Shakespeare's Latin: A pragmatic perspective

Jonathan Culpeper (Lancaster University) and Caterina Guardamagna (University of Liverpool)

@ShakespeareLang

The initial inspiration: Recent research on the pragmatics of borrowing

- Shift from traditional areas of lexis, morphology and phonology into the realms of pragmatics.

- 2017 saw the publication of a special issue on the topic in the *Journal of Pragmatics*.

- Most of the papers there considered present-day language and pragmatic borrowing from English ('Anglicisms').

Two views on pragmatic borrowing

(1) *The narrow view* (pragmalinguistic focus): "the incorporation of pragmatic and discourse features of a source language (SL) into a recipient language (RL)" (Andersen 2014:17).

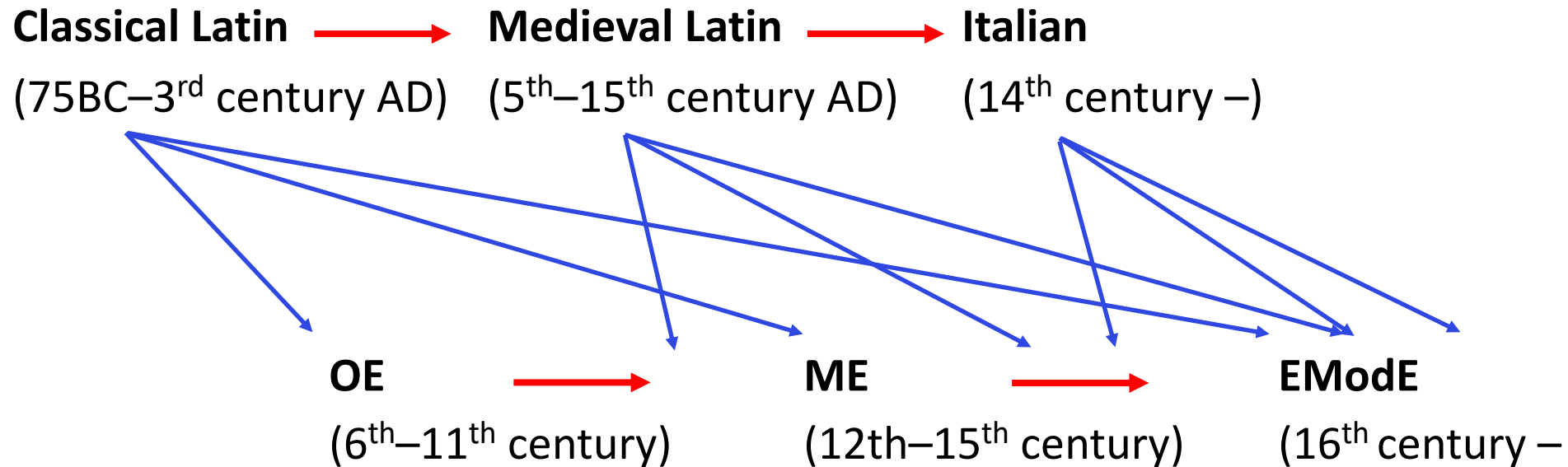# The initial inspiration: Recent research on the pragmatics of borrowing

(2) *The broad view* (sociopragmatic focus): local contextual relationships and functions of the borrowed linguistic material; often driven by a desire to account for the pragmatic motivations for lexical borrowing.

Our aims in this presentation:

- Very little Latin pragmalinguistic material in the narrow sense.

- Broad view more promising. First steps:

➢ To work out the norms and parameters of Latin in Shakespeare

➢ To devise a research agenda
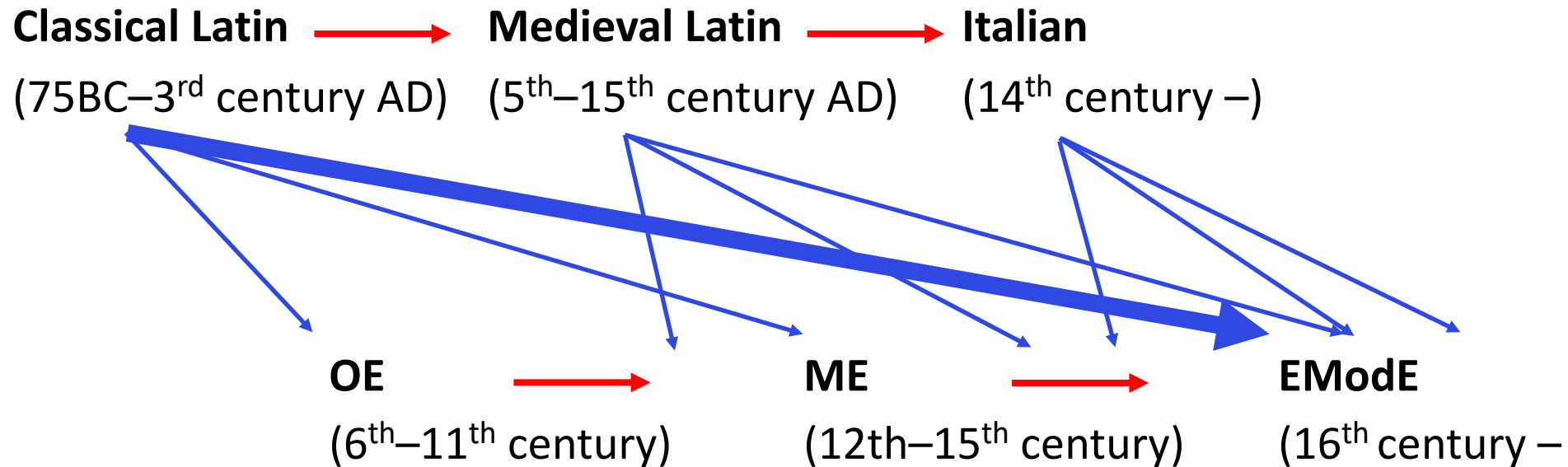
Latin and Latin loans in English

