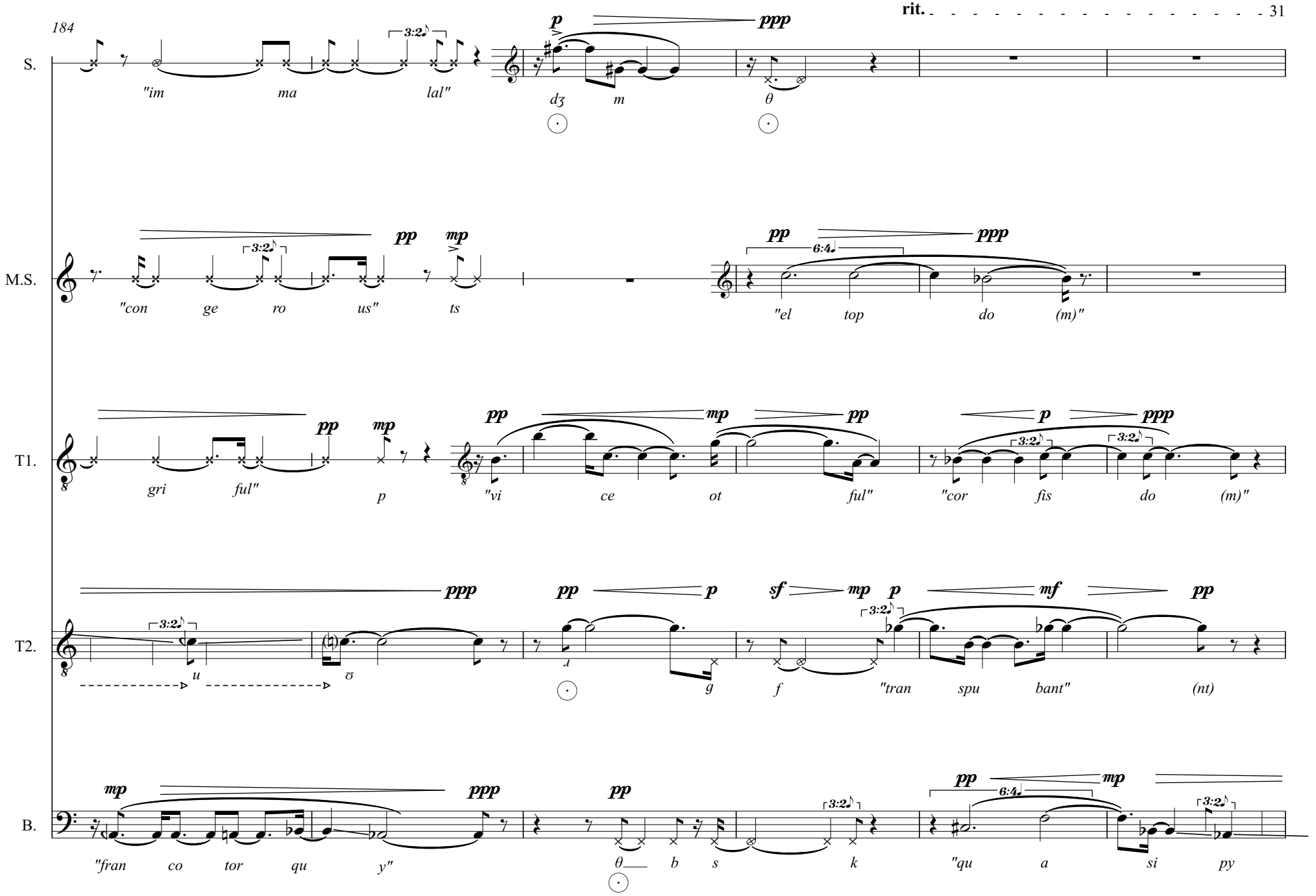

26
157
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
expressionistic
diabolic
whisper
"p"
spoken
very expressionistic
mf
p
f
pp
sf
3:2
6:4
"di a crur ty" "he mi cro sty"
"di a crur ty" "he mi cros sty"


161
♩ = ca. 70
Mixed feelings (recapitulation of previous characters)
rit.
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
very expressionistic
very expressionistic
diabolic
whisper
"im glo ri as" "pre do
"im glo ri as" "pre do de
"im glo ri as" "pre do de cish"


166
whisper
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
de cish" "tran sco ra s" tʃ ʒ f w dʒ dʒ z d g n k tʃ ð r j
ʊ ɪ s t p "e mtri ly" b ʒ d ŋ z r θ k
ʊ ɪ s b θ "ef scen dly" "em tri ly"
cish" "tran sco ra s ʌ ɛ ɪ u æ i ɔ "e fscen dly"
"tran sco ra s" ʌ ɛ ɪ u æ æ i ɔ e θ p dʒ l g d l


171
rit.
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.


