SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF LANGUAGE IN

KING LEAR

AHU NEŞE GÜVEN

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ÖZET

On altıncı yüzyılda İngiliz dili önem kazanmaya başlayınca birçok başarılı yazar ortaya çıktı. Eserlerinin çoğu günümüze uyarlanan William Shakespeare bu yazarlardan sadece bir tanesi.

Bu tezin amacı, Shakespeare'in dili kullanımını onun en çok beğenilen eserlerinden biri olan *King Lear*'de incelemektir.

Bu tez, bir giriş, üç esas ve bir de sonuç bölümünden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölümde on altıncı yüzyıl İngiltere'sinin sosyal durumu, dili ve Hümanizmin, Rönesans'ın ve Reformasyon' un etkileri üzerinde durulmuştur.

İkinci bölüm Retorik kavramı ve genel olarak Shakespeare'in sanatı ile ilgilidir. Ayrıca Shakespeare'in başlangıçtan olgunluk dönemine kadar geçen sanatsal gelişimi de bu bölümde çalışılmıştır.

Üçüncü bolüm *King Lear* oyununda Shakespeare'in edebi sanatları nasıl kullandığı konusundaki çalışmayı içerir. Bu bölüm ayrıca Shakespear'in sanatsal tarzı ve bu oyunda kullandığı semboller konusuna da açıklık kazandırır.

Bu çalışmadan çıkarılacak sonuç, edebiyatta etkili bir dil kullanmanın önemidir. Bir sanat eserini ölümsüz ve evrensel yapan şey, yazarının gözlem gücü ve etkili dilidir.

ABSTRACT

In the sixteenth century, as the English Language gained importance, there appeared many successful writers. William Shakespeare is only one of them many of whose plays have been updated to our time.

The aim of this thesis is to present the Shakespeare's use of language in one of his most appreciated plays, *King Lear*.

The thesis consists of an introduction, three main chapters and a conclusion. In the first part the social background and language of the sixteenth century England and the effects of humanism, renaissance and reformation were given.

The second part deals with the concept of Rhetoric and Shakespeare's art. Shakespeare's metrical developments from his apprenticeship to his maturity are also studied in this part.

The third part includes the study of Shakespeare's figurative language in *King Lear*. This part clarifies his use of symbols, figures of language and his artistic style in *King Lear*.

The conclusion drawn from this study is the importance of using language effectively. What makes a work of art universal and timeless is its effective language and its writer's power of observation

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INTRODUCTION

Language has become an instrument for constructing a harmonious, protected realm within a bare and hostile world. The theatrical world of words is not only as a form for reflecting experience but also as a vehicle for creating reality. William Shakespeare is the one who is aware of that world of words and who could use its materials effectively.

Shakespeare's reputation as the greatest English-language writer, stems from many dimensions of his collective works. Over thirty-eight plays, he addresses every aspect of human experiences. It is difficult to think of a dramatic situation or a human dilemma that his works do not touch upon. Although he wrote for a specific audience of a particular historical era, Shakespeare's works are timeless. In fact, many of his works have been updated to our time. His works have the complexity of our experiences, and often yield contradictory interpretations of their meaning. His texts include some words and phrases that require definition. Lastly, creative innovation is a hallmark of Shakespeare's writing. Although he utilized dramatic, poetic, fictional and historical sources and models, Shakespeare puts his own art upon these materials.

Shakespeare's use of language is a proof of his artistic talent

PART I

16th CENTURY

The sixteenth century in England is the age of the Tudor Dynasty. It covers the accession of Henry VII, goes to death of Elizabeth I.

About decade before Henry VII took the throne the art of printing, that is the printing machine which was the German invention had been introduced to England by William Caxton, about 1422-91. Seven years after Henry VII became king, Colombus discovered America and a few years later Vasco de Gama reached the Orient by sailing around the Cape of Good Hope. The English were not the pioneers in the discovery and exploration of the western hemisphere, but the consequences of new discoveries were to affect their place in the world profoundly, and in the seventeenth century they became great colonizers and merchants. London grew in to a metropolitan market and business in the modern sense began to develop. At the same time the old feudal system began to decline.

HUMANISM

During the fifteenth century, a few English priests and government officials had journeyed to Italy and had seen some of the extra ordinary cultural and intellectual movement flourishing in the cities there. But it was only near the end of the century that Italian influence came to be important.

Humanism was an attempt to break away from the rigid discipline of church. It concerned itself with human interest rather than theological teaching. It was a revolt against other worldly orientation of medieval philosophy and religion. Humanism helped to civilize man, to make him realize his potential powers and gifts and to reduce the discrepancy between potentiality and attainment, by freeing him from the shackles of Scholasticism. Humanism regarded man as a creature perfectible on earth. The thesis of humanism was that man's proper role in the world was action but not contemplation. Wealth and power were not evil, since they might provide the means of achieving good.

Humanism was to have a profoundly effect upon English intellectual life, education and writing through the sixteenth century. Queen herself was a typical product of a humanistic education with her command of languages and her practical sense of the problems of government. Furthermore the age of humanists had emphasized the value of the classical languages. But in Italy, France and England

alike there came to be a revolt against the imitation of the classics. The idea was that "the value of a language not inherit in the language itself, but depends upon what great and fine works are written in that language".

RENAISSANCE

The term is derived from the French word meaning "rebirth". It is a label for the period dating approximately from the mid fourteenth to the sixteenth century. The term renaissance applied to the rediscovery and revival of classical literature and studies, which began in Italy in the middle ages and spread to Northern Europe and Britain in the sixteenth century. This period was characterized by an amazing energy, curiosity and creative effort, by a tremendous burst of activity into arts of painting, literature, sculpture, and architecture. Social life was increasingly secularised and individualism grew.

Other notable characteristics of that period were the expansion of scientific and philosophical horizons, the creation of new social and economic institutions and the arrival of a new view of man and his world.

The renaissance was a gradual process rather than a sudden and unexpected phenomenon. During that period many great writers flourished. The most influential

were Dante, Petrarch, Boccacio, Machiavelli, Erasmus, Montaigne, Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spencer, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sir Francis Bacon, and William Shakespeare.

REFORMATION

Reformation was a sixteenth century religious movement against the abuses in the Roman Catholic Church, ending in the formation of the Protestant churches. The circumstances included humanism and the renaissance that encouraged a new critical spirit, the invention of printing which aided the spread of ideas, the growing wealth of the clergy especially in Germany and religious and moral shortcoming of certain sections of the clergy. The leaders of the reformation sought to restore Christianity to its early purity by going back to the scripture as the sole authority on religious matters. Luther began the reformation in Germany in 1517. The reformation tended to increase the growth of nationalism and to strengthen the economic position of the merchant class. A new sect came into existence called "Protestantism" apart from the Roman Catholic Church. Reformation was a return to pure Christianity from the point of view of those who supported it,. It was also both the secularisation of society and the establishment of princely ascendancy over the church. In England reformation started with Henry VIII.

A-THE LANGUAGE OF THE PERIOD

Shakespeare learned to speak as many of his educated countrymen considered a crude and ignoble tongue when he was a child.

The beginning of Shakespeare's literary career coincided with the emergence of his native language as a significant expressive tool, for English replaced Latin as the primary medium for poetry. Early modern English was relatively undeveloped as a literary instrument. Thus, its plasticity afforded Shakespeare and his contemporaries rare freedom in shaping vocabulary, grammar, and other features of style. Moreover, poets and playwrigts of the period used their artistic medium, a widespread interest in words that resulted from decades of debate about the native language, the vernacular.

A convenient way of summarizing the linguistic revolution in the sixteenth century was to say that the English language became respectable. Throughout the Middle Ages the vernacular served mainly for informal oral discourse, not as a vehicle for serious and permanent forms of communication. Those who wrote history or philosophy or theology usually wrote in Latin. Legal proceedings as well as many matters of state were conducted in French. Until the middle of the sixteenth century a poet or fiction writer, except from Chaucer in the Middle Age, and Scots poetry in

the fifteenth century, did not write in the native tongue. By the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, the vernacular had mostly supplanted Latin as the primary medium for written discourse.

A hundred years earlier the English language stood in very low repute. English was the linguistic stepchild.[1] When the Normans conquered Britain in the eleventh century, French became the proper tongue. A survey of sixteenth century view of education and writing indicated that English was often dismissed as crude and therefore unsuitable for literary or scholastic uses. The native tongue did not permit the writer to scale the peaks of eloquence available to the Latinist. English vocabulary was too limited for sophisticated argument and its structures were too simple for graceful statement.

So many sixteenth-century writers spent so much time maligning their language and expounding its weaknesses. But as more and more people learned to read, writers began to recognize that English, not Latin, was the most practical means of reaching the public. Although Latin was still the focus of a young man's education in the grammar schools, many thousands of people learned to read English in dame schools or petty schools. The increasing significance of English in the sixteenth century was chiefly attributable to the rise of literacy, but there were also another important factors.

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[1] *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language*, Russ McDonald, Oxford University Press, 2001, p 11

The first factor was the printing press. The printing machine which was a German invention had been introduced to England by William Caxton's publication of *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* in 1476. Until the end of the fifteenth century, the vast majority of writing was in Latin. The production and widespread distribution of printed books began to tip the balance in favour of the vernacular. Then, English books became the principal product of the printers and the booksellers. The most important book in that period was the Bible.