English and borrowing from Latin (conventional & approximate dates!)

Classical Latin → **Medieval Latin** → **Italian**

(75BC–3rd century AD)   (5th–15th century AD)   (14th century –)

OE   →   **ME**   →   **EModE**

(6th–11th century)   (12th–15th century)   (16th century –

Also, Latin entering English via other languages, notably, French!

Latin and Latin loans in English

English and borrowing from Latin (conventional & approximate dates!)

Classical Latin → **Medieval Latin** → **Italian**

(75BC–3rd century AD) (5th–15th century AD) (14th century –)

OE → **ME** → **EModE**

(6th–11th century) (12th–15th century) (16th century –

Also, Latin entering English via other languages, notably, French!

Latin and Latin loans in English

Latin and Greek words as percentages of all words first cited in the OED, 701-1989
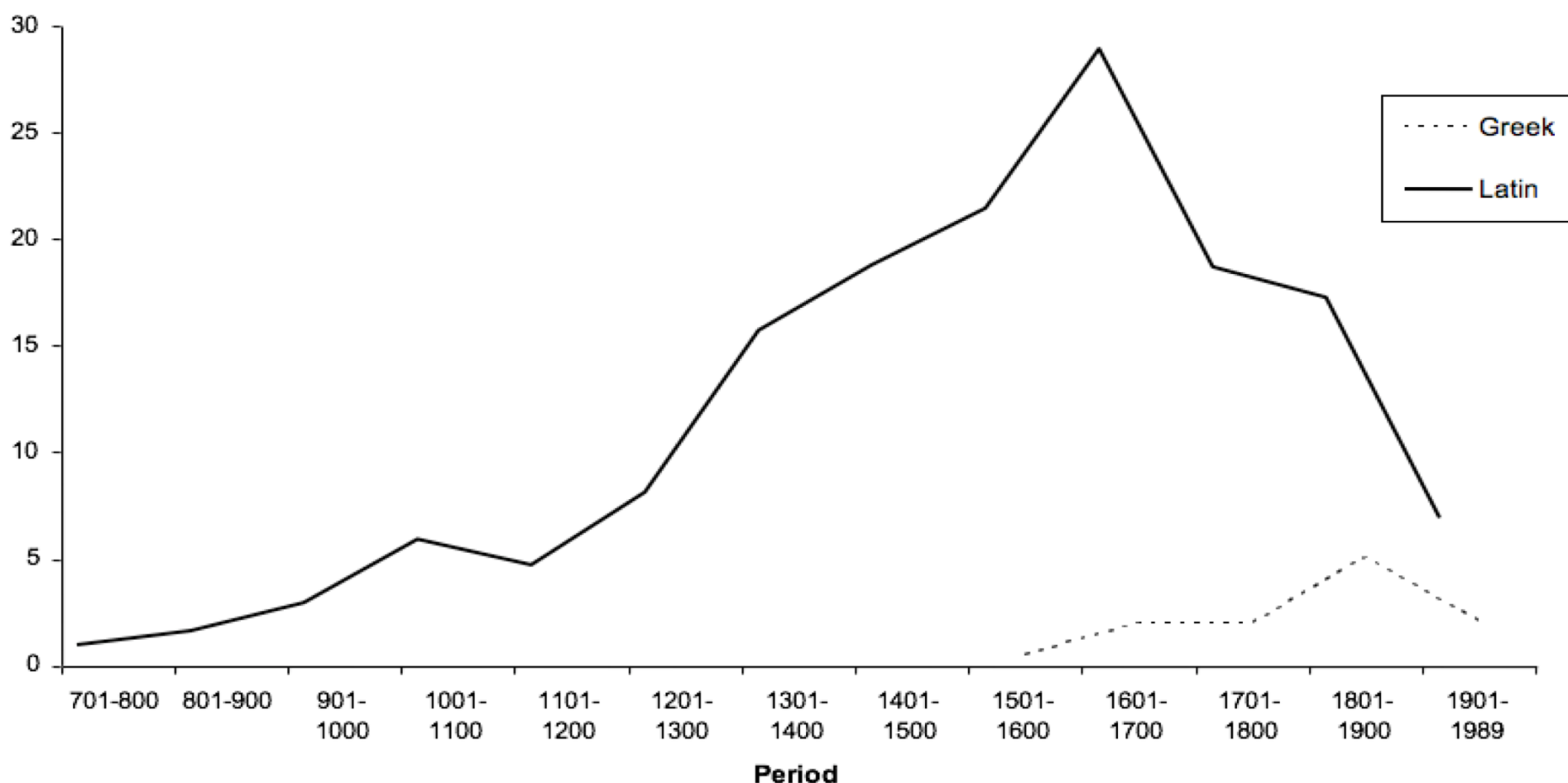
Shakespeare and Latin

