



*Encyclopaedia of
Shakespeare's
Language*



Shakespeare's Language

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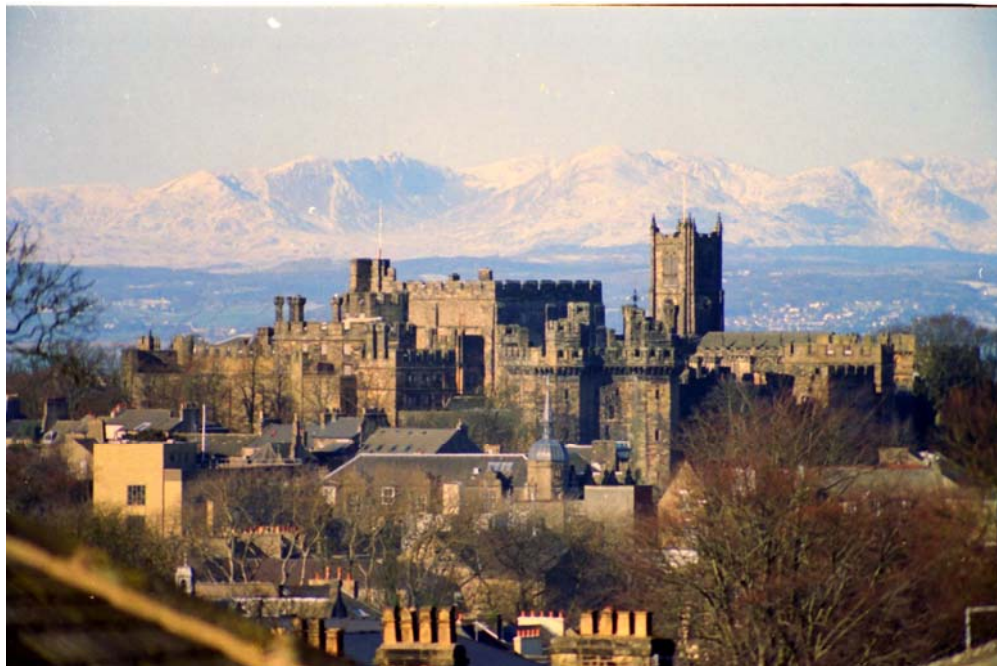


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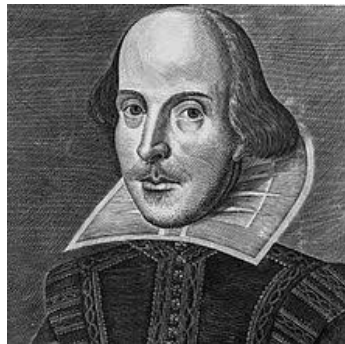
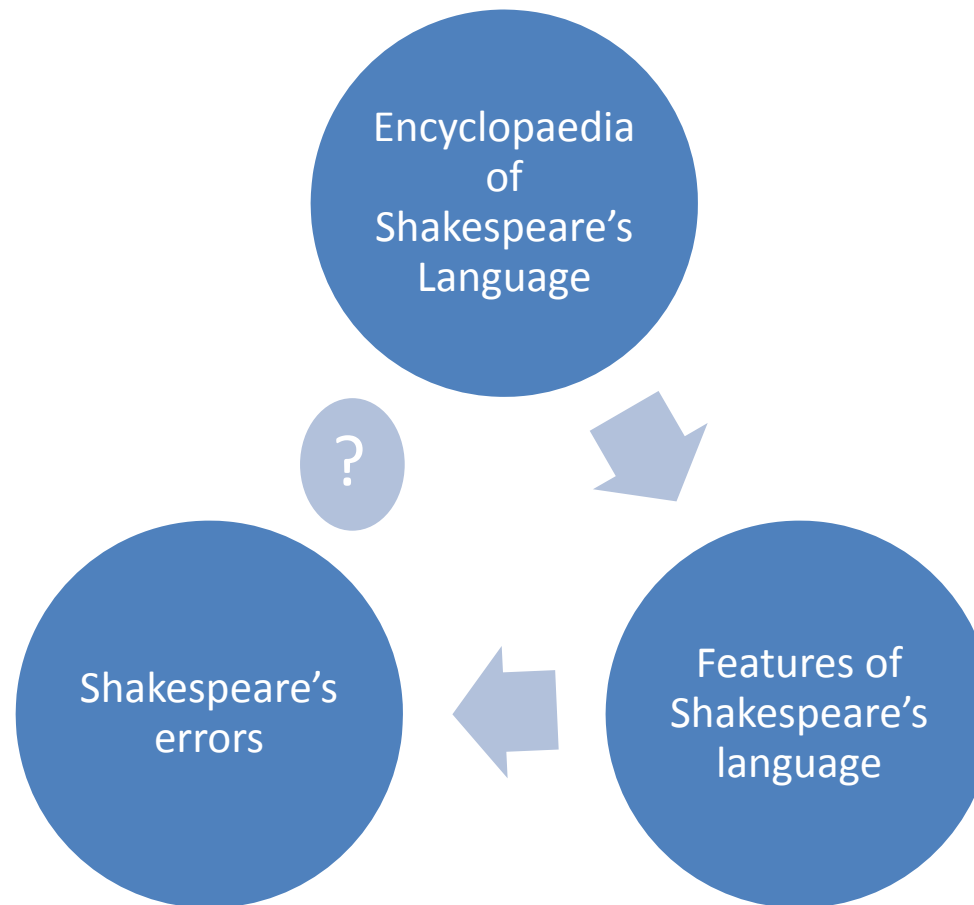