The second factor was the religious reformers. In that period tradition was powerful and as English was considered unworthy, some of the Protestant converts who had efforts to translate the Scriptures from Latin, met with resistance. Most of the early Tudor English translations were printed on the continent and smuggled into England. Opponents of an English Bible deplored the lack of eloquence available in the vernacular. The reformation succeeded in turning that very characteristic to its ideological purposes, and at last native simplicity was to be preferred to the painted rhetoric of Rome.

The third factor was the spirit of nationalism. The growing influence of England in European politics, caused the authority on the native language. Educators and writers began to associate the English tongue with English value and national pride.

The fourth factor was the rise of humanism, which brought with a new interest in the classics in their original form and language. Scholars searched for the many best texts became available in their original language and shape. They were no longer disguised in medieval adaptations. Schools and universities started to teach classical rather than vulgar Latin. They began to compare their language and literature with classical works in Latin and Greek.[2]

B-THE SHAPING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

By the age of Elizabeth, as English became more esteemed and more widely used, and as science began to expand, many writers found themselves faced with a vocabulary insufficient to their needs. For that reason, they found it necessary to invent or borrow or adapt words or phrases from another languages in order to express a new idea or make a fine distinction. These processes are known as "neologizing". There emerged two contrary approaches to neologizing. [3]

Some objected to practice of borrowing from other languages. Advocates of the vernacular proposed as an alternative, to fill gaps of meaning by creating fitting and self-explanatory terms, particularly compouds, from native materials only. But

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[2] *The language of Shakespeare*, N.F. Blake, Macmillan Education 1983, p.16
[3] McDonald, p.14

that prejudice generated some ingenious fabrications. For example, Ralph Lever tried to protect his discourse from foreign contemination in his textbook *The Arte of Reason, rightly termed, Witcraft.* He deviced native substitutes, such as *witcraft* for 'logic', *endsay* for 'conclusio',*ifsay* for 'proposito conditionalis', and *saywhat* for 'definitio'. In time the opponents of verbal borrowing lost the battle, as the dissapearance of all Lever's inventions.[4]The winners of this controversy, took a more pragmatic view of foreign influence. They crafted new and necessary terms from the nouns, verbs, and modifiers available in the well-stocked stores of Latin, Greek, and modern Romance languages. At last between 1500-1659, almost 30.000 words were added to English, mostly from Latin.

The other approach was the use of a whole range of verbal wordplay, including pun, which means using words sounded alike or words with two meanings one of which is often obscene.[5]

Many Elizabethan writers wishing their language to serve as a model for their society, feel responsibility to participate in this reneval. Whether by preserving the authority of ancient words, by inventing new words, or by bringing old words alive

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[4] McDonald, p.15
[5] Blake, p.25

with fresh meaning , the poets hope to increase the quality of their society by choosing the best words.[6]

In the last half of the sixteenth century it was realized that the most notable feature of the English language was it's lack of standardization. Until the seventeenth century, there was no dictionary of English language. Robert Cawdrey's *A Table Alphabetical* (1604) was a helpful collection of new and unusual words and it was considered as the first English dictionary.[7]

Since the Elizabethan readers had no source to consult for the definition of an unfamiliar word or phrase, they had to rely on context, on a synonym provided by a considerate writer, or on etymological clues supplied by their familiarity with Latin. For similar reasons, spelling was irregular. Even a single writer or scribe often spelled the same word in different ways for no apparent reason. Additionally, other features of grammar and sentence structures were changed as well.

Revelling in the new possibilities of their language, writers (and readers) took pleasure in repetition, variation, exemplification, synonymy, and other specific forms of verbal multiplication. Many technical names were given to those forms: *epexegesis* (adding words and *phrases* to amplify an idea); *systrophe* (heaping up

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[6] *Shakespeare and the Sixteenth Century study of language*, Jane Donawerth, Uni.of Illinois, 1984, p.37
[7] McDonald, p.17

descriptions in place of a definition); *anacephalaeosis* (a recapitulation) *epizeuxis* (repetition of a word with no other word in between). Such a formulae helped to reveal the bravery of the English language and thus caused favourable comparison between the vernacular and Latin.[8]

C- ELIZEBETHAN GRAMMAR

The Elizabethan was a transitional period in the history of the English language. As is known, the effects of new discoveries and new thoughts caused the coinage of new words. On the other hand, the revival of the classical studies and the popularity of translation from Latin and Greek authors, suggested Latin and Greek words as the remedy for the English language as well.

For the most part, the influence of the classical languages was confined to single words, and to the rhythm of the sentence. But the syntax was mostly English both in its origin and its development.

Elizabethan English is different from the Modern English in so many ways either in the formation of words or in the combination of words into sentences. In the first place, almost any part of speech could be used as a verb, "They *askance* their

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[8] McDonald, p. 27

eyes."; as a noun, " the *backward* and abysm of time"; or as an adjective, " a *seldom* plasure". Any noun, adjective, or a neuter verb can be used as an active verb. You can "happy" your friend, or "fall" an axe on his neck. An adjective can be used as an adverb; and you can speak and act "easy", "free", and "excellent"[9] In the second place, every variety of apparent grammatical accuracy can be seen everywhere: He for him, him for he; spoke and took for spoken and taken.[10]

"To fright you thus methings I am too savage" (Macbeth, 4.2.70)

Grammar was in an unstable condition in that period. Writers and speakers often had a choice of choosing grammatical forms. The inflected endings characteristic of Middle English (*go, goest, goeth*) were being replaced with their simpler modern equivalents (*go, go, goes*). But both forms were available around 1590, and Shakespeare himself used them both.

Similar choice was also available with pronouns.

	Subject	Object	Possessive	
Singular	thou	thee	thine	thyself
Plural	you	ye	yours	yourself

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[9] *A Shakespearean Grammar*, E. A. Abbott, Dover Publications 1966, p.5
[10] Abbott, p. 6

During Early Modern English, the distinction between subject and object uses of *ye* and *you* gradually dissapeared, and *you* became the norm in all grammatical functions and social situations as a result of a process of replacement. *You* was the more formal and respectful choice.[11] *Thou* and *thee* were more familiar. *You* was used by people of lower rank or status to those above them, and was also the standard way for the upper classes to talk to each other. By contrast, *thou /thee* were used by people of higher rank to those beneath them, and by the lower classes to each other; also, in elevated poetic style, in addressing God, in talking to witches, ghosts, and other supernatural beings.[12] Shakespeare carefully used his words for dramatic purposes. He clarified social relationships among characters by his careful assignment of pronouns. In *Twelfth Night*, the Countess Olivia finds herself attracted to the young messenger Cesario and maintains the formal 'you' throughout their first interview.

> OLIVIA: You might do much. What is your parentage?
>
> VIOLA(CESARIO): Above my fortunes, yet my state is well: I am a gentelman. (I. V. 276-78)

as soon as she is alone, Olivia confesses her passion to the audience in soliloquy, shifting to the more personal 'thou' and 'thy'.

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[11] Abbott, p. 153
[12] Abbott, p. 142

OLIVIA:...................

Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit,

Do give thee fivefold blazon............(I.V. 292-94)

As for the syntax, the placement of words in sentence, it was flexible enough to provide a writer a good deal of choice. Early Modern English afforded a number of structural alternatives unlike Latin or present-day English. For example in *Macbeth* :

LADY MACBETH: ....

Stand not upon the order of your going,

But go at once. (III.IV.118-119)

Here, 'not' occupies the stressed position.

Many of these variations made the dramatists use the advantages of such variations. Shakespeare did so and shifted the accent usually. *The Comedy of Errors* is one of the best examples of it. In the first scene of the play, the word *confiscate* is pronounced with accent on the second syllable (con-fis-ket), while the second scene it is spoken in the modern way (con-fis-cate).[13]

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[13] McDonald, p. 23

By the end of the seventeenth century the process of standardization was nearly complete, and the range of expressive possibility had narrowed considerably.

PART II

A - RENAISSANCE RHETORIC AND SHAKESPEARE

In sixteenth century there was an intense interest in language. The literarily text began to be seem both as the creation of an individual artistic intelligence and the product of cultural forces articulated through the writer in that period. Additionally, expression became one of the principle subjects both in spoken and written language; so, rhetoric (art of using language) gained importance and its source was "pleasure".

Rhetoric is an art developed in ancient times by the Greeks and Romans to give public speakers –whether senators, citizens, or lawyers- systematic techniques for persuading their audiences.[14]

English grammar school pupils were taught to practice at expressing different and even contradictory ideas as persuasively as possible at that period, and this assignment forced them to search out the most effective verbal means available, regardless of the merit of the argument of their own opinions about it. The ultimate effect of rhetorical training must have been not only verbal but also philosophical. Such a perspective caused great artistic achievements. Shakespeare himself can be regarded as ideal student of Renaissance rhetoric. He enthusiastically and brilliantly

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[14] *Reading Shakespeare's Dramatic Language*, S.Adamson, The Arden Shakespeare, 2001, p.17

adapted the schemes and tropes of the humanist masters such as Cicero and Erasmus. As for Erasmus, rhetoric was more than the systems of figures, so it was for Shakespeare; and Cicero, as Shakespeare did, required the writer both to promote and deny a political or philosophical position derived from history. The Roman orator, Cicero was probably the single most influential name among classical rhetoricians in Shakespeare's time. Reading Cicero's writings encouraged Renaissance schoolboys to place the highest value on well- developed communication skills.