- School at Stratford
- No university

→ No detailed info → guesswork
(< other schools + S's writings)

"Most contemporary scholars agree that S's grammar-school education suffices to account for his **evident familiarity** with the language and literature of ancient Rome [...]" (Wolfe 2012 p.519)

"S probably would have studied selections from the **major Latin poets, historians and rhetoricians**, including Virgil, Ovid, Livy, Cicero and Quintilian." (Wolfe 2012 p.519)

+ collections of maxims, fables, dialogues, epithets…

+ Lily's *Brevissima Institutio* (Grammar Textbook)

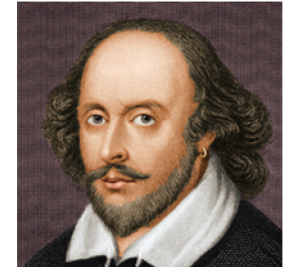Holofernes
"Novi hominem tamquam te"
"Vir sapit qui pauca loquitur"
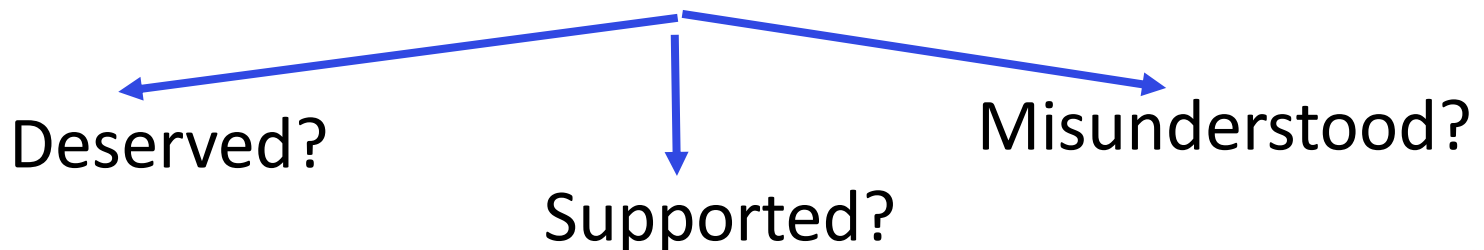
Shakespeare and Latin

Ben Jonson

"To the memory of my beloved, the author,
Mr William Shakespeare."

[H]ow far thou didst our Lyly outshine

Or sporting Kyd or Marlowe's mighty line.

And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek

From thence to honor thee, I would not seek

For names, but call forth thund'ring Aeschylus,

Euripedes and Sophocles to us....

Deserved?

Supported?

Misunderstood?

The Literature on Shakespeare's Latin

- **Scanty** literature + Tends to…

- Focus on **speculations** about Shakespeare's **knowledge** of Latin and Latinisms

- Take a narrow **lexicographic/stylistic** perspective

1. Claflin (1921)
2. Wilder (1925)
3. Baldwin (1944) book
4. Hower (1951)
5. Enck (1961)
6. Binns (1982)
7. Garner (1987)
8. Avery (1994)
9. Damascelli (undated)

See also - on knowledge of the classics:
Wolfe (2012) and Karagiorgos (blog, undated)

The Literature on Shakespeare's "Latin"

Latinisms (e.g. *festinate*) not Latin (e.g. *domine*)

1 **Philological/Historical** RQs, e.g.:

> **How much** Latin did S. know?

> What were his **sources**?

> Were these **first-hand** or second-hand?

2 **Semantic/Pedagogical** RQs, e.g.:

> What is the **etymology** of S's Latinisms?

> What semantic **change** did these undergo?