THE QUEEN'S
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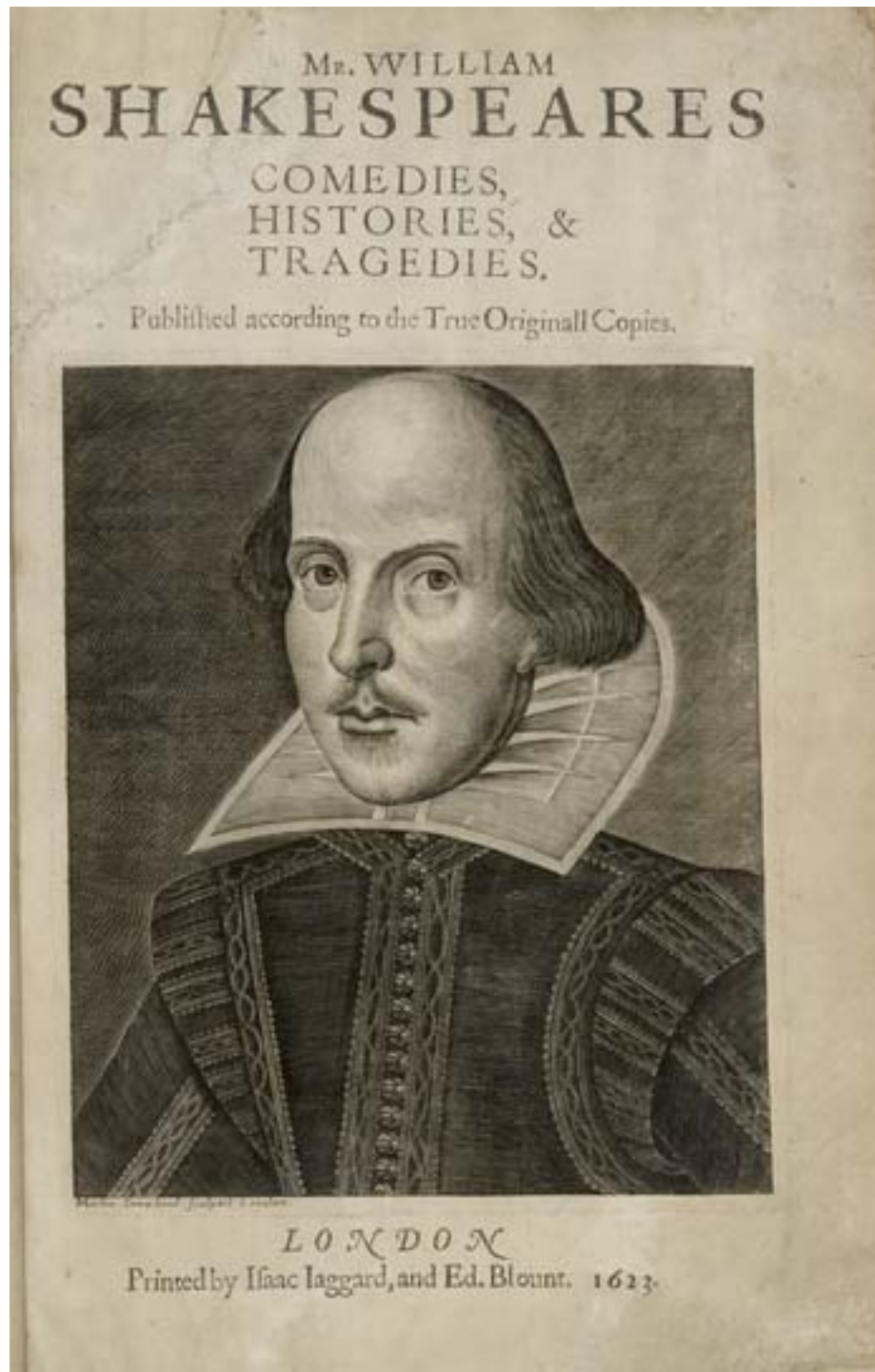


Outline



What is “Shakespeare’s Language”?

- **First Folio 1623** –
Shakespeare dead for 7 years
- Good quartos, Bad quartos
- Play text – manuscript fragments
- Collaboration among playwrights
- Plagiarism – a compliment?
- No record of Shakespeare’s spoken language
- **SO, Shakespeare’s language = surviving texts**



The Encyclopaedia of Shakespeare's Language

- [Encyclopaedia of Shakespeare's Language](#)
- Volume 1: A kind of dictionary which focuses on:
 - use and meanings of Shakespeare's words
 - in the context of what he wrote
 - in the context in which he wrote
- Every word in Shakespeare is compared with:
 - a 1 million word corpus of other contemporary playwrights
 - a 379 million word corpus of other contemporary publications



The Encyclopaedia of Shakespeare's Language

Volume 2: A compendium of linguistic profiles based on comparisons, e.g.:

- The play *Hamlet* v. all Shakespeare's other plays
- The character Hamlet's speech v. all other characters in *Hamlet*
- All tragedies (incl. *Hamlet*) v. all comedies and histories

- plays
- characters
- genders (female/male/assumed female/assumed male)
- social status (scale 0-7)
- dramatic genres (comedy/history/tragedy)
- concepts (e.g. love, death)

Volume 3: focuses on grammatical words and patterns

Social status of characters

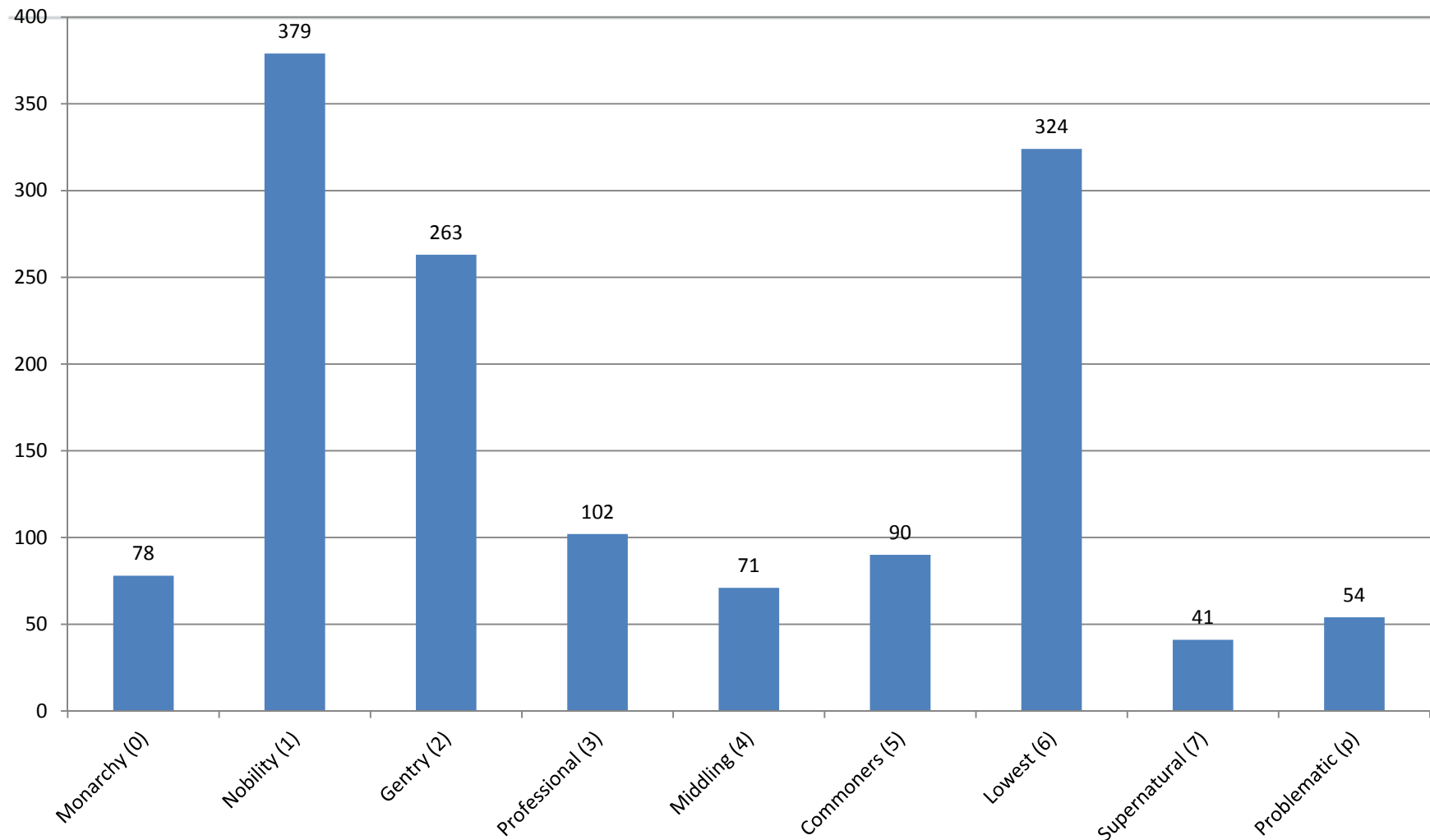
- Is the word 'prithee' more commonly used by higher or lower status characters?
- Is a clown's language different from that of his social betters?
- What sort of language is used by characters of low social status?