Originally, the aim of rhetoric was artificial and literally. In this period the most approved language was that most artificial; it was not close to realism of speech or colloquialism.[15]

The English language being shaped into forms by the great Tudor rhetoricians, and Shakespeare's relation to contemporary systems of rhetoric is an important topic. Especially Shakespeare's early poems and plays were in acquaintance with the rhetoricians' arguments. It was said that every person who had a grammar- school education in Europe knew by heart, up to a hundred figures, by their right names, so a dramatic poet, someone with a professional interest in language, must have been more adept at the art. So, words were the principle issue over language and sixteenth century educators and commentators thought and wrote

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[15] Adamson, p.18

much more extensively about words than grammar and syntax. Thus, Shakespeare spent much of his time in his enlargement of the language. Clearly, he took advantage of the plasticity, the unruliness of the English language.

His individual talent and cultural context, his sensitivity to words combined with the range and plasticity of the English language. He himself was engaged in the coining of words in English. Shakespeare's contribution to the language was noticed by Francis Meres for the first time in 1598. He places Shakespeare among those who have dignified their language. But later, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries critics and scholars began to doubt that Shakespeare could have helped significantly with the expansion of English vocabulary. Some of them thought Shakespeare as a poor Latinist, and others seemed eager to deprecate his classical learning and they preserved him as a Saxonist. But it was determined that Shakespeare coined nearly 10,000 words to English language.[16]

Shakespeare significantly enriched the English language with coinages, many from Latin, some from French, some from native roots. A high percentage of these have not survived for some reasons. Some terms were 'nonce-words', created to answer a momentary poetic or theatrical need: for example, 'unprovokes' in the Porter scene in *Macbeth,* was apparently coined to make a comic match with 'provokes' in the previous line. Many words did not catch on, such as 'convive'

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[16] McDonald, p. 35

meaning 'to feast' (*Troilus*, 4.5.272); 'crimeless' meaning 'innocent' (*Henry VI*, 2.5.64); 'facinorous' meaning 'extremely wicked' (*All's Well*, 2.3.30); 'unseminared' meaning 'castrated' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 2.5.11). On the other hand, some words that we use appears to be Shakespearean coinages, such as: 'countless' (*Titus*, 5.3.159), 'assassination' (*Macbeth*, 1.7.2), 'unreal' (*Macbeth*, 3.4.106), and 'frugal' (*Much Ado*, 4.1.128).[17]

Taking pleasure in the sound and arrangement of words for their own sake, he gained experience and maturity. We can clearly see that his dependence on rhetoric never disappears from the earliest to the last ones. All his plays and poems reveal Shakespear's joy in verbal patterning and poetic artifice. For example, in the Tragedy of Richard II, the language best captures its tragic meaning in Richard's great prison soliloquy, the speech in which he recognizes his waste of talent:

> ....But whate'er I be
>
> Nor I, nor any man that but man is,
>
> With nothing shall be pleased till he be eased
>
> With being nothing. (*Richard II*, 5.5.38-41)

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[17] A *Shakespeare Glossary*, C.T.Onions, Clarendon Press, 1919

This speech is rhetorically brilliant as his earlier performances, resounding with assonance and lexical repetition. Here are some more examples:

> She swore in faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange.
>
> 'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful. (*Othello*, 1.3. 159-60)

> ....Yet I'll not shed her blood,
>
> Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
>
> And smooth as monumental alabaster. (*Othello*, 5.2. 3-5)

> What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
>
> That he should weep for her? (*Hamlet*, 2.2. 561-2)

> Come night, come Romeo; come, thou day in night,
>
> For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
>
> Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.(*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.2. 17-19)

All of these passages rely upon rhetorical turns to which the Renaissance theorists had given specific names and functions: *anastrophe*, abnormal word order, in Othello's contemplation of murder; *antimetabole*, 'turning about', in Hamlet's

play on 'Hecuba'; *conduplicatio*, doubling, in Juliet's *apostrophe* to night; and *metaphor*, implicit comparison, everywhere.[18]

Shakespeare must be discovered that the most effective form of rhetoric is that which conceals itself. If the chief aim of rhetoric is to move others through speech, then Shakespeare's creation of such speakers as Hamlet, Othello, Falstaff, Cleopatra and Kent must be his greatest rhetorical achievement.

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[18] McDonald, p. 46

B-SHAKESPEARE'S FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

"His sonnets seem to be full of fine

things said unintentionally"

John Keats

A play is a union of the voices and the actions of the speakers, the human experience that they communicate, and the imagination of the audiences. And language is a reflection of human nature, so the playwrights of the Elizabethan period agreed that their purpose was to mirror human character in their plays with words. Then, they held the mirror up to human nature with the language they used. The audiences of the period wanted to hear a play, but not to see it. Because plays were performed in natural daylight with no scenery and visual effects, and the language was required to do the kind of work which can now be done by stage design, artificial lightening and special effects.[19]

Shakespeare's theatre itself was very dependent on words. In the absence of videotapes, recordings and reviews; the words evoke gestures, actions, relationships; the words establish a contact with the audience. This kind of communication through words naturally brought the idea of an artificial language. As in Elizabethan period there was an intense interest in language, playwrights of the period tried to prove

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[19] Donawerth, p.13

them selves by using the most obscure and high-sounding words. For words are the peoples; there is a choice of them to be made: to choose well is a major responsibility of the poet and the playwright. At this point figurative language gained importance.[20]

In literature, words may be classified as either "literal" or "figurative". Ordinary literal words are those of the everyday vocabulary that have no hidden meaning but mean just what they say, letter by letter. Figurative language is any departure from plain statement or the literal use of words. "He fought like a lion in the battlefield" is figurative. Whereas "he fought very bravely in the battlefield" is literal.[21] Figurative language uses figures of speech such as imagery, symbol, simile, metaphor, alliteration, irony, pun, metonymy, and hyperbole. It can be clearly seen that figurative language is everywhere in Shakespeare's plays.

IMAGERY

Imagery is the creation of images, which is a mental picture or concept, to help the poet achieve his intended purpose. It represents objects, actions, feelings, thoughts, ideas, states of mind and any sensory or extra sensory experience. An image may be visual, (pertaining to the eye), olfactory (smell), tactile (touch),

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[20] Donawerth, p,24
[21] *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, J.A. Cuddon, Penguin Books, 1982, p. 323

auditory (hearing), and gustatory (taste). It may also be abstract and kinaesthetic (pertaining to the sense of movement and bodily effort).[22]

In *Macbeth* one of the pervasive sets of images is concerned with clothing. Macbeth, when addressed as Thane of Cawdor, says:

> The Thane of Cawdor lives, why do you dress me
>
> In borrowed robes? (1.3.109-110)

Not long after, Banquo comments:

> New honours came upon him
>
> Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
>
> But with the aid of use (1.3.145-7)

These images about clothing suggest that Macbeth does not fit into the robes of a king. He is not big enough, not great enough, to be king. Macbeth does not fit his clothes because he has stolen them. They are not his. Macbeth's inability to rule as Duncan had, is emphasized by the subtle use of this metaphor.[23]

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[22] Cuddon, p. 323
[23] *Literature, a close study*, Burns and McNamara, MacMillan Ltd. 1995, p.18

METAPHOR

Metaphor is an implicit comparison in which one thing is described in terms of another. A metaphor expresses a complex of thought and feeling that is so subtle and precise that it cannot be any other way.[24] There are hundreds of Shakespearean metaphors:

When Romeo says to Juliet at her window "speak again, bright angel", he metaphorically substitutes one noun for another, "angel" for "Juliet". The effect of this transference is to apply or to carry over to Juliet the properties of the angel, and in this case, particular purpose is not only to clarify what she is but also to glorify her.

When Lady Macbeth says to her husband "Look like the innocent flower, / But be the serpent under't' (1.5.64-5), the command is based on the metaphor that, Macbeth's fragility and his ambition under it.

The 'closet scene' of Hamlet is full of multiple metaphoric expressions:

Mother, for love of grace

Lay not a flattering unction to your soul

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[24] Cuddon, p.391

That not your trespass but my madness speaks.

It will but skin and film the ulcerous place

Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,

Infects unseen. (3.4.135-40)

This passage establishes the difference between literal and figurative language. The literal meaning is simple: don't comfort yourself with the excuse that I'm mad and you're not guilty; to do that will make the sin even worse. But the metaphoric expression is not simple at all, but adds nuance and colour to the semantic sense of Hamlet's words.[25]

In Othello, Iago compares a good name to a jewel:

Good name in man and woman dear my lord,

Is the immediate jewel of their souls;

Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;

'T was mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;

But he that filches from me my good name

Robs me of that which not enriches him

And makes me poor indeed. (III.III.158-165)

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[25] *The Shakespearean Metaphor*, Ralph Berry ,The Bowering Press.1978, p.5

By first saying that one's good name is a jewel, Iago introduces the metaphor. He then extends the metaphor by observing now, like a jewel, his good name can be stolen. To do this he uses words such as 'filches' and 'robs'. He continues by speaking of being left 'poor indeed' after the theft of the jewel. Iago uses elaborate speeches like this, as well as emotive language, to rouse Othello into an emotional state. In this state Othello begins to doubt Destamona's honesty and faithfulness.

Shakespeare's metaphors are based not on the magical properties of words, but on the likeness of speech to music.