> How can we enhance the **teaching** of S?

3 **Stylistic** RQs, e.g.:

> Shak as a **creative neologist**/inventive word-maker?

> Shak as a user of **current** Latinate words?

> Inkhorn words? Renaissance vibes?

Lists/Inventories

- Claflin 1921 (66)
- Hower 1951(39)
- Avery (1994) (38)
- Garner 1987 (626)

The Literature on Shakespeare's "Latin"

Broad pragmatic borrowings

(well, a hint of...) + stylistics

- (Some) Humour/puns

  Hower 1951, Enck 1961

Yes, that's all...

Corpus : Damascelli (undated)

- 900,000 wd corpus + Garner's (1987) list
- Wordsmith / WordCruncher

Distribution/Variation parameters

- Genre (tragedy/comedy/history/poetry)
- Narrative Character (main/secondary)
- Character's social positioning (to an extent)
- Date of production

Examples of findings

Tragedies

evidence of expressively more mature production + characterization of hero

(→ **stylistic** explanation)

Comedies

aristocratic characters

(→ **sociolinguistic** explanation)

No studies on Shakespeare's **(actual) Latin** to date

Extracting Latin from Shakespeare

Shakespeare

- First Folio 1623 + *Pericles* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*
- Produced c.1589-1613; published 1623
- Just over one million words

The broad Latin list

- Manually code as Latin every word that has:

(1) a plausible Latin (spelling) profile, and

(2) is marked with respect to surrounding English words; or

(3) is part of a cohesive chunk of other plausibly Latin words.

- Assisted by the *Variant Detector* (VARD) program (largely developed by Alistair Baron.

Extracting Latin from Shakespeare

The broad list includes (see Binns 1982):

- **Sententiae** (i.e. proverbs, maxims, etc.),

  e.g. **Veni, Vidi , Vici** (LLL 4, 1); **Satis quod sufficit** (LLL 5, 1); **Vir sapit qwui pauca loquitur** (LLL 4, 2); **Laus deo** (LLL 5, 1)

- **Quotations** from Latin texts (both Classical & Renaissance)

  e.g. **Irae furor brevis est** (Timon 1, 2, 28) < Horace (Epistles 1, 2, 62)

  Fauste, precor gelida quando pecus omne sub umbra ruminat
  (LLL 4, 2) < Italian Humanist Battista Spagnoli

- **Constructed** Latin text,

  e.g. **Bone intelligo** (LLL 5, 1)

- **Not always clear-cut distinction!**

  e.g. **Si fas aut nefas** (Titus 1,1, 633)

  < ~~~ Fasque nefasque (Ovid, Met. 6, 585, 6)

Extracting Latin from Shakespeare

- **Mock Latin expressions**
  e.g. *Gremio*.[…] I pray let us that are poor petitioners speak too? **Baccare**, you are marvellous forward. (TS 2.1) [*back + -are; used by John Heywood 1555; dig at Gremio for being pompous*]
- **Marked borrowings** (relatively recent loans in restricted contexts; listed in LEME (1580-1613), mostly, Thomas Thomas (1578) *Dictionarium Linguae Latinae et Anglicanae*)
  e.g. **ergo**, **ecce**, **terra**, **homo**
- **Ambiguous cases** (i.e. Latin and another language)
  e.g. **et, tres** (French), **tu, tua** (Italian), **non**, **si** (French, Italian, etc.)
- **Proper nouns**
  e.g. **Franciae**, **Jovem**, **Brutus**, **Angliae**, **Henricus**
- **Stage directions**
  e.g. **exeunt**, **manet**, **omnes, finis**

Shakespeare's "small Latin"?

Latin in Shakespeare and in a corpus of contemporary playwrights

Shakespeare corpus: 38 plays (c.1589-1613); 1,038,509 words

Comparative plays corpus: 46 plays by 24 other playwrights (1584-1626); 1,091,729 words

N.B. It is likely that some of the "other playwrights" had a hand in co-writing some of Shakespeare's plays.

A glance at the contents of the comparative plays corpus:

Encyclopaedia of Shakespeare's Language Project
Contents of comparative corpus for Shakespeare's plays