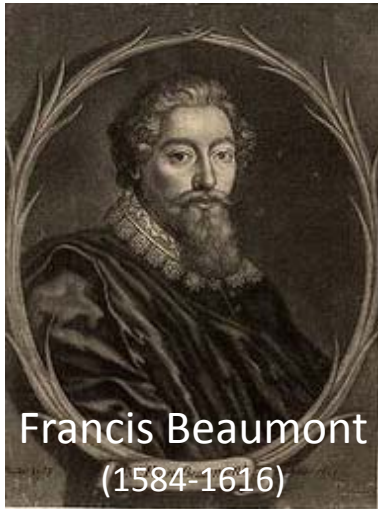


Social status for each character

Monarchy (0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Queen, King
Nobility (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Duke, Earl, Baron, Archbishop
Gentry (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knight, General, Gentleman, Ambassador
Professional (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• priest, doctor, lawyer, schoolmaster
Middling (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• merchant, captain, steward, jester
Commoners (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• hostess, joiner, apprentice, shepherdess
Lowest (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• servant, messenger, common soldier, guard
Supernatural (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ghost, fairy, spririt, god
Problematic (p)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• actor, poet, musician, character who undergoes a significant change of status

Characters per social group





Francis Beaumont
(1584-1616)

Thomas Drue
(c.1586-1627)



John Fletcher (1579-1625)

Thomas Kyd
(1558-1594)

Thomas Dekker
(c.1570-1632)

John Lyly
(1554-1606)



Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

Thomas Drue
(c.1586-1627)

Anthony Munday
(1553-1633)

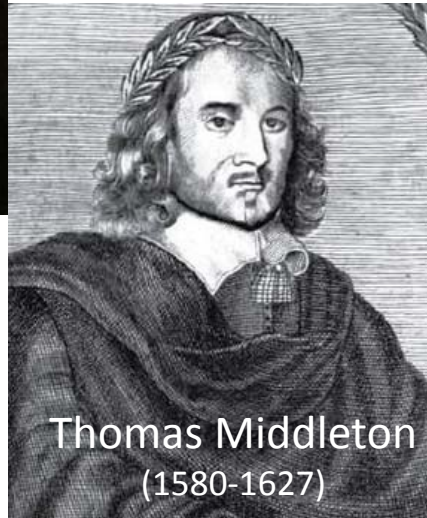
George Wilkins
(c.1576-1618)

John Webster
(c.1578-1634)

George Chapman
(c.1559-c.1634)

Robert Greene
(1558-1592)

George Peele
(1556-1596)



Thomas Middleton
(1580-1627)

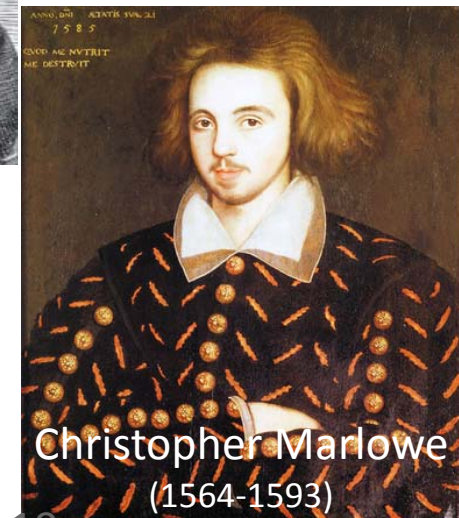
Henry Porter
(d.1599)

John Marston
(c.1575-1634)

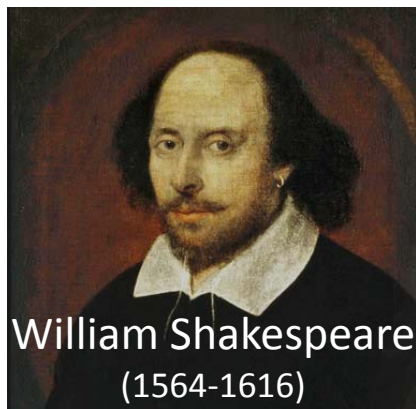
William Rowley
(1585-1637)

Philip Massinger
(1583-1640)

Thomas Heywood
(c.1574-1641)



Christopher Marlowe
(1564-1593)




William Shakespeare
(1564-1616)

Data and genre: *Early English Books Online (TCP)* 1560-1639 (379 million words; 5,750 texts categorized by genre, domain and style)





Styles	Domains	Genres	Sub-genres (examples)
Literary	Imaginative	Plays Poetry, Verse & Song Fiction General	Comedy, History, Tragedy, Masque Ballads
Formal – Spiritual	Religion	Bible Catholicism Protestantism Doctrine, Theology and Governance General	Anti-Catholicism Church of England Sin and Repentance Sermons
Formal - Statutory	Government	Royal Parliamentary Legal General	Proceedings Reports Trials Speeches
Formal - Instructional	Didactic	Philosophy Science Mathematics Medicine General	Experiments Anatomy Alchemy
Informational	Factual	Biography Essay Letters Pamphlets General	Dialogue Food and Cookery

Shakespeare dictionaries: *good*

- *Onions* (1911): (1) Conventional epithet to titles of high rank, (2) comely, (3) Financially sound; (hence) wealthy, substantial.
 - *Crystal & Crystal* (2004): (1) [intensifying use] real, genuine ('love no man in good earnest'). (2) kind, benevolent, generous. (3) kind, friendly, sympathetic. (4) amenable, tractable, manageable. (5) honest, virtuous, honourable. (6) seasonable, appropriate proper. (7) just, right, commendable. (8) intended, right, proper. (9) high-ranking, highborn, distinguished. (10) rich, wealthy, substantial.
- 

good

(gʊd )

Word Frequency 

Collins COBUILD

Word forms: comparative **better** , superlative **best** 

1. adjective

Good means pleasant or enjoyable.