PERSONIFICATION

Personification is a form of metaphor in which the attributes of a person are transferred to abstract or non-human things. This figure of speech is usually used to make the things more real, vivid and immediate, and to make an idea easier to grasp.[26] In *Hamlet* Shakespeare personifies morning:

> But look, the morn, in russed mantle clad
>
> Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill

---

[26] Burns&McNamara, p.169

The idea of morning as a richly dressed person approaching across the hills gives a vivid sense of the loveliness of the coming dawn. This is very appropriate in the play, as the characters are the most relieved to see night go.

SIMILE

Simile is an explicit comparison between two unlike objects, usually using "like" or "as". In a simile one thing is likened to another, in such a way as to clarify and enhance an image.[27] A good example of simile can be found in *Henry IV.*

In *Henry IV*, Falstaff and the Prince engage in a contest of similes. It begins with Falstaff's claim that he is 'as melancholy as a gib cat, or a lugged bear', continues with two alternative vehicles suggested by the Prince ('Or an old lion, or a lover's lute'), and proceeds through more possible comparisons from Falstaff and then again from the Prince. The simile game is recreational in two senses: it amuses the participants, of course, but it also represents their efforts to make their conversation more vivid and less conventional. Such verbal games keep the Prince from thinking about his courtly responsibilities and keep Falstaff from facing the truth about himself, a truth he knows but prefers not to contemplate.

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[27] Cuddon, p.100

WORDPLAY (PUN)

Wordplay serves to colour the verbal text, offering the rewards of diversion and ornament, but sometimes this causes to semantic transparency or certainty of meaning.[28]

The pun is a figure of fun that requires the reader or listener to hesitate, to look in two directions at once, enforcing a momentary shift into another context and thus muddling and / or enriching the meaning of the verbal text.[29]

Pun means likeness in difference. A word, the signifier, has a single sound but refers to two distinct objects or ideas, two different signified. Puns may be either homophonic or semantic. Homophonic puns involve words that sounded alike as "boil-bile". Semantic puns involve words that have two meanings, one of which is often obscene.[30]

Shakespeare's attraction to likeness in difference manifests itself everywhere: in his fascination with twins, as in *The Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night*, in his creation of pairs of characters, in his sets of brothers, Claudius and Old Hamlet, or

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[28] McDonald, p.141
[29] McDonald, p.141
[30] Blake, p.25

Edgar and Edmund, in the double plots that enrich many of his plays; in the assignment of female roles to boy actors, and the dressing up of some of these 'young women' (e.g. Rosalind in *Twelfth Night*) as young men. [31]

Many of Shakespeare's characters appreciate the principle multiple meaning and so use puns deliberately, impressing their listeners with their cleverness. *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, begins with a masculine sparring match:

> SAMSON: Gregory, on my word, we'll not carry coals.
>
> GREGORY: No, for then we should be colliers.
>
> SAMSON: I mean, we be in choler, we'll draw.
>
> GREGORY: Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of collar.
>
> (1.1.1-4)

Two members of the house of Capulet show off their wit by seeking to best each other mentally and verbally. The initial turns on 'coals' shift as the dialogue continues in to a worrying of the word 'moved' (to be angered or to run away in fear) and then into a series of jokes about maid's heads and maidenheads and men's weapons or sexual tools.[32]

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[31] McDonald, p.142
[32] McDonald, p. 143

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, the meeting scene of Katherine and Petruccio involves a good example of pun:

> PETRUCCIO: Come, come, you wasp, i'faith you are too angry.
>
> KATHERINE: If I be waspish, best beware my sting.
>
> PETRUCCIO: My remedy is then to pluck it out.
>
> KATHERINE: Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.
>
> PETRUCCIO: Who knows not where the wasp does wear his sting? In his tail.
>
> KATHERINE: In his tongue.
>
> PETRUCCIO: Whose tongue?
>
> KATHERINE: Yours, if you talk of tales, and so farewell.
>
> PETRUCCIO: What, with my tongue in your tail? (2.1.209-16)

Shakespeare seems to have been possessed with language as a subject. He had speculated on what language can and cannot do. Moving words in an artful arrangement is a proof of his emotional and theatrical power.

C-SHAKESPEARE'S METRICAL DEVELOPMENT

VERSE

Most plays in Shakespeare's time written in verse[33], because audiences evidently enjoyed hearing a lively pulsing rhythm from the actors on the stage. When they went to comedies, they heard rhymed lines, which Shakespeare used sometimes in his early plays:

'Twas I won the wager, though you hit the white,

And being a winner, God give you good night! (*Taming of the Shrew*, 5.2.187-8)

By the time Shakespeare began to write plays, the usual form for most of the lines was *blank verse-* unrhymed *iambic pentameter*. Pentameter meant that there were five metrical units, or feet; iambic, that each foot was usually composed of a relatively unstressed syllable followed by a stronger one.[34]

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[33] *Shakespeare's poetic styles: Verse into Drama*, John Baxter, Routledge &Kegan Paul Publication,1980, p.2
[34] Adamson, p.51

> The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain. (*A Midsummer Night Dream*, 2.1.93)

Shakespeare wrote four- stress verse now and then, especially for the song-like speeches of fairies or witches:[35]

> Double, double, toil and trouble;
>
> Fire burn, and cauldron buble. (*Macbeth*, 4.1.10-11)

Shakespeare's technical skills grew prodigiously as he gained experience at composing verse for speaking characters.

He first imitated the verse style of contemporary dramatists as Marlowe. Christopher Marlowe, born the same year as Shakespeare, had been especially successful in developing a powerful verse line for his heroic plays and dark dramas of sin. Each of his lines seems a strong statement, linked grammatically to the others but syntactically separate, and metrically quite regular.[36]

> I hold the Fate's bound fast in iron chains,
>
> And with my hand turn Fortune's wheel about,
>
> And sooner shall the sun fall from his sphere

---

[35] Adamson, p.52
[36] Adamson, p.53

Than Tamburlaine be slain or overcome. (Marlowe, *Tamburlaine*, Part
1, 1.2.174-7)

Shakespear's blank verse develops over the course of his career from
regular to irregular, from smooth to rough, from rhythmically simple to
various. It caused to thematic and tonal complication. The complication of the
pentameter reflects the thematic density of the later plays. [37] For instance, Julius
Caesar is richer than Henry IV as the sound of its verse more various and
complex.

> BRUTUS: No, not an oath: if not the face of men,
>
> The sufferance of our souls, the time's abuse,--
>
> If these be motives weak, break off betimes,
>
> And every man hence to his idle bed;
>
> So let high-sighted tyranny range on,
>
> Till each man drop by lottery. But if these,
>
> As I am sure they do, bear fire enough
>
> To kindle cowards and to steel with valour
>
> The melting spirits of women, then, countrymen,
>
> What need we any spur but our own cause,
>
> To prick us to redress? what other bond

---

[37] McDonald, p.91

Than secret Romans, that have spoke the word,

And will not palter? and what other oath

Than honesty to honesty engaged,

That this shall be, or we will fall for it?

Swear priests and cowards and men cautelous,

Old feeble carrions and such suffering souls

That welcome wrongs; unto bad causes swear

Such creatures as men doubt; but do not stain

The even virtue of our enterprise,

Nor the insuppressive mettle of our spirits,

To think that or our cause or our performance

Did need an oath; when every drop of blood

That every Roman bears, and nobly bears,

Is guilty of a several bastardy,

If he do break the smallest particle

Of any promise that hath pass'd from him. (II.I.113-39)

The structure of this verse represents one of the Shakespeare's early practices. The lines are mostly end stopped, that some form of punctuation ends the line. When the sentence is longer than a pentameter line, the grammatical segments tend to correspond to the poetic joins. In the pair of lines that follows the questions, the compound sentence split into two separate units divided equally between two lines:

" The smallest worm will turn, being trodden on,

And doves will peck in safeguard of their blood."

Here, although the first line is broken by a comma, the two parts of the sentence match each other: each contains a subject, a verand then a conditional phrase modifying the verb, the first one participial, the second prepositional.

In such kind of lines, generally, the grammatical components of the sentence, such as prepositional phrases or objective clauses, break the pentameter line into smaller segments; and as for Russ McDonald, Shakespeare's poetic development may be charted partly by his manipulation of these midline breaks[38]At this early stage the similar length of each poetic unit, about ten syllables, imparts to the work a sense of aural uniformity. All the verse in the early comedies and histories exhibits exactly this kind of lineal regularity. Sometimes it is more audible, sometimes less.[39]

In his early years the main problem Shakespeare faced was the sovereignty of the ten- syllable line, the challenge of fitting English sentence into decasyllabic units. The custom was to make the fit between sentence and line as smooth as possible. For English dramatic poets at this period, the end stopped line was expected, and

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[38] McDonald, p.92
[39] McDonald, p.92

Shakespeare would have been abnormal if he had flouted that convention in his early works.[40]

The division of poetic speech into roughly equal poetic lines reflects the highly formalized action in Shakespeare's early drama. Later he exploits the aural conventions of metrical symmetry and equivalence to produce meaning in his early historical plays.

KING RICHARD III: Say, I will love her everlastingly.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: But how long shall that title 'ever' last?

KING RICHARD III: Sweetly in force unto her fair life's end.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: But how long fairly shall her sweet lie last?

KING RICHARD III: So long as heaven and nature lengthens it.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: So long as hell and Richard likes of it.