Author	Title	First production*	First publication*	Edition in corpus**
Comedy				
John Lyly	*Alexander and Campaspe*	c.1583	1584	1584
John Lyly	*Gallathea*	1585	1592	1592
Robert Greene	*Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*	1589	1594	1594
George Peele	*The Old Wives Tale*	1590	1595	1595
George Chapman	*The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*	1596	1598	1598
Thomas Heywood	*The Fair Maid of the West Part I*	1604	1631	1631
George Chapman	*An Humerous Dayes Myrth*	1597	1599	1599
Henry Porter	*The Two Angry Women of Abington*	c.1598	1599	1599
Anonymous	*Mucedorus*	1590	1598	1598
Thomas Dekker	*Old Fortunatas*	1599	1600	1600
Thomas Heywood	*How a Man May Chuse*	1602	1602	1602
Ben Jonson	*Volpone*	1606	1616	1616
Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher	*The Woman Hater*	1606	1607	1607
George Wilkins	*The Miseries of Inforst Marriage*	1606	1607	1607
Francis Beaumont	*The Knight of the Burning Pestle*	1607	1613	1613
John Fletcher	*The Faithful Shepherdess*	1608	c.1610	1610
Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher	*Philaster*	1609	1620	1620
Thomas Middleton	*The Roaring Girl*	1611	1611	1611
Ben Jonson	*Bartholomew Fayre*	1614	1631	1631
Philip Massinger	*The Bondman*	1623	1624	1624

*Dates of first production and first publication are from the Database of Early English Playbooks: http://deep.sas.upenn.edu/

**Play-texts sourced from Early English Books Online: http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home

Author	Title	First production*	First publication*	Edition in corpus**
History				
Robert Greene	*The Scottish History of James the Fourth*	c.1590	1598	1598
Christopher	*Tamburlaine Part I*	c. 1587	1590	1590
Christopher	*Edward II*	1592	1594	1594
George Peele	*The Famous Chronicle of Edward I*	1591	1593	1593
Christopher	*The Massacre at Paris*	1593	c.1594	1594
George Peele	*The Battle of Alcazar*	1589	1594	1594
Anthony Munday	*The Death of Robert Earl of Huntingdon*	1598	1601	1601
Thomas Heywood	*Edward IV Part I*	1599	1600	1600
Thomas Heywood	*Edward IV Part II*	1599	1600	1600
Anonymous	*The Life of Sir John Oldcastle*	1599	1600	1600
Thomas Heywood	*If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody Part I*	1604	1605	1605
Thomas Dekker	*Sir Thomas Wyatt*	1602	1607	1607
Robert Armin	*The Valiant Welshman*	1612	1615	1615
Thomas Drue	*The Duchess of Suffolk*	1624	1631	1631
Tragedy				
Thomas Kyd	*The Spanish Tragedy*	1587	1592	1592
Christopher	*The Jew of Malta*	1589	1633	1633
Christopher	*Dr Faustus*	1592	1604	1604
Christopher	*Dido, Queen of Carthage*	1586	1594	1594
Thomas Heywood	*A Woman Killed With Kindness*	1603	1607	1607
John Marston	*The Malcontent*	1604	1604	1604
Ben Jonson	*Sejanus*	c.1604	1604	1604
Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher	*The Maid's Tragedy*	1610	1619	1619
John Webster	*The White Devil*	1612	1612	1612
John Webster	*The Duchess of Malfi*	1614	1623	1623
Thomas Middleton and William	*The Changeling*	1622	1653	1653
Thomas Middleton	*Women Beware Women*	1621	1657	1657

Shakespeare's "small Latin"? (contd.)

From our <u>broad Shakespeare Latin list</u> we excluded:

- Mock Latin expressions

- Ambiguous cases (i.e. ambiguous between Latin and another language, e.g. Italian, French)

- Proper nouns

- Stage directions

This left: **Sententiae, quotations from Latin texts, constructed Latin text, marked borrowings**

	Types	Tokens
Broad list	970	457,655
Focussed list	245	362

Shakespeare's "small Latin"? (contd.)

A glance at the top-50 items from the focussed Latin list

hic (13), ergo (8), ad (6), pauca (6), quondam (6), videlicet (6), cum (5), inprimis (5), benedictus 4), extempore (4), aliis (3), bone (3), deum (3), horum (3), ibat (3), lapis (3), mater (3), nec (3), quis (3), quod (3), quo (3), senis (3), sigeia (3), suis (3), tellus (3), accusativo (2), aer (2), armiger (2), benedicite (2), bene (2), caret (2), cucullus (2), dii (2), domine (2), facit (2), fatuus (2), hac (2), haud (2), hoc (2), ignis (2), ipse (2), lentus (2), manes (2), mollis (2), monachum (2), mulier (2), nominativo (2), omne (2), perge (2), primus (2)

Shakespeare's "small Latin"? (contd.)

The number of Latin words in the Shakespeare Corpus and the occurrence of those words in the Comparative Corpus of contemporary Playwrights

	Types	*Tokens*	*Type-Token Ratio*
Shakespeare corpus (focussed list)	245	362	67%
Comparative corpus of contemporary playwrights	28	74	38%

High = More lexical variation

Low = Less lexical variation

➡ Sh's Latin vocabulary is more varied than his contemporaries put together

Shakespeare's "small Latin"? (contd.)