We had a really good time together.

I know they would have a better life here.

There's nothing better than a good cup of hot coffee.

It's so good to hear your voice after all this time.

2. adjective

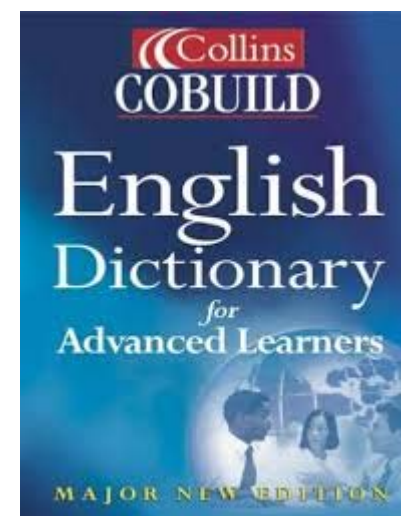
Good means of a high quality, standard, or level.

Exercise is just as important to health as good food.

His parents wanted Raymond to have the best possible education.

The train's average speed was no better than that of our bicycles.

...good quality furniture.



The Encyclopaedia of Shakespeare's Language: *good*

Encyclopaedia of Shakespeare's Language

Definition preview: definition 104 for entry [good_ADJ](#)

good**** *adj.* (good, better, best):

1. A polite address: '(my) good Lord/friend/Sir/Master/Lady/Madam/etc.'. Typically used when meeting or parting, thanking or making suggestions. *But (good my Lord) do it so cunningly* TGV, III. 1.
2. Honest, truthful, principled; of high moral standards. (This sense also shapes the discourse markers '(in) good faith/sooth/troth', which mean truly or honestly). *a man of good repute, carriage, bearing, & estimation* LLL, I. 1.
3. Positive rather than negative. Typically, contrasted with 'bad'. *Is thy news good or bad?* ROM, II. 5.
4. In one's favour, especially favourable wishes or blessings. *The Gods be good to us* COR, V. 4.
5. A welcoming, cheerful manner. *Therefore for Gods sake entertain good comfort, And cheer his Grace with quick and merry eyes* R3, I. 3.

good will As now.

good morrow Good morning.

good night As now.

Characters: % of speech in play



■ Hamlet ■ Claudius ■ Polonius ■ Horatio ■ Laertes ■ Other



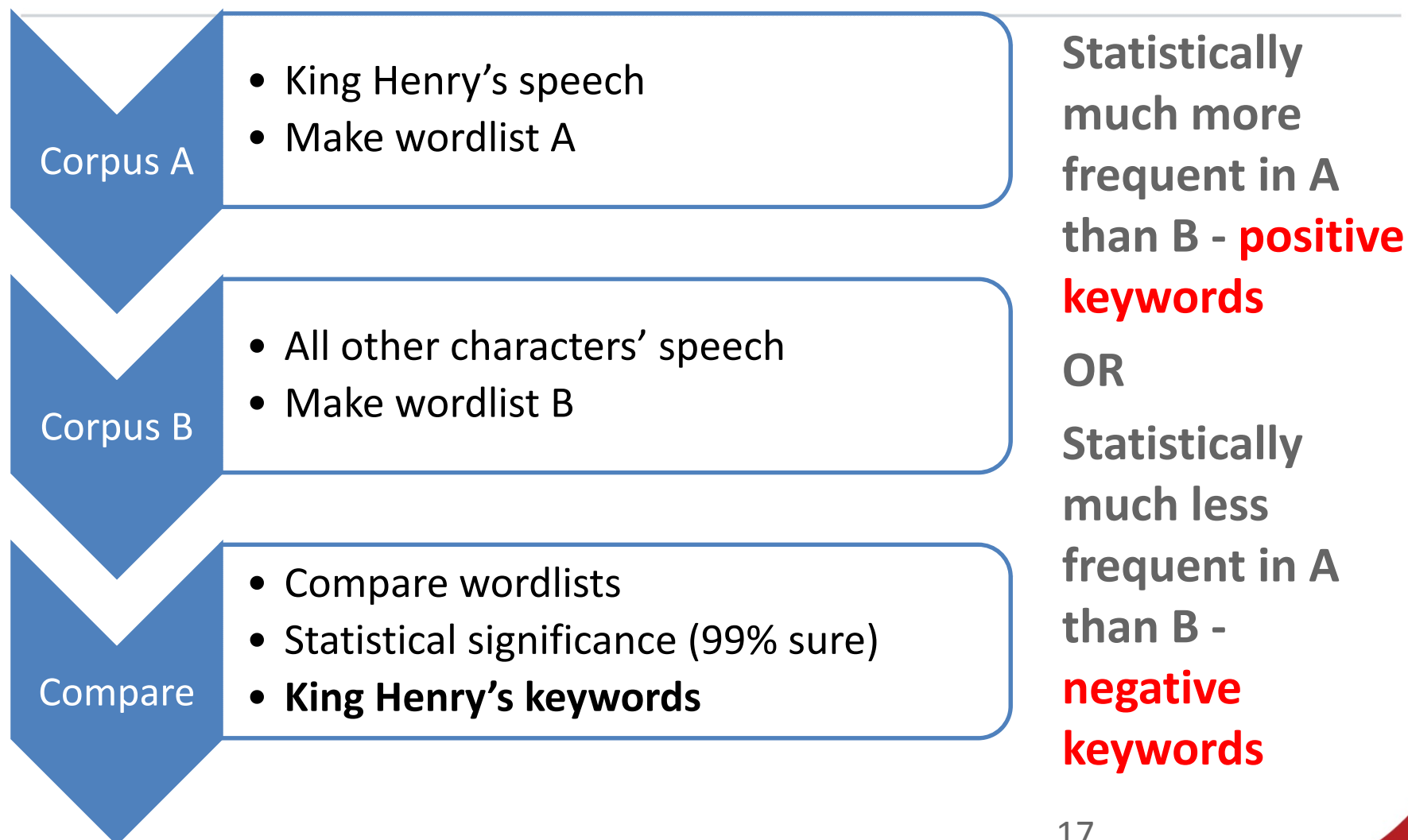
■ King Henry ■ Wolsey ■ Katharine ■ Buckingham ■ Norfolk ■ Chamberlain ■ Other

Three's a crowd

Henry VIII, Katherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn



A quick guide to keywords



King Henry

Keywords: we, ha, prithee


Henry speaks like a king, particularly in his use of the royal **we** (and also **us** and **our**'). 'Sit by **us**' (1.2.124), he says to Katherine.