♩ = ca. 90
30
177
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
whisper
"ne o co a__ s"
"i go pis ther"
"af sa tal"
"fo to flo e o us"
"mac fro mpa thy"
"he xfos war" ð s
"an glo ma nish"
"con hir su ter"
"u na
"pan ter nan d" o ɔ
i u ʊ o o ɔ i i
i ʊ u ɛ æ ɔ e
"en do pun cty"
"pe ri gra mo sis"


184
rit.
S.
M.S.
T1.
T2.
B.
"im ma lal"
dʒ m θ
"con ge ro us" ts
"el top do (m)"
gri ful"
p
"vi ce ot ful"
"cor fis do (m)"
u o
g
f
"tran spu bant"
(nt)
"fran co tor qu y"
θ b s k
"qu a si py

languid (the end is near)

190 ♩ = **ca. 75**

S.

M.S.

pp *ppp*

æ *ɛ* *o* *ʊ*

T1.

pp *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

i *ɪ* *u* *ʌ* *tf* *tf*

T2.

p *mp* *pp* *p* *ppp*

p *θ* *t* *f* *w* *f* *ɹ* *r* *tf* *tf* *tf*

B.

pp *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *p* glottal trill *ad. lib.* *mp* *mf* *mp*

lant" *ɛ* *æ* *u* *ʌ* *æ* *o* *o* *ʊ* *ʌ* *i*

until the end should sound
fleshy and vulnerable

♩ = 55

rit. - - - - - - - - - - - -

195

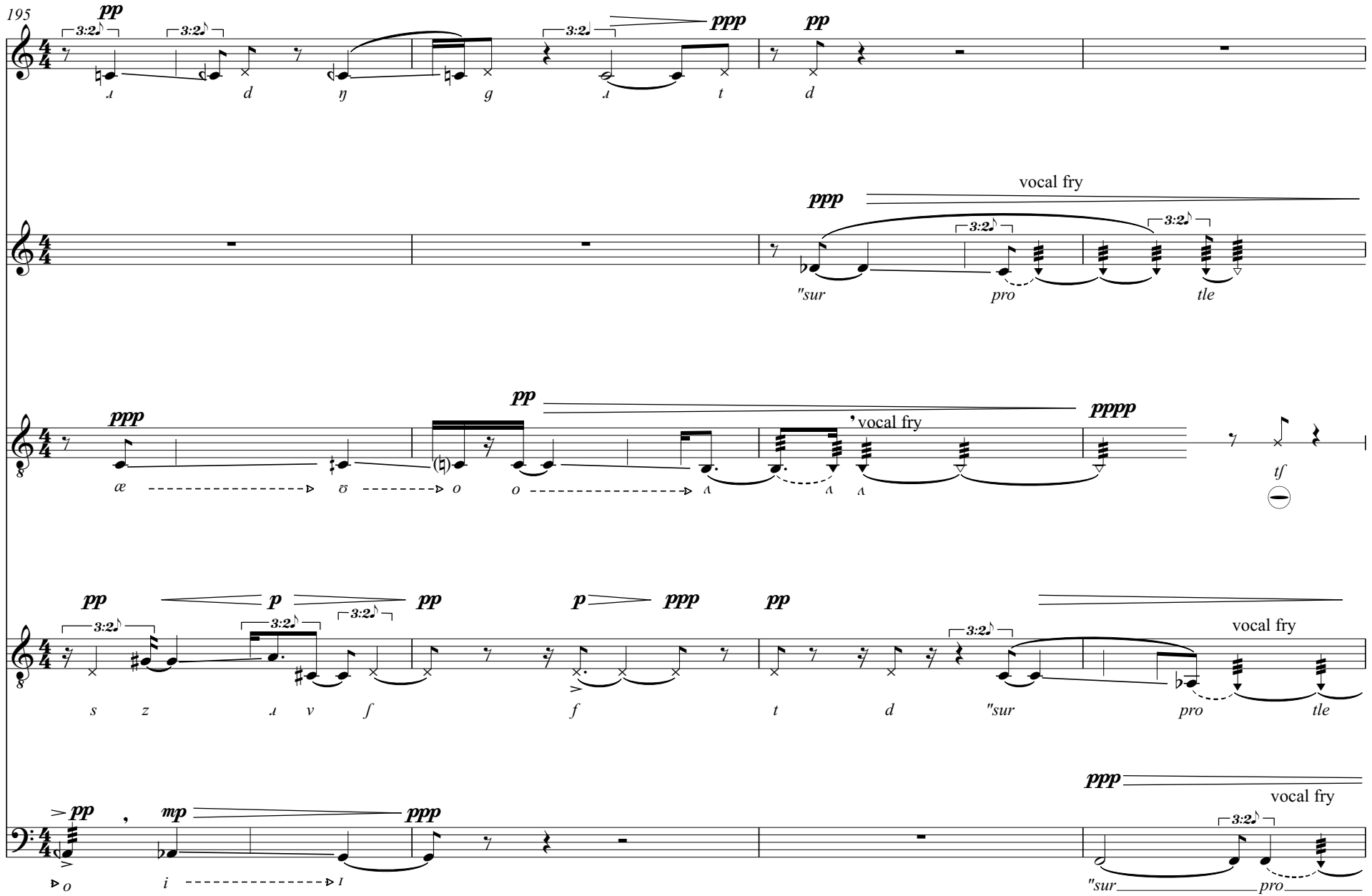
S.