KING RICHARD III: Say, I, her sovereign, am her subject love.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: But she, your subject, loathes such sovereignty.

KING RICHARD III: Be eloquent in my behalf to her.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.

KING RICHARD III: Then in plain terms tell her my loving tale.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: Plain and not honest is too harsh a style.

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[40] *Shakespeare's Metrical Art*, George T Write, Penguin Books,1988, p,53

KING RICHARD III: Your reasons are too shallow and too quick.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: O no, my reasons are too deep and dead;

Too deep and dead, poor infants, in their grave. (IV:IV:280-93)

Throughout the early histories poetic lines oppose each other. The two speakers match each other, returning full line for full line. When one alters the pattern by inserting a midline pause ("Say I, her sovereign.") , the other responds in kind ("But she, your subject.") So the poetic lines march together to create a dramatic whole vivified by their contention. [41]

Such a pattern of opposition obtains in the early comedies as well. The blank verse line in these plays is noticeably regular and relatively simple. In composing the dialogue in *Comedy of Errors*, Shakespeare manipulates the pentameter to differentiate between speakers and to transform the dramatic mood[42]

ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE :

He that commends me to mine own content

Commends me to the thing I cannot get.

I to the world am like a drop of water

That in the ocean seeks another drop,

[41] McDonald,p.94
[42] McDonald, p.95

Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,

Unseen, inquisitive, confounds himself:

So I, to find a mother and a brother,

In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself.

(Enter DROMIO of Ephesus)

Here comes the almanac of my true date.

What now? how chance thou art return'd so soon?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS:

Return'd so soon! rather approach'd too late:

The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit,

The clock hath strucken twelve upon the bell;

My mistress made it one upon my cheek:

She is so hot because the meat is cold;

The meat is cold because you come not home;

You come not home because you have no stomach;

You have no stomach having broke your fast;

But we that know what 'tis to fast and pray

Are penitent for your default to-day. (I.II.33-52)

Here, almost every line is endstopped, and the phrasal repetitions of Dromio's reply are striking. These variations establish a rhythmic opposition between master and servant. Both speak blank verse, but Antipholus' lines are long and leisurely whereas Dromio's are choppy and urgent. The contrast arises from Shakespeare's exaggeration of the midline pause in Dromio's lines.[43]

Shakespeare's metrical development helps to produce his thematic evolution. Rhythm is intimately related to meaning. In later plays Shakespeare introduces immense variety into the sound of the pentameter. Fewer lines are end stopped than in the early plays. The basic ten-syllable unit has been dismantled. Midline breaks occurs frequently, sometimes more than once in a line. At the same time, many phrases run longer than a single line. The texture of the verse is less formal, less artificial, more natural, and more conversational. This movement can be seen from uniformity to irregularity in any of his great tragedies [44]:

> To be, or not to be: that is the question:
>
> Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
>
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
>
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
>
> And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;

---

[43] McDonald, p. 95
[44] Adamson, p. 52

No more; and by a sleep to say we end

The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation

Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;

To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come

When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,

Must give us pause: there's the respect

That makes calamity of so long life;

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,

The insolence of office and the spurns

That patient merit of the unworthy takes,

When he himself might his quietus make

With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,

To grunt and sweat under a weary life,

But that the dread of something after death,

The undiscover'd country from whose bourn

No traveller returns, puzzles the will

And makes us rather bear those ills we have

Than fly to others that we know not of?

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;

And thus the native hue of resolution

Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,

And enterprises of great pith and moment

With this regard their currents turn awry,

And lose the name of action.--Soft you now!

The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons

Be all my sins remember'd.   (III.I.56-80)

After a decade of experience Shakespeare has overthrown the tyranny of the ten-syllable segment and replaced it with a productive counterpoint between sentence and line. In the mature style the grammar of the sentence often propels the listener into the next line, as when the terminal word is a verb demanding an object: "unto bad causes swear/ Such creatures as men doubt; but do not stain/ The even virtue of our enterprise."[45]

The irregularity of the pauses contributes a propulsive energy as phrases run over the ends of lines and thus convey the passion of the speaker. Such control of tempo is part of the mature poet's skill at manipulating the metre for rhetorical effect.[46]

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[45] McDonald, p.98
[46] McDonald, p.98

The mature Shakespeare's metrical freedom with the poetic line permits him to exploit the sound of verse in the service of various dramatic ends, in plays like *Hamlet* and *King Lear*.

As Shakespeare moves beyond the mature tragedies into the final phase, the years that produces the dramas known as the romances, he permits the metrical frame to become looser and looser. But the poet never forgets the value of the fundamental pattern. By means of such tension between line and phrase, the aural experiments in plays such as *Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale,* and *The Tempest* become the theatrical invention.

The vast difference between the late style and the regular pentameter of the early plays becomes immediately audible in the language of the romances. In these plays virtually and extended speech exhibits the sophisticated sound of the late style. Packing as much thoughts as possible into the space the sentence, he often eliminates such potentially superfluous elements as relative pronouns, conjunctions, even verbs.[47] For example, Innogen's first entrance in disguise in *Cymbeline*, typifies this characteristic metrical variety:

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[47] McDonald, p.102

Two beggars told me

I could not miss my way: will poor folks lie,

That have afflictions on them, knowing 'tis

A punishment or trial? Yes; no wonder,

When rich ones scarce tell true. To lapse in fulness

Is sorer than to lie for need, and falsehood

Is worse in kings than beggars. My dear lord!

Thou art one o' the false ones. Now I think on thee,

My hunger's gone; but even before, I was

At point to sink for food. But what is this?

Here is a path to't: 'tis some savage hold:

I were best not to call; I dare not call: yet famine,

Ere clean it o'erthrow nature, makes it valiant,

Plenty and peace breeds cowards: hardness ever

Of hardiness is mother. Ho! who's here?

If any thing that's civil, speak; if savage,

Take or lend. Ho! No answer? Then I'll enter. (III.VI.8-24)

The rhythmic structure of the late verse seems almost random. End-stopped line has been withdrawn. At least half the lines are extrametrical. In these Romances

when characters speak under the influence of extreme emotion, these metrical variables become especially conspicuous.[48]

Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and

ears a fork'd one!

Go, play, boy, play : thy mother plays, and I

Play too, but so disgraced a part, whose issue

Will hiss me to my grave: contempt and clamour

Will be my knell. Go, play, boy, play. (I.II.187-91)

Feminine endings, late pauses, short phrases, and an elusive rhythmic structure are the metrical properties of the late style. Additionally, extravagant alliteration, other forms of consonance , assonance, and various forms of lexical and phrasal repetition are the other poetic features which help to pull words together, creating a poetic coherence. So such kind of metrical devices gives the actor much greater flexibility. This means at the end of his career, Shakespeare has achieved his rhetorical power.

As a result, the speech rhythms have become more nearly natural or conversational and both the nature of the stories chosen and the dramatic presentation of them have become more artificial and unrealistic. Shakespeare has

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[48] McDonald, p.103

moved from the representational style of the tragedies to the presentational style of the romances. The late plays are connected with myth and fairy tale.

PROSE

When Shakespeare wrote *Henry IV*, he was entering a period during which he was to use prose far more. However, the principle innovation in *Henry IV*, is its greatly increased dependence on prose.

The movement from verse to prose denotes a change in mood, and a formal relaxation.

Prose is not poetry, and the main difference between verse and prose is the kind of rhythm. Blank verse normally consists of lines of ten-syllables organised into five beats, each beat constituting an iamb, one unaccented followed by one accented syllable. Thus, the verse line ends after the tenth syllable, with a new line beginning at the left-hand margin and signified by a capital letter. Since prose lacks the regular rhythms of verse, its lines extending all the way to the right- hand margin and with capital letters used mainly to mark the beginning of a new sentence. Often the rhythms of prose are situational, developed according to

the topic of the speech and the particular impulses or style of the speaker. Prose is less strictly organized than poetry, less formal and intense.

Shakespeare's skill at writing dramatic prose should be seen in light of the philosophical and pedagogical debates over language occurring at the end of the sixteenth century.

At the middle of the sixteenth century, there were two different styles of writing: One of them favoured intricate sentence based on parallel clauses, elaborate rhetorical patterns, and stylistic decoration for its own sake: the Ciceronian style. The other one was Senecan prose which supplanted the older view, regarded style strictly as a means of conveying thought and consequently disapproved of obvious rhetorical patterns.

Shakespeare's prose was a theatrical instrument, speech written for dramatic characters, and that function makes it different from others. Additionally, every major character is given a more or less distinctive voice. So, it can be said that Shakespeare used Ciceronian style much.

For Shakespeare, verse was the dominant form, and prose was the subordinate. When Elizabethan playwrights wrote dialogues in prose, they tended to employ it for comic scenes. Elizabethan tragedy dealt with kings, comedy with

clowns, or at least with ordinary people. As a beginner, Shakespeare tended to observe this social distinction fairly strictly. His first history plays were composed in verse, the early comedies were both verse and prose. Upper-class characters tended to speak verse, servants and lower class figures prose.