Henry's characteristic exclamation is **Ha**. It occurs with an interrogative in eight out of nine cases. **Ha?** is an interjection in the form of a question which invites the addressee to agree to something. It is a linguistic character trait which may be interpreted as Henry having a quick-tempered and intimidating personality:

Henry: Who am I? **Ha?**

Norfolk: A gracious King (2.2.65-66)

His keyword **prithee** is always used before an imperative, '**Prithee** come hither' (1.4)



Katherine of Aragon

Keywords: I, woman, trouble

Collocates of Katherine's keywords **woman** and **women** include 'poor', 'simple', 'weak', 'wretched' and 'unhappy'; 'I am a **Woman** friendless , hopeless', she says (3.1.80). Together, they paint a depressing picture of the status and regard for women in the period, at least from Katherine's perspective.

She regards herself as a source of **trouble** for her husband and as she is dying, she tells her gentleman usher to tell the king that: 'his long **trouble** now is passing / Out of this world ' (4.2.162-163).




Anne Bullen (Boleyn)

Keywords: not, pity, she

Anne refers to Katherine often, using **she** and **her**, and claims to feel **pity** for her: '**she** / So good a Lady' (2.3.3); 'So much the more / Must **pity** drop upon her' (2.3.18).

Anne is courted by Henry, but appears full of doubts, reflected by **not**: 'I would **not** be a Queen' (2.3.24).

However, when Henry makes her Marchioness of Pembroke and gives her a thousand pounds a year, she says with great modesty: 'I do **not** know / What kind of my obedience, I should tender' (2.3.65-66). In reality, her use of negatives equates to a modest acceptance and she knows very well what obedience she must tender.



Features of Shakespeare's language



Functional shift



YOU SHOULD TWEET THAT!
LET ME GOOGLE IT!
I'M GOING TO BING HIM!
THAT MOMENT IS INSTAGRAMMABLE!
I'M GOING TO TUMBLE THAT!
DO YOU WANT TO SKYPE?
YOU SHOULD FACEBOOK THAT!
I'M GOING TO PHOTOSHOP YOUR PHOTO!

Shakespeare loved functional shift

Noun → verb

Tut, tut! **Grace** me no grace, nor **uncle** me no uncle. (R2 2.3.86)

Noun → adjective

Kingdomed Achilles in commotion rages (TC 2.3.173)

Adverb → noun

Thou lovest here a better **where** to find (KL 1.1.126)

In *Hamlet*

the sepulchre Wherein we saw thee quietly **inurned** (1.4.27-28)

noun → verb

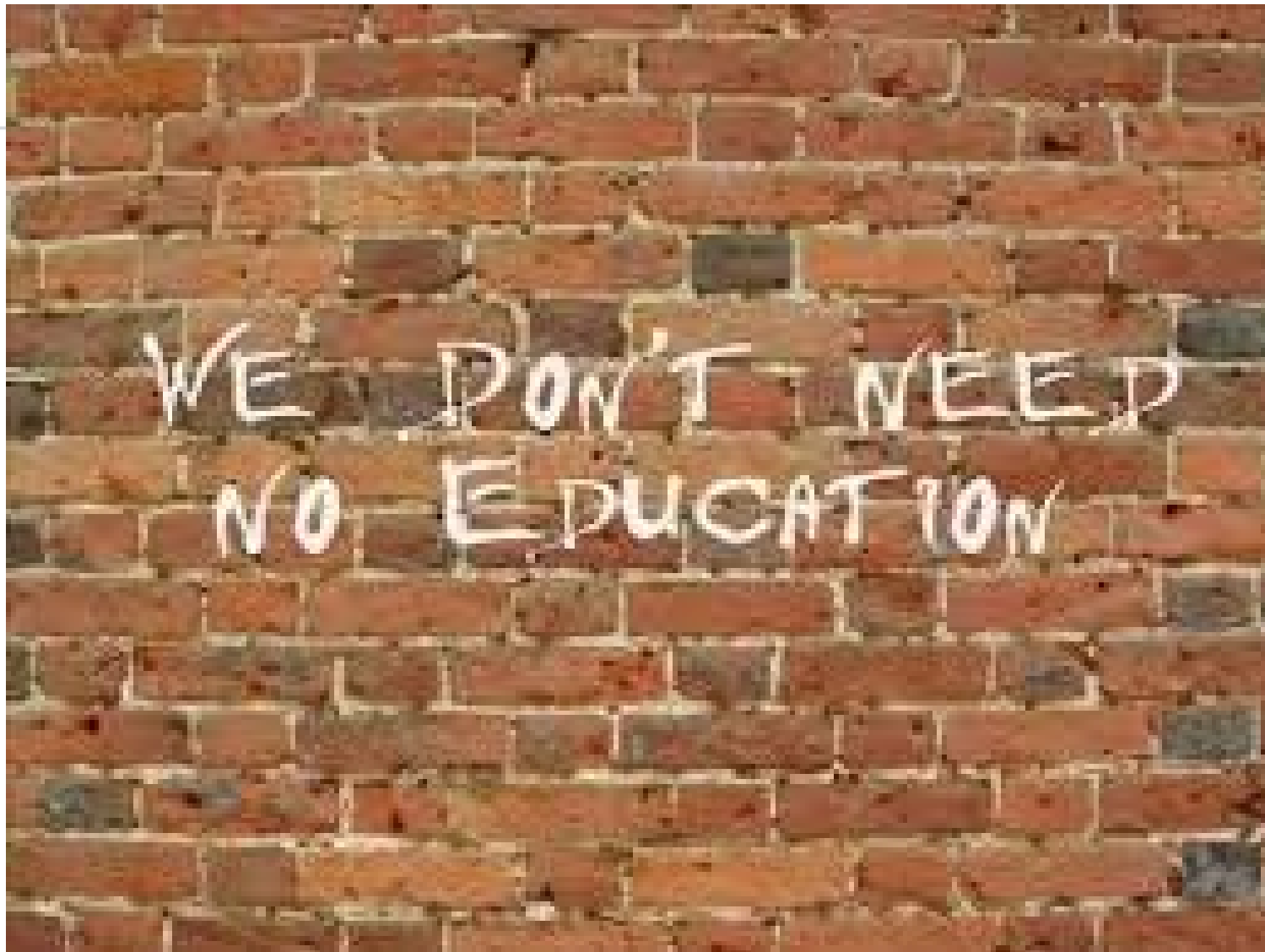
And many suchlike '**as'es** of great charge (5.2.43) conj. → noun



So why does Shakespeare use functional shift?