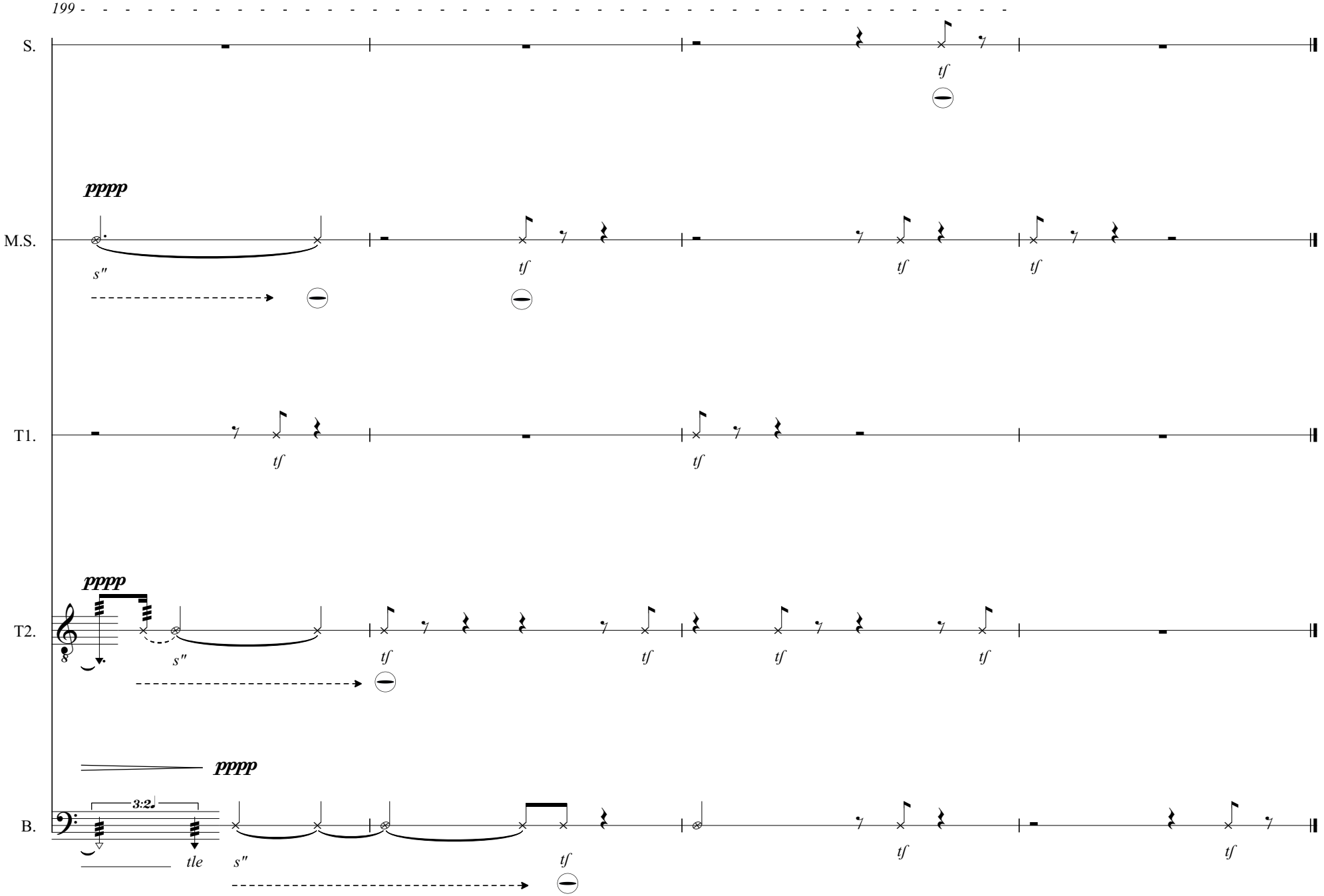
M.S.

T1.

T2.

B.




199
S.
tf
pppp
M.S.
s"
tf
tf
tf
T1.
tf
tf
pppp
T2.
s"
tf
tf
tf
tf
pppp
3:2
B.
tle
s"
tf
tf
tf