Shakespeare's prose would conform to the pattern known as paratoxis with clauses of relatively equal length.[49]

> GRUMIO
>
> Tell thou the tale: but hadst thou not crossed me,
> thou shouldst have heard how her horse fell and she
> under her horse; thou shouldst have heard in how
> miry a place, how she was bemoiled, how he left her
> with the horse upon her, how he beat me because
> her horse stumbled, how she waded through the dirt
> to pluck him off me, how he swore, how she prayed,
> that never prayed before, how I cried, how the
> horses ran away, how her bridle was burst, how I
> lost my crupper, with many things of worthy memory,
> which now shall die in oblivion and thou return
> unexperienced to thy grave. (IV.I.64-75)

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[49] McDonald, p.117

Shakespeare often used prose as a vehicle for comic interplay, and such dialogues often depended on specious logic and rhetorical pretension. Since prose was frequently spoken in comic situations, verbal tics and extravagant stylistic turns seem much more prominent.

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Don Armado sends a letter to Jaquennetta, the country girl with whom he is besotted. When the letter is misdelivered, Boyet reads it aloud to the Princess of France and her ladies:

> BOYET:
>
> 'By heaven, that thou art fair, is most infallible;
>
> true, that thou art beauteous; truth itself, that
>
> thou art lovely. More fairer than fair, beautiful
>
> than beauteous, truer than truth itself, have
>
> commiseration on thy heroical vassal! The
>
> magnanimous and most illustrate king Cophetua set
>
> eye upon the pernicious and indubitate beggar
>
> Zenelophon; 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: he came, one; saw two;

overcame, three. Who came? the king: why did he come? to see: why did he see? to overcome: to whom came he? to the beggar: what saw he? the beggar: who overcame he? the beggar. The conclusion is victory: on whose side? the king's. The captive is enriched: on whose side? the beggar's. The catastrophe is a nuptial: on whose side? the king's: no, on both in one, or one in both. I am the king; for so stands the comparison: thou the beggar; for so witnesseth thy lowliness. Shall I command thy love? I may: shall I enforce thy love? I could: shall I entreat thy love? I will. What shalt thou exchange for rags? robes; for tittles? titles; for thyself? me. Thus, expecting thy reply, I profane my lips on thy foot, my eyes on thy picture. and my heart on thy every part. Thine, in the dearest design of industry,

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO.'

Thus dost thou hear the Nemean lion roar

'Gainst thee, thou lamb, that standest as his prey.

Submissive fall his princely feet before,

And he from forage will incline to play:

But if thou strive, poor soul, what art thou then?

Food for his rage, repasture for his den. (IV.I.60-86)

This prose letter represents Shakespeare's own discovery of what he could do with language, particularly his command of prose rhythm, aural patterning, syntactical contrast, and rhetorical schematisation.

Just a few years into his writing career, Shakespeare seems to have been suddenly possessed with language as a subject. In earlier plays he realized that what language could and could not do: In *The Taming of the Shrew* the battle of the sexes is depicted as a war of words, and in the three *Henry VI* plays he could hardly have missed the political ramifications of his characters' speech. But *Love's Labour's Lost, Richard III,* and *Romeo and Juliet* suggest a new degree of self-consciousness about the medium in which he worked.[50] Especially in *Richard III* characters repeatedly seize meaning from one another by twisting words into an unintended and usually unwelcome sense:

YORK: I pray you, uncle, render me this dagger

RICHARD GLOUCESTER: My dagger, little cousin? With all my heart. (3.1.110-11)

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[50] McDonald, p.166

PART III

<u>KING LEAR</u>

King Lear is regarded as Shakespeare's greatest artistic achievement. It is one of the most complex of Shakespeare's tragedies. Its language is considered to be the finest example of tragic lyricism in the English Language.

King Lear is supposed to be written between 1604-1605. Shakespeare turned to various sources, including Holinshed's *Chronicles* for the outline of Lear's story, and Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* for the Gloucester sub-plot. *King Lear* is a good example of plot-in plot play.

A-SUMMARY OF THE PLAY

King Lear is about an old king who wants to share his kingdom between his three daughters, and suffers much afterwards.

Goneril, Regan and Cordelia are Lear's daughters. Goneril and Regan are married, but Cordelia is not. Lear decides to share his kingdom between his daughters and spend his remaining years as a regular guest at their courts.

Lear either gives up his duty or expects everybody behaves him as if he were still a king. So, he arranges a love competition between his daughters in order to hear how much they love their father.

Goneril and Regan say what Lear wants to hear. They say exaggerated words, which are quite artificial, but Cordelia refuses to earn her share by joining her older sisters in exaggerated public declarations of love for her father. Honest Cordelia just says "nothing". Lear gets angry and blames her for being untender. Then, Lear banishes both Cordelia and Duke of Kent who defends Cordelia against him. So, Lear divides his kingdom between Goneril and Regan. The King of France, who admires her honesty, takes Cordelia as wife without dowry.

As for the subplot of *King Lear*, Gloucester has two sons, Edgar and bastard Edmund. Edmund hears what his father says to Kent about him and decides to take revenge himself on it. He devises a scheme to set his father against Edgar, Gloucester a phony letter in which Edgar tries to enlist Edmund into a murder plot against their father. By the way, Goneril tells her father that she will cut the number of his court in half. This causes Lear to leave in anger for Regan's castle, and sends disguised Kent with a letter to Regan's manor. The king's fool makes fun of his master for giving power to such cruel, faithless, and deceptive daughters. Goneril's husband, the Duke of Albany, criticizes her harshness toward Lear, but she sends a

letter to her sister, encouraging Reagan to adopt the same contemptuous stance toward their father.

Edmund, on the other hand, advances his plot against his brother. Gloucester is deceived and he vows to execute his traitorous son Edgar. Regan and her husband, the Duke of Cornwall, visit Gloucester's castle and enlist Edmund into their service. Outside of that castle, Kent first insults and then fights Oswald. As punishment for the assault, Kent is placed in the stocks. Edgar escapes from his father's search party by taking the disguise of a madman named Tom of Bedlam. Lear arrives at Gloucester's castle seeking Regan and sees his messenger humiliated. Kent is set free, but Regan then abuses Lear in the same way as her sister, saying that there is no need for Lear to support any retinue of knights. So, Lear leaves the castle and plunges into the stormy night, followed only by Gloucester and the Fool. Kent learns that Lear has been wandering about madly in the storm, shouting epithets and curses at his daughters, his fortune, and nature itself. He finds Lear in a dishevelled state and urges him to take shelter. At his castle, Gloucester tells Edmund that he has been commanded by Cornwall not to offer any aid to Lear. He also says that Cordelia and the King of France have heard of Lear's plight and are mounting an army to invade England. Edmund decides to tell Goneril and Regan about it so that they will punish Gloucester, allowing Edmund to inherit his father's estate. Lear remains in a torrential rage there they encounter Edgar in his Tom O'Bedlam disguise; Lear sympathizes and identifies with Edgar disguised as the mad Tom

Gloucester arrives and offers Lear a shelter when he learns Goneril and Regan's plan for killing their father and warns the trio to flee from his daughter's grasp. Goneril and Regan arrive and Gloucester himself is placed under arrest. When he chastises them, the Duke of Cornwall puts out his eyes.   In reaction, one of Gloucester's loyal servants attacks Cornwall and injures him badly.

The blinded Gloucester reunites with Edgar, still disguised as Mad Tom, and the son agrees to lead the father to the cliffs of Dover where Gloucester plans to commit suicide. Goneril and Edmund are informed by Oswalld that Cordelia and an army from France are about to invade England. Goneril instructs Edmund to raise an army in response; then they reveal their plan to murder Goneril's husband, the Duke of Albany. But when Albany arrives he rails against the brutality of his wife and Edmund and then vows to exact revenge for Gloucester's blinding. Goneril expresses her fears that Regan (whose husband Cornwall has died) also harbours sexual intentions toward Edmund. A battle between Cordelia's French army and the forces of Goneril, Regan, Edmund and Albany begin to take form. Meanwhile, on the Cliffs of Dover, Edgar (as Tom) tricks his father into thinking that he has jumped off the steep precipice and been rescued from death by the gods. Cordelia and Lear unite, but Lear is so mad that he cannot recognize her at first, mistaking his daughter for a spirit.

Jealous Regan argues with Edmund about his relationship with Goneril. Edgar appears in disguise and tells Albany about his wife's plan to kill him and marry Edmund. Cordelia's forces are defeated and both she and Lear are captured. Edmund sends his henchmen to strangle Cordelia. Edgar removes his beggar's clothes, wears armour and attacks Edmund, and wounds him. Goneril poisons Regan and then commits suicide. An effort is made to stop Edmund's men from killing Cordelia, but it is already too late. Albany says to Lear, carrying the dead Cordelia's corpse, lapses into madness and dies broken-hearted. Gloucester also dies after realizing Edgar's true identity and worth.

B-LANGUAGE IN *KING LEAR*

The opening scene of *Lear* represents that the power of language is prominent from the beginning. This effect of the opening scene owes much to Shakespeare's instinct for surrounding verse with prose to enhance dramatic tension. Thus, *King Lear* contains the final examples of Shakespeare's dramatic verse. In Act I, scene I, there are 300 lines, and lines 88-121 and 188-283 are mostly in blank verse, while the opening and closing movements are both in prose. We can divide this scene into five parts: Lines 1-87 are part I, which is a quite prelude, the conversation among Gloucester, Kent and Edmund; lines 88-121 are part II, a heightening of anxiety, as the love test unfolds and Cordelia objects; lines 122-187 are the third part in which

there is an outburst of royal anger ending in banishment. Lines 188-283 are the fourth part, a degree of relaxation as Kent exist and Cordelia's marriage to France is arranged; lines 284-300 are the fifth part, a quite coda, in which Goneril and Regan confidentially look to the future. In lines 122-187, there is out breaking of couplets, spoken mostly by Kent.