- It increases the number of words you can use
up/down (adv/prep): I'm having a lot of **ups and downs** (noun)
 - Neuroscientific tests show that functional shift can have 'distinct and unique' effects on the brain.
- A) You said you would **accompany** me.
- B) You said you would **charcoal** me.
- C) You said you would **incubate** me.
- D) You said you would **companion** me.





Multiple negation

Famous

You ain't heard **nothing** yet.

I can't get **no** satisfaction.

Shakespeare

I have one heart, one bosom and one truth.

And that **no** woman has, **nor never none**

Shall mistress be of it, save I alone. (TN 3.1.155)

Nor understood **none neither** sir. (LLL 5.1.144)

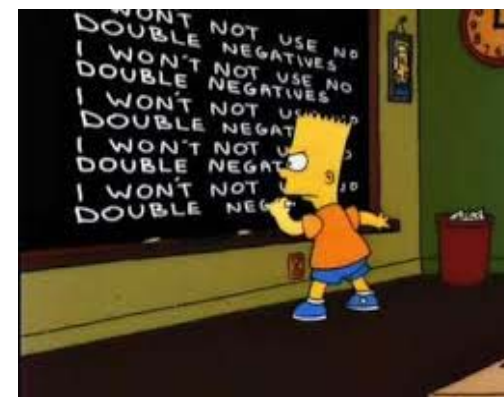
Hamlet

Hamlet: What man dost thou dig it for?

First Clown: For no man, sir.

Hamlet: What woman then?

First Clown: For **none neither**. (Ham 5.1.131)



False friends

word	Example	meaning
catastrophe	Like the catastrophe of the old comedy (KL 1.2.133)	final conclusion
glass	You go not till I set you up a glass (Ham 3.4.20)	mirror
issue	To what issue will this come? (Ham 1.4.64)	result
table, meet	My tables , my tables ! Meet it is I set it down (Ham 1.5.107)	notebook / appropriate
owe, intelligence	Say from whence / You owe this strange intelligence (Mac 1.3.75)	got (and now possess), information
bully	I love the lovely bully (H5 4.1.48)	good friend
want	A beast that wants discourse of reason / Would have mourned longer (Ham 1.2.150)	lacks

Typical Shakespearean words

word	Example	meaning
cuckold	I could marry this girl (TN 2.5.175)	wench
fain	[the] spirit hurries / To his confine (Ham 1.1.156)	hies
forbear	I would like it just as much if the town-crier had spoke my lines (Ham 3.2.3-4)	had as lief
hie	who would not make her husband a husband of an unfaithful wife , to make him a monarch? (Oth 4.3.75)	cuckold
had as lief	Who calls me villain? Breaks my head across? (Ham 2.2.569)	pate
pate	I would happily prove [to be a faithful and honourable man] (Ham 2.2.131)	fain
wench	For love of God, stop him (Ham 5.1.269)	forbear

Metre – the rhythm of speech

~~Iambic (unstressed-stressed) pentameter (5 times in a line)~~

If **mu** /-sic **be** / the **food** / of **love**, / play **on** (TN 1.1.1)

ADD A SUFFIX - vasty

Can this cockpit hold

The **vast** /-y **fields** / of **France**? / Or **may** / we **cram**

(H5 Prologue 11-12)

ADD A PREFIX - disbenched

Sir, I hope

My **words** / dis**benched** / you **not** (Cor 2.2.69)

CHANGE THE WORD ORDER

- I **saw** / your **son** / **walk**ing / so **ear**ly
- So **ear** /-ly **walk** /-ing **did** / I **see** / your **son** (RJ 1.1.123)

Archaic forms

woo't – wouldst thou (would you)

Woo't weep? **Woo't** fight? **Woo't** fast? **Woo't** tear thyself? (Ham V.i.271)

yclept - called

Judas I am, **yclept** Maccabaeus (LLL V.ii.594)

trow – guess, know

'Twas time, I **trow**, to wake and leave our beds (1H6 II.i.41)

eyne – eyes

To what, my love, shall I compare thine **eyne**? (MND III.ii.138)

shoon - shoes

[Ophelia singing] And his sandal **shoon** (Ham IV.v.26)



you and thou: Lear and Cordelia

LEAR what can **you** say to draw
A third more opulent than **your** sisters'?
Speak!

CORDELIA

Nothing, my lord.

LEAR

Nothing?

CORDELIA

Nothing.

LEAR

Nothing will come of nothing. Speak again.

CORDELIA

I love **your** majesty

According to my bond, no more nor less.

LEAR

How, how, Cordelia! Mend **your** speech a little
Lest you may mar **your** fortunes.

CORDELIA

Good my lord,

You have begot me, bred me, loved me.

I return those duties back as are right fit,

Obey **you**, love **you**, and most honour **you**.

LEAR

But goes **thy** heart with this?

...

Let it be so! **Thy** truth then be **thy** dower!

...**thou** my sometime daughter.

(KL 1.1.85-120)

thou (thee, thy, thine) you (you, your, yours)

Use of **thou** or **you** can depend on a variety of factors:

- number
 - talking to one **thou**; talking to more than one **you**
- status
 - high to high: **you**; low to low : **you/thou**
 - higher to lower: **thou**; lower to higher: **you**
- intimacy: 'Wherefore art **thou** Romeo?' (RJ 2.2.33)
- insult: 'If **thou thou'st** him some thrice' (TN 3.2.43)
- non-human: 'I have **thee** not, and yet I see **thee** still' (Mac 2.1.35)

you and thou: Lady Macbeth/Macbeth

LADY MACBETH

He has almost supp'd. Why have
you left the chamber?

MACBETH

Hath he ask'd for me?

LADY MACBETH

Know **you** not, he has?

MACBETH

We will proceed no further in
this business

LADY MACBETH Was the hope

drunk,

Wherein **you** dress'd yourself?