The number of Latin words with a **single occurrence** in the Shakespeare Corpus and the number of of Latin words (from the Shakespeare focussed list) with single occurrences in the comparative corpus of contemporary playwrights

	Single occurrences	*Tokens*	*Percentage of total*
Shakespeare corpus (focussed list)	187	362	53%
Comparative corpus of contemporary playwrights	12	74	16%

High = More lexical variation

Low = Less lexical variation

➡ **Further evidence** Sh's Latin vocabulary is more varied than his contemporaries put together
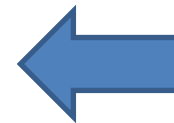
Shakespeare's Latin: Social Distribution

Field	Feature marked	Possible values
1	speaker(s)	singular (s) or multiple (m)
2	speaker ID tag	already undertaken for us
3	gender of speaker	male (m), female (f), assumed male (am), assumed female (af), neither (n), mixed (mi), problematic (p)
4	status/social rank of speaker	Monarch (0), Nobility (1), Gentry (2), Professional (3), Other Middling Groups (4), Ordinary Commoners (5), Lowest Groups (6), Supernatural Beings (7), Problematic (8)

Status/social rank categories initially based on rank, estate or sort, in order to reflect (i) pre-industrialised nature of EmodE society, and (ii) way in which EmodE contemporaries spoke about status, but also reworked to capture particular Shakespearean features …

Shakespeare's Latin: Social distribution
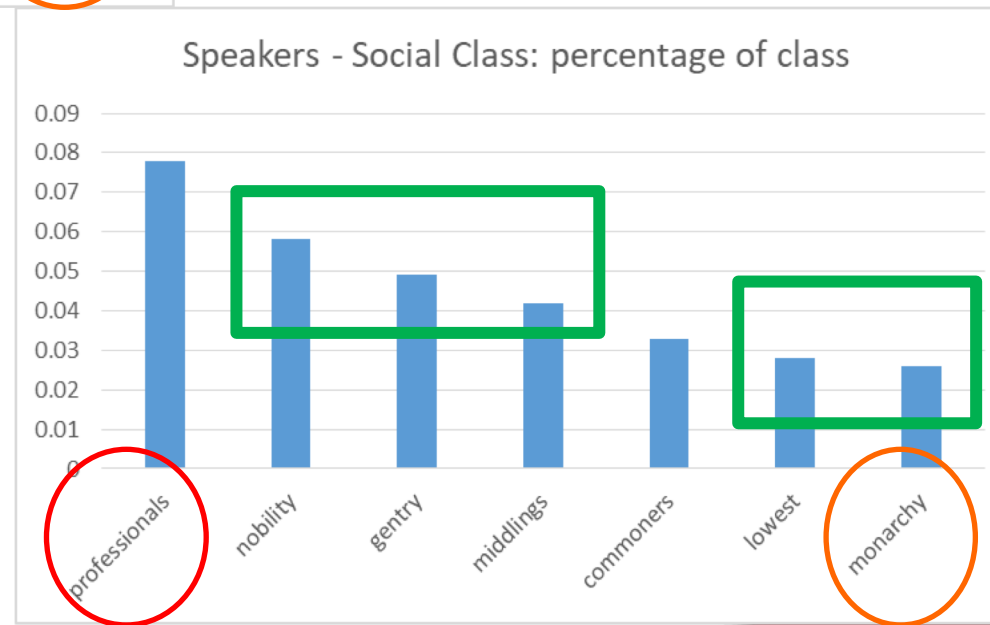