The opening conversation between Gloucester and Kent makes it plane that Lear has already arranged the division of the kingdom before the ceremony in which he formally announces it. And immediately we are offered Gloucester, and his natural son, Edmund. All this has much to do not only with their characters but with the nature of the action.

In lines 37-38, Lear says "Know that we have divided/ In three our kingdom." This is a variation on the usual syntax: normally one would say, "We have divided our kingdom in three." This is a result of a process of artistic selection. The effect of the speech is heightened by the departure from the usual word order.

Ceremonial love competition requires verse. The verse of the daughters Goneril and Regan has to be formal, manifestly insincere. That's why their speeches to Lear are full of hyperbole:

GONERIL: Sir, I love you more than word can wield the matter;

Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty;

Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;

No less than life, with grace, health and beauty, honor;

As much as child e'er loved, or father found;

A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable.

Beyond all manner of so much I love you. (1.1.55-61)

REGAN: I find she names my very deed of love;....

Only she comes too short: that I profess

Myself an enemy to all other joys

Which the most precious square of sense possesses

And find I am alone felicitate

In your dear highness' love. (1.1.71-76)

The use of the word "deed" in Regan's speech suggests a legal definition of love.[51] Her use of this word suggest about artificialness of her attitude. Regan says that the only thing wrong with Goneril's profession of love is that, she does not love enough.

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[51] Burns&McNamara, p.33

Cordelia exposes her sisters' rhetorical falsity. She prefers to be silent. She does not come out of the archaic and artificial contest well.[52] She speaks only to say "nothing".

> LEAR: ......-Now our joy,
>
> Although our last and least; to whose young love
>
> The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
>
> Strive to be interest; 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: Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
>
> My heart into my mouth. I love your Majesty
>
> According to my bond, no more no less (1.1. 82-93)

Here, rhetorical formulae is used for a dramatic purpose. Repetition is one of the characteristics of Shakespearean plays. It gives depth to meaning.

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[52] *Shakespeare's Language*, Frank Kermode, Farrar.Straus.Gioux, 2000, p.186

Cordelia's inability (or unvillingness) to join with her sisters is this competition so angers Lear that he curses Cordelia.

> LEAR: Let it be so, thy truth then thy dower!
>
> For, by the sacred radience of the sun,
>
> The mysteries of Hecate and the night,
>
> By all the operation of the orbs
>
> From whom we do exist and cease to be,
>
> Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
>
> Propinquity and property of blood,
>
> And as a stranger to my heart and me
>
> Hold thee from this forever. The barbarous Scythian, (1.1.110- 118)

Lear clearly employs language to exercise power, invoking the goddess Hecate*, the sun, night, and the stars in his support. Here, we see the art of allusion, which means referencing something or someone. He references to Hecate and the barbarous Scythian**.

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* Hecate : the Goddess of the dead. She is invoked by the witches and is depicted brandishing a torch and accompanied by mares, bitches and she-wolves. Her powers are terrifying, especially at night and under the tracherous light of the Moon with she is identified.(*Dictionary of Symbols*, Chevalier and Gheerbrant, penguin books, 1994 p.489)
** Scythian : it refers to a barbarous tribe of people sometimes believed to eat their children. *(Literature, a close study* Burns and McNamara, , Macmillan, 1983,p.35)

In fact Lear brings tragedy upon himself when he speaks this famous oath, thereby invoking cosmic forces and disturbances well.

Lear's dialogue with Cordelia on "nothing" introduces another theme in the play's imagery echoing, among other scenes, some of his later conversations with the Fool.(I.IV.130- "Can you make no use of *nothing*, nuncle?") and others. According to many critics *King Lear* is in many ways, about "nothing".[53] Regan and Goneril seem to offer much in the beginning, but after whittling down the number of Lear's nights, they leave him with "nothing", and in the end their natural affection comes to "nothing" as well. Lear is progressively brought to "nothing", stripped of everything –kingdom, knights, dignity, sanity, clothes, his lost loving daughter, and finally life itself.

The language of scene itself reveals the beginning of Lear's fall. Throughout the first part of the scene language is formal, he addresses to her daughter as "lady", but at the end of this part language becomes informal:

> Hold thee from this forever. The barbarous Scythian,
>
> Or he that makes his generation messes
>
> To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
>
> Be as well neighbored, pitied, and relieved,

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[53] Kermode, p.186

As thou my sometime daughter.

Additionally, the style of personal pronouns is worth attention: Lear is almost always uses "we", until he loses his temper with his daughter, he uses "I". Kent also unmannerly addresses the King as "thou". In Elizabethan period "thou" was used by an inferior to a superior to express such feelings as anger and contempt[54]. The use of "thou" to a person of equal rank could thus easily count as an insult:

KENT: What would thou do, old man?

Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak, (I.I.146-47)

The love King seeks is the sort that can be offered in formal expression, and he therefore rejects the love of Cordelia and of Kent.

The Gloucester plot is introduced immediately after the departure of Cordelia. First Edmund invokes nature as his goddess, a goddess who despises such human, social contrivances as primogeniture. At the very outset of his scheming he and Gloucester have a perfectly motivated exchange on the subject of "nothing":

GLOUCESTER: What paper were you reading?

EDMUND: *Nothing*, my lord.

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[54] Abbott, p157

GLOUCESTER: No? What needed, then, that terrible dispatch of it into your pocket? The quality of *nothing* hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

(I.II. 30-35)

Much of the poetry in the play depends on these echoes or repetitions; here "nothing" is associated with seeing, sight, and the loss of it, which Gloucester is soon to suffer. Edmund plays his trick on the foolish old man and on his brother, whose fault is "foolish honesty" (I.II.181).[55]

The scene is followed at once by another in which we see Goneril's contempt for her father ("old fools are babes again" (I.II.181))

In act II, comes the disastrous gathering at Gloucester's house of the daughters and their husbands, with Kent and Lear arriving later. Regan's wicked opening question to Gloucester was much admired.[56] "What, did my father's godson seek your life (90). Here, the supposed crime of Edgar is, as it were, by association exclusively attributed to Lear, his godfather. This is a periphrastic trick of identifying guilt by tracing kinship, which Shakespeare appears to enjoy using much.[57] Here, language of Regan, as always, characterises her as without mercy, cold and cunning.

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[55] Kermode, p.189
[56] Kermode, p. 190
[57] Kermode, p. 190

From this moment on, in act III, the language of *King Lear* has much more force and variety than any other scenes. Lear rages, and his rage is rant. Lear wants nature to take his part against his "unnatural" daughters:

> And thou, all-shaking thunder,
>
> Strike flat the thick rotundity o'the world!
>
> Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
>
> That make ingrateful man!

In line "More sinn'd against than sinning" (III.II.60), the noise of Lear's speech is a necessary prelude to his sudden turning in compassion to the Fool, and later to Poor Tom. The shouting of the King and barbed chatter of the Fool accompany this recognition of what is to be cold and poor, to be at the bottom level of nature. The tone changes in the lines beginning "Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are, / That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm" (III.IV.28-29),[58] and Lear sends the Fool before him into the hovel. There they find Poor Tom. It is superbly apt that Lear imagines Tom's troubles to have come from the ingratitude of his daughters, a punishment for his having begotten them. Here, Edgar -Tom provides a vision of unjust luxury; he has been a fine courtier, but now, without shoes and clothes and perfume, he is an image of destitution:

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[58] Kermode, p.191

"here's three on's are sophisticated. Thou are the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, fork'd animal as thou art" (III.IV.105-8).

And Lear begins to tear off his own clothes:

"Off, off, you lendings! Come, unbutton here" (108-9)

This scene is in prose and yet it is the poetry of the highest quality. Shakespeare had mastered the device of allowing a pattern of language to irrupt into violent dramatic action.[59]

Lear believes that Edgar has shown himself to be a philosopher, a student of thunder, and he often addresses to Edgar-Poor Tom as "my philosopher", "noble philosopher", and "judge" in this scene.

The next scene (III.IV) presents an image of mad justice in the fantasy trial of Goneril and Regan. The "justicers" are a Fool (dealing with equity rather than unmitigated justice) and a Bedlam maniac ("Thou robed man of justice" (35)) "Let us deal justly," says Tom (40). Lear now quite mad, still in his babblings, does not stray far from the obsessive language of the play: "Is there any cause in nature that

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[59] Kermode, p.192

make these hard hearts? (It is a philosophical question, like inquiring into the cause of thunder)...You, sir...I do not like the fashion of your garments" (77-80)

The action precedes with another trial, this time the interrogation and the punishment of Gloucester. Goneril and Regan make Gloucester blind to punish him. In the midst of this obscene horror the words "justice", "eyes" and "seeing" are repeated again and again, even with an echo of the Fool's earlier joke about the use of the nose to separate the eyes:

"Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i'th' middle on's face?...to keep one's eyes of either side's nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into." (I.V.18-21)

"...All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind man; and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking." (II.IV.68-71)

Gloucester, now an "eyeless villain" must "smell his way to Dover" (III.VII.93-94)

Edgar congratulates himself on having fallen so deep into misery that he can fall no further, at which point his eyeless father enters and Edgar understands that as

long as we are capable of saying we are "the worst" we have not yet reached that point: "the worst is not / So long as we can say, 'This is the worst' "[60] (IV.I.27-28)

There is something rather terrifying about the way in which having created this nightmarish scenario, Shakespeare continues his insistence on a linguistic subplot: " 'Tis the time's plague, when madmen lead the blind" ..."the best parel"... "naked fellow"... "Poor Tom's a cold"... "Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed"[61] (IV.I.46-54)

According to Kermode (2000:193) "much of *King Lear* seems to arise from its cruelty, which can sometimes seem to be a sadistic attitude to the spectator, an attitude enhance by the coolness with which are forced to deal with a pain that does not hinder the poet from playing his terrible games."