... From this time

Such I account **thy** love. Art **thou**
afeard

To be the same in **thine** own act
and valour,

As **thou** art in desire? ...

(Mac 1.7.29-41)



Rhetoric

- Medieval universities – liberal arts – ‘trivium’ of basic subjects: grammar, logic, rhetoric – the art of persuasion
- Students learned to structure and present arguments, using rhetorical devices
- Bdelygmia: a list of abusive terms

KENT (to OSWALD)

A knave, a rascal, ...a base, proud, shallow, beggarly ...knave, a whoreson, glass-gazing, ...and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pander and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch
(KL 2.2.14-22)

Rhetorical devices in *Hamlet*

Apostrophe - exclamatory address

***O** all you host of heaven! **O** earth! What else?* (1.5.92)

Chiasmus – repetition in reverse order

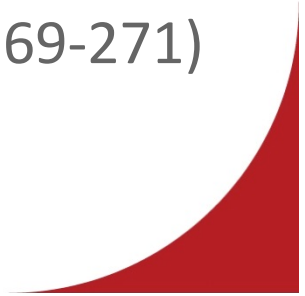
*That he is mad **'tis true, 'tis true 'tis pity** / And **pity 'tis 'tis true***
(2.2.97-98)

Hendiadys – one thing in two

*Within the **book and volume** of my brain* (1.5.110)

Hyperbole - exaggeration

***Forty thousand brothers** / Could not with all their quantity of love
/ Make up my sum* (5.1.269-271)



Rhetorical devices in *Othello*

Anadiplosis – reduplicate

OTHELLO *Is he not **honest**?*

IAGO ***Honest**, my lord?*

OTHELLO ***Honest**? Ay, honest.*

IAGO *My lord, for aught I know.*

OTHELLO *What dost thou **think**?*

IAGO ***Think**, my lord?*

OTHELLO ***Think**, my lord! By
heaven, thou echo'st me*

(3.3.103-109)

Metonymy - name change

an old **black ram** / Is tuppung
your **white ewe**! (1.1.87-88)

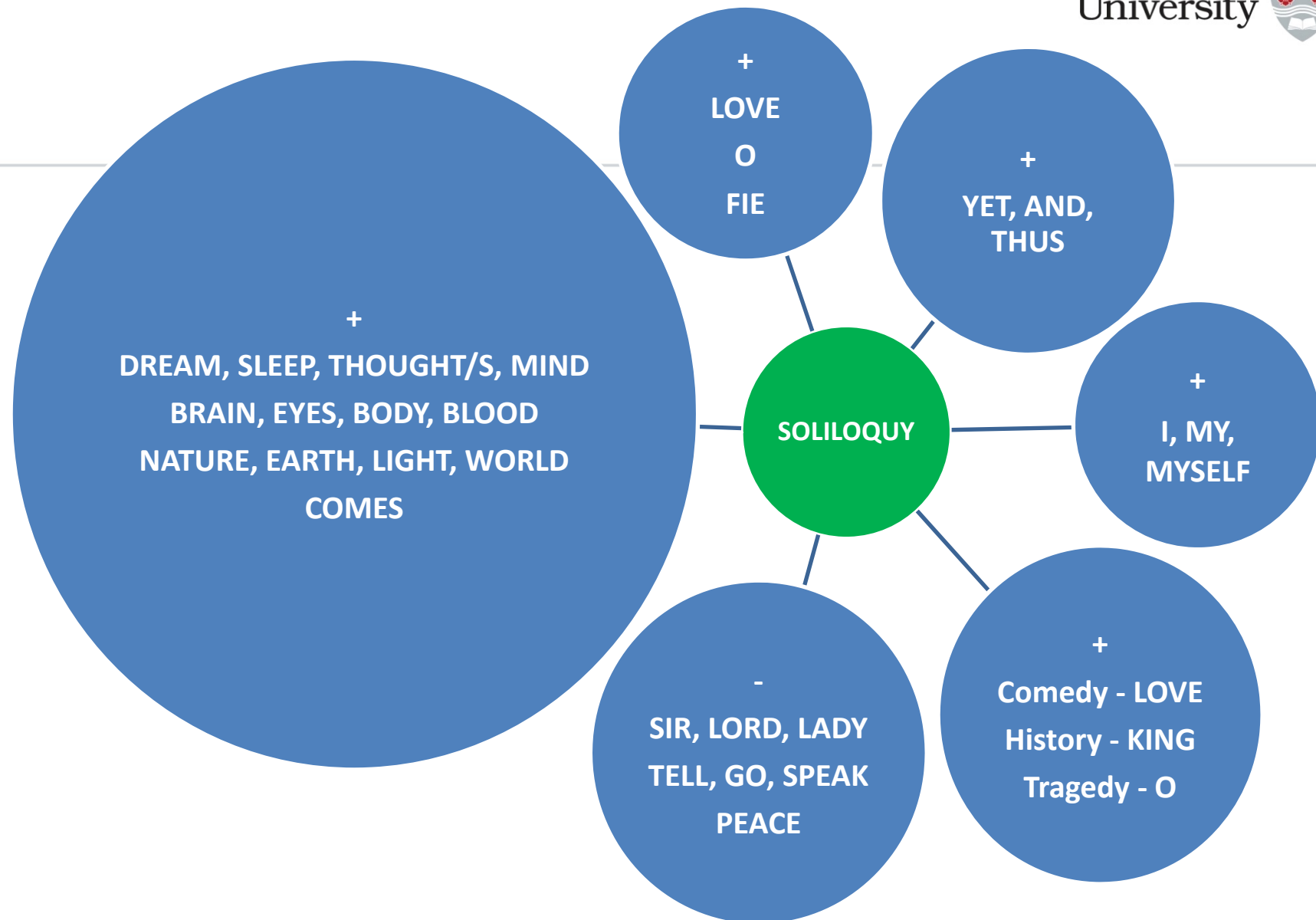


Hypallage - words in the wrong
place

*Alas, what **ignorant** sin have I
committed?* (4.2.71)

Antanaclesis - play on words

*Put out **the light**, and then put
out **the light*** (5.2.7)



Ideas

My **thoughts**
are whirled like a
potter's wheel

Henry VI Part I I.v

Within the book
and volume of
my **brain**

Hamlet I.v

Thou, **Nature**,
art my goddess
King Lear I.ii

O **sleep!** thou
ape of death
Cymbeline II.ii

Mine **eyes** are
made the fools
o'the other
senses

Macbeth II.i

O **world**, thy
slippery turns!
Coriolanus IV.iv

Comes

N	L3	L2	L1	Centre	R1
1	AND	HERE	WHO	COMES	HERE
2		BUT	HE		
3			SHE		
4			HERE		



O here comes my nurse
But **who** comes here

Romeo and Juliet III.ii
Taming of the Shrew II.i

Emotion

C 5.5

Love looks not with the eyes,
but with the mind

Midsummer Night's Dream I.i

My only **love sprung** from my
only hate

Romeo and Juliet I.v

H 3.3

T 1



O thou blessed moon

Antony and Cleopatra IV.ix

O! that I had my wish

Love's Labour's Lost IV.iii



Fie on ambition! **fie** on myself

Henry VI Part 2 IV.x

Fie, fie, fie, fie!