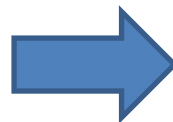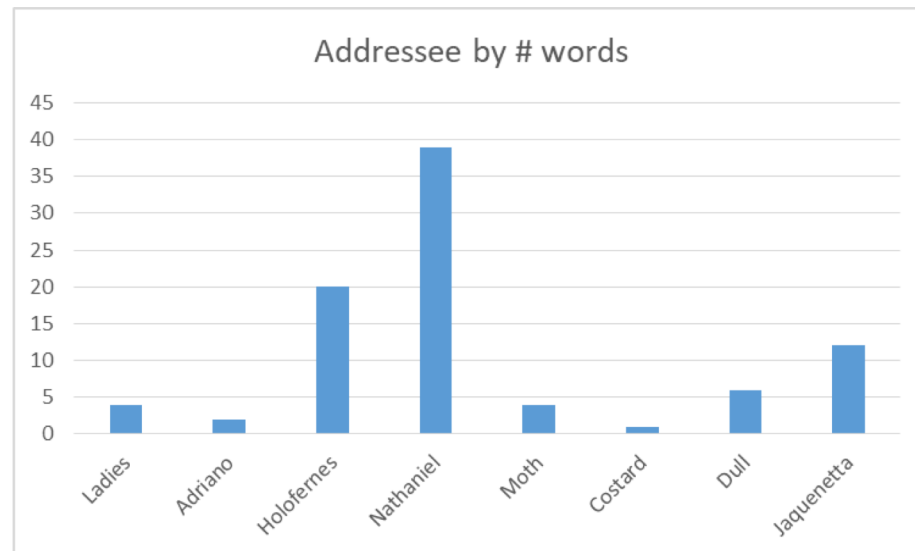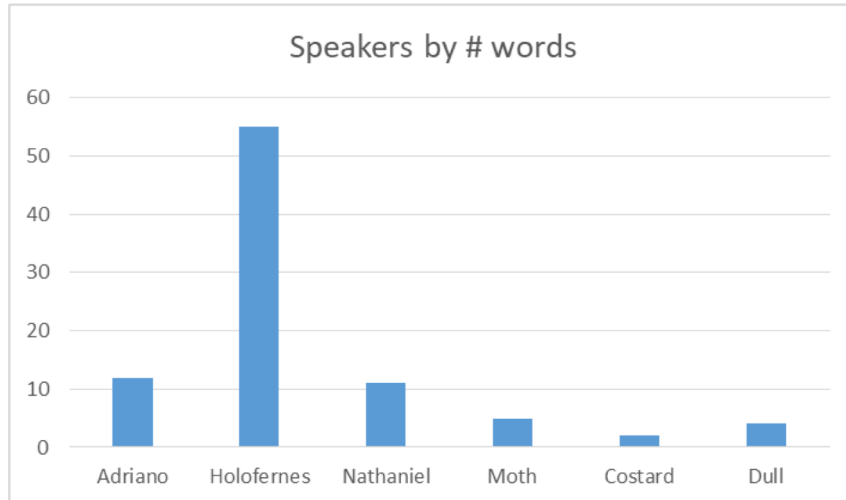Speakers per Social Class - Freq pmw
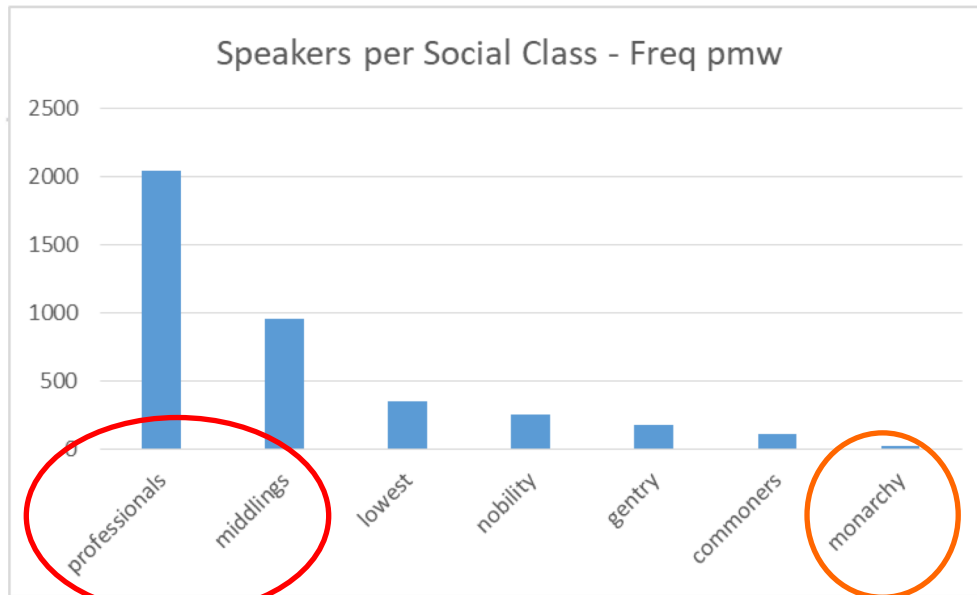
How much Latin does each social class use?

Dispersion = no. of speakers with 1+ hits in their social class

e.g. 7.8% of professionals use at least one word of Latin

Speakers - Social Class: percentage of class

Shakespeare's Latin: Social distribution A case study – Love's Labour's Lost

Lancaster University

Speakers by # words

Addressee by # words

Ferdinand King of Navarre

Princess of France

Ladies

Don Adriano - noble

Holofernes – schoolmaster

Sir Nathaniel – curate

Moth – page

Dull – constable

Costard – rustic

Jaquenetta – rustic wench

LLL: the nobles

- Latin absent from the King/Princess, Ladies and Gentlemen apart from **Don Adriano de Armado** – a noble Spaniard **braggart** who talks in fancy language to suggest that he is more refined than he actually is.

- He is infatuated with the **villain wench Jaquenetta**… who can't even read! And uses Latin in a love letter to her.