Despite this cruelty goodness can survive and comes from Kent and, more strikingly, Albany; easily put down by his wife, Goneril, in the early scenes. Albany tells her that she is "not worth the dust which the rude wind / Blows in face (IV.II.30-31). This speech reminds us of another Shakespearean style, the one in which an initial idea makes itself more complex in its expression:

That nature which contemns its origin

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[60] Kermode, p.192
[61] Kermode, p.192

> Cannot be bordered certain itself.
>
> She that herself will sliver and disbranch
>
> From her material sap, perforce must wither,
>
> And come to deadly use. (IV.II.32-36)

The sentiment is fairly clear in the first two lines; this is another excursion into the semantics of "nature"; and the second line carries the implication that Goneril's contempt for her progenitor must be a kind of self-contempt, which she will be unable to control. The remaining lines move silently to the image of the family as a tree; in destroying her father she must destroy herself, here represented as vegetation ruining itself.[62] Goneril finds this as "foolish", and Albany follows her remark with the famous speech that ends:

> If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
>
> Send quickly down to tame these vild offenses,
>
> It will come,
>
> Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
>
> Like monsters of the deep. (IV.II.46-50)

Albany is soon to say that the fate of Cornwall demonstrates that there are "justicers" above. (IV.II.79).

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[62] Kermode, p.194

Regan and Oswald are again at their horrible worst in IV.V ("It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eye being out, / To let him live" (9-10)). IV.VI is probably the cruellest and paradoxically the most beautiful scene in Shakespeare.[63] There is the wild moment when Edgar leads his father to the edge of an imaginary cliff top and vividly describes to the blind man the nonexistent drop beneath him. Here the energy of the verse goes into imagining the scene:

> Come on. Sir; here's the place: -stand still.-How fearful
>
> And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
>
> The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
>
> Show scarce so gross as beetles: halfway down
>
> Hangs one that gathers samphire, -dreadful trade!
>
> Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:
>
> The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
>
> Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
>
> Diminishet to her cock, -her cock, a buoy
>
> Almost too small for sight: the murmuring surge,
>
> That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
>
> Cannot be heard so high. – I'll look no more;
>
> Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight

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[63] Kermode, p.195

Topple down headlong. (IV.VI.14-27)

Once more, one feels that this trick, using great poetic resource, is cruel; the scene must look either absurd or deeply shocking.[64] It must be notices that Edgar insists on the "eyes' anguish", on the act of casting down one's eyes, on "the deficient sight", even as he is demonstrating what it is to see. When Edgar takes on his second role as the man who comes to the aid of Gloucester on the beach, he again stresses the vastness of the cliff face: "Do but look up. / Alack, I have no eyes" (59-60).

On the other side, the King, accustomed to being the agent of justice, now finds he is human, and since man's life is now known as cheap as beast's, he concludes that crimes such as lechery should not be punished. But the great speech turns into a disgusted rejection of sexuality. There follows an amazing passage in which the topics of the King's mortal body, the authority of kings, justice, nature, clothes, lust, eyesight, nothingness, and apocalypse are all introduced:

GLOUCESTER: O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world

Shall so wear outto naught.- Dost thou know me?

LEAR: I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me?

No,dothy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love.

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[64] Kermode, p.195

> GLOUCESTER: Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.
>
> LEAR: Are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money
>
> in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light:
>
> Yet you see how this world goes. (4.6.136-143)

In this passage Lear speaks prose and Gloucester verse. The prose is appropriate in the same way as Poor Tom's; this is "matter and impertinency mix'd, / Reason in madness!" (174-75) which also resembles in some ways the Fool's, for Lear is now, with the privilege of madness, playing a fool's role, being "The natural fool of fortune" (191).[65] At one point Lear takes over the talk, curses authority in disgusted verse, and advices Gloucester, "Get thee glass eyes, / And like a scurvy politician, seem / To see the things thou dost not." (170-172)

After learning of Oswald who is in search of Gloucester's "eyeless head" (227), Gloucester ends the scene wishing he could be as mad as the King:

> Better I were distract,
>
> So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
>
> And woes by wrong imaginations lose
>
> The knowledge of themselves. (281-84)

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[65] Kermode, p.196

This coiled sequence is characteristic of Elizabethan period: If I were mad, I should be unaware of my huge sorrows- that is the simple sense, but the idea is complicated: thoughts and grieves are severed, as if one could experience grieves without being aware of them.[66]

In Shakespeare's plays music is often a signal of peace and reconciliation. When Lear sleeps and has been clothed in "fresh garments" (IV.VII.21) music plays. Here music is meant to be restorative and is followed by the scene of Lear and Cordelia which has purity and extraordinary beauty. At the end of this scene, the audience may think that the play will end happily. But there is a cruelty in the writing that echoes the cruelty of the story. Although several versions of Cordelia survive in chronicles and other poems, including the old King Leir, on which Shakespeare drew, no Cordelia except his is murdered. As for Johnson, Cordelia should not be allowed "to perish in a just cause, contrary to the natural ideas of justice, to the hope of the reader, and to the faith of the chronicles".[67]

The King himself, a prisoner with his daughter (V.III), imagines a happy ending too. Lear says that "We two alone will sing like birds in a cage."

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[66] Kermode, p.197
[67] Kermode, p.197

The rest of the scene concerns Edmund's fatal move to kill Cordelia and the King, the love lives of Regan, Goneril, and Edmund, and the emergence of Albany as the man in charge. Edmund dies at his brother's hand, Edgar tells his father's story, Goneril and Regan die. The King enters with his daughter in his arms, thinking she is dead, wondering if she still breathes. The King has a heart attack and later he complains of his eyes (V.III.280), asks for a button to be undone so that he can once more shed an addition. Maybe the most important part is that for the first time in his life the King thanks to a person who undone his button. Within these intensities the words "see" and "look" resound four times in Lear's last ten words:

....

Do you see this? Look on her, -look, her lips,-

Look there, look there!-

The words of Gloucester in fact summarize the end of the story:

As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;

They kill us for their sport. (IV.I.36-37)

C-SYMBOLS, STYLE AND FIGURES

In *King Lear*, there are four main symbols: the first symbol is the letters that the characters constantly circulate between each other. These letters symbolize the betrayal of the characters and the revenge that many of the main characters take against each other.

The second symbol is eyes. Eyes symbolize knowledge. From the very first scene of the play characters revert again and again to the organ of sight. Goneril's first lines describe her father as "dearer than eyesight" (I.I.56). the old King orders Kent "out of (his) sight" (I.I.157), to which the earl replies, "See better, Lear, and let me still remain / The true blank of thine eyes" (I.I.268). These early references to eyesight and vision are supplemented by the more or less metaphoric use of "look", "appear", and "see".

The third symbol is the weather. The weather depicts the turmoil of the characters. When Lear is in self-pity and on the verge of insanity, the weather becomes stormy and threatening. In fact the "storm" scene is the reflection of the inner self. In Shakespeare's plays "storm" symbolizes the confusions, immorality, crime, disobedience, murder and any corruption in society. For example, after King Duncan (in *Macbeth*) and Caesar (in *Julius Caesar*) were killed, there began a storm.

The forth symbol is the flowers. The flowers emphasize the inner peace of the characters. After Lear escapes from Dover, he runs off to a field of flowers. In the flowers, Lear finds peace from the insanity that is taking over his mind and body.

Shakespeare utilizes many aspects of style in his writing. In *King Lear*, he uses many examples of allusions and imagery. For example, irony and humour fill the play. One such example is the fool. A traditional fool is a naïve comic used to entertain the king. Yet, *King Lear*'s fool is intelligent and filled with intellectual observations. In addition, the fool often creates a humorous atmosphere with his satirical remarks toward the king: In *King Lear* the Fool is both royal and bitter. He is the source of wisdom.

In *King Lear*, in the first scene in which he appears before us he is, amid all his nonsense, harping upon the idea that Lear has committed the folly of trusting to the gratitude of the ungrateful, and is reaping the inevitable consequences. As he enters he hands his coxcomb, the symbol of folly, to the King, and to Kent for taking the King's part. His first jingling song,

> Have more than thou showest,
>
> Speak less than thou knowest,
>
> Lend less than thou owest,......

is an expansion of the maxim, "trust nobody", and the King tells him the song is 'nothing'; and the pair have a dialogue on the nature of nothing:

> FOOL: Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for't. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?
>
> LEAR: Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.
>
> FOOL(to Kent): Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool. (1.4.128-33)

"Nothing will come of nothing" had been the words Lear had used to Cordelia; now he is bidden to see how they have become the exact description of his own fortune. Then, the fool calls the king as a fool:

> LEAR: Dost thou call me fool, boy?
>
> FOOL: All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with. (1.4.51-52)

The King has divided his wit in two, like an egg cut in half, and given both sides away, leaving nothing in the middle. He is a