Timon of Athens II.ii

Connecting words

I have thee not **and yet** I see thee still!

Macbeth II.i

For who would bear the
whips and scorns of time

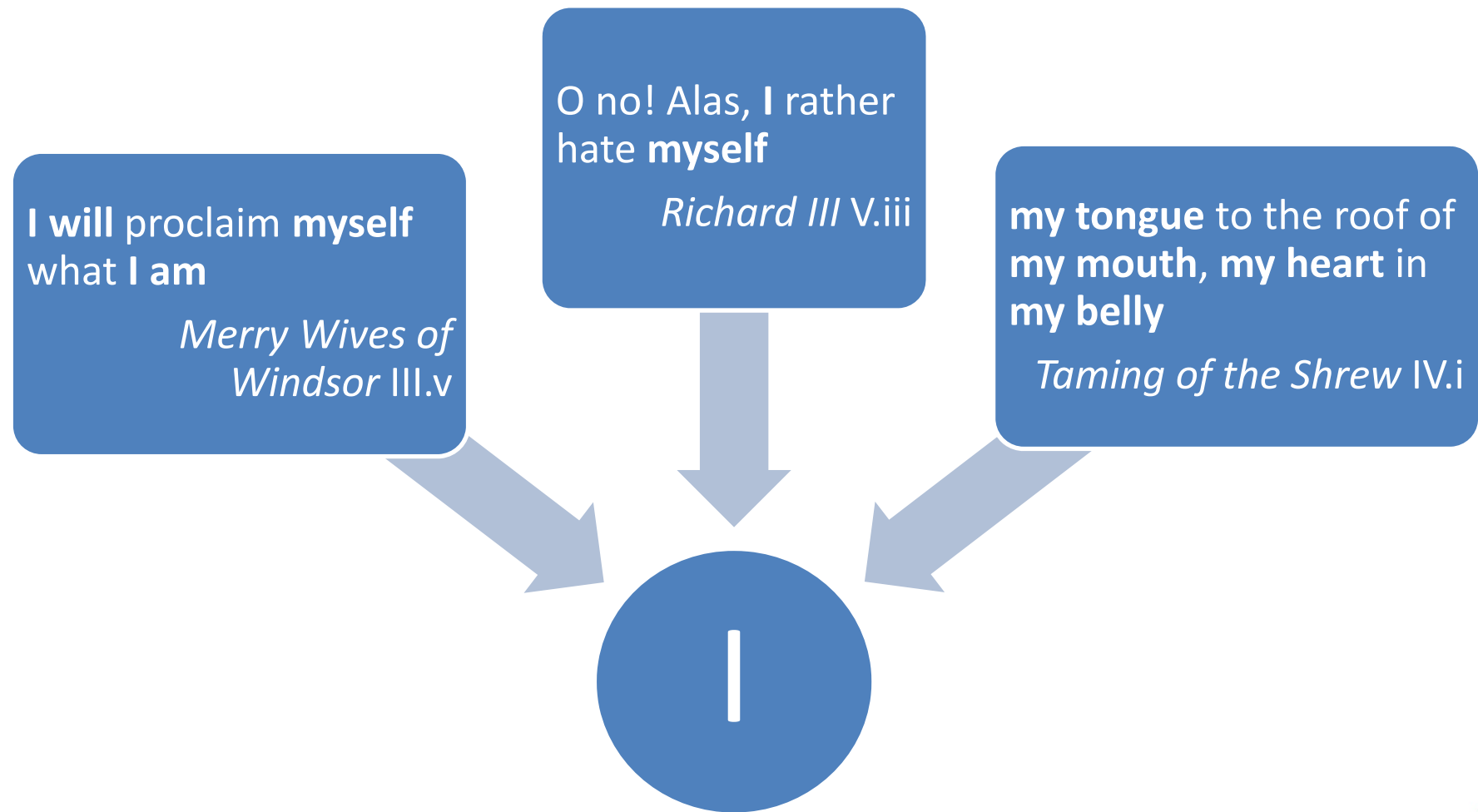
Hamlet III.i

Thus conscience does make cowards of
us all,

And thus the native hue of resolution

Hamlet III.i

The self



Soliloquy by genre



+
love, I, she

-
thy, thou



+
Henry, King,
many

-
love, her



+
't, gods, O

-
love, I

Shakespeare's 'errors'



Common 'errors'

Staying in our country is more better than going abroad.

~~more~~

Despite of the problems, I would live there.

~~of~~

When I buy the newspaper, these news are old.

~~this news is~~

I can not wear no dress on a hot day.


~~no - a~~



Shakespeare's 'errors'

Longman Learners Corpus (1990-2002) 9 million words	Early English Books Online (EEBO) (1473-1700) 1.2 billion words	Shakespeare (First Folio, 1623) 1 million words
staying in our country is more better than going abroad (14.8)	Are ye not more better then they? (4.3)	nor that I am more better Then Prospero (Tem) (20.3)
Despite of these problems, I would live there (8.4)	Despite of you i'll tarry with them still (5.4)	Despight of mine owne Nature (KL) (15.7)
when I buy the newspaper, these news are old (1.0)	because these news are general (0.9)	But wherefore doe I tell these Newes to thee? (HIV1) (4.6)
I can not wear no dress for very hot day (0.2)	I can not go no faster (0.4)	I can not goe no further (AYL) (1.8)

So are these ‘errors’?

-
- *First Folio* - 5 ‘better than’, 78 ‘better then’, 3 ‘more better’
 - Early English Books Online - 5,180 ‘more better’
 - Late 16th c. / early 17th c. no written standard
 - 18th c. more prescriptive attitudes
 - Evidence of language change and standardization
 - In linguistics, we call ‘more better’ a ‘variant form’
 - Should we describe learner ‘errors’ as ‘variant forms’?
 - Negative connotations of ‘errors’ – undermine learners’ self-confidence
 - Good opportunity to raise awareness of language change and even spark an interest in Shakespeare!
- 



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Questions?

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