> […] and he it was that might rightly say,
> **Veni, vidi, vici**; which to annothanize in the
> vulgar,--O base and obscure vulgar!--**videlicet**,
> He came, saw, and overcame: […]

→ Effect: pretentious and comical

LLL: the professionals / pedants

Speakers (below) Addressees (side)	Ladies	Adriano	Holofernes	Nathaniel	Moth	Costard	Dull	Jaquenetta	Total
Adriano	0	x	0	0	0	0	0	12	12
Holofernes	4	1	x	39	3	1	6	0	54
Nathaniel	0	0	12	x	0	0	0	0	12
Moth	0	1	4	0	x	0	0	0	5
Costard	0	0	1	0	1	x	0	0	2
Dull	0	0	4	0	0	0	x	0	4
Total	4	2	21	39	4	1	6	12	89

- Most intense interaction between Holofernes & Nathaniel

- In-group / identity / belonging to **the learned**

- Holofernes produces **the longest string**: "Fauste, precor gelida quando pecus omne sub umbra Ruminat,--and so forth." – a quote from Italian Humanist Battista Spagnoli

- Holofernes addresses in Latin everyone but Jaquenetta → **comic** effect.

LLL: the lower classes

- **Type 1: The Wit** -- Moth outwits both his master Don Adriano and Holofernes – he shows a reasonable command of Latin (he "gets back at them" intellectually – he challenges their in-groupness)

  ADRIANO The meaning, pretty ingenious?
  Is not lead a metal heavy, dull, and slow?
  MOTH **Minime**, honest master; or rather, master, no.

- **Type 2: The Fool** -- Dull and Costard are fools whose misunderstandings produce comical effects (they are out-groups)

  HOLOFERNES
  Sir Nathaniel, **haud credo**.
  DULL
  'Twas not a **haud credo**; 'twas a pricket.

→ identity/social management and humour

Concluding remarks

- Scarce literature on Latinisms; especially scarce for Latin in Shakespeare, aside from quick footnotes.

- Shakespeare's Latin is not so small!

- Social distribution: appears to be stuff of the professionals/middling and lower orders (though dispersion is narrow)

- Functions include:
  - ➢ Characterisation (e.g. the wit, the fool, the braggart) (e.g. characters manipulating others, characters not in control of their language),
  - ➢ Humour for audience,
  - ➢ Demonstrating author learnedness (cf. quotations, sententiae),
  - ➢ Conforming to play conventions (cf. stage directions)
  - ➢ Etc.

Concluding remarks

Limitation
- Small Latin: we don't take account of Latin items in the comparative corpus **but not** in Shakespeare.

Future research
- More work on a data-driven taxonymy of functions (e.g. social marking, humour)
- More work needed on 'status' of borrowings:
  - ➢ (1) frequency, dispersion and date of first citation (e.g. "ergo" – first cited 1400(?) (OED), **but** still marked as Latin, used in widely circulated Latin texts, appears in Latin-English dictionaries), and
  - ➢ (2) often not single words but chunks.
- Work on metalinguistic comments concerning Latin.
- More work on comparative data, especially EEBO.

References

Andersen, G. (2014). Pragmatic borrowing. *Journal of Pragmatics* 67, pp. 17-33.

Avery, R.A. (1994). Latin as the Language of Magic Shakespeare's Use of Latinates in King Lear. *University of Tennessee Honors Thesis Project.*

Baldwin, T.W. (1944). *William Shakespeare's small Latin and less Greek*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Binns, J.W. (1982) "Shakespeare's Latin Citations: the Editorial Problem", *Shakespeare Survey* 35, pp. 119-128.

Claflin, E.F. (1921). The Latinisms in Shakespeare's Diction. *The Classical Journal* 16/6, pp. 346-359.

Damascelli, A.T. (undated). Shakespeare: The Power of Language and the Language of Power. Available at: https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/documents/college-artslaw/corpus/conference-archives/2007/247Paper.pdf Last accessed 2nd Aug. 2018

Enck, J.T. (1961). A Chronicle of Small Latin. *Shakespeare Quarterly* 12/3, pp. 342-345.

Garner, B.A. (1987). Shakespeare's Latinate neologisms. In Salmon, V. & Burnesson, E. A (eds.) reader in the language of Shakespearian drama, Amsterdam: Benjamins, pp. 207-229.

Hower. C.C. (1951). The importance of a knowledge of Latin for Understanding the Language of Shakespeare. *The Classical Journal* 46/5, pp. 221-227.

Karagiorgos, P. (undated) Shakespeare's classical knowledge. Available at: http://karagiorgos.blog-net.ch/articles-and-essays/shakespeares-classical-knowledge/ Last accessed 2nd Aug. 2018.

Wilder, M.L. (1925). Shakespeare's "Small Latin". *Modern Language Notes* 40/6, pp.380-381.

Wolfe, J. (2012). Classics. In Kinney, A. F. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare*, Oxford: OUP, pp. 517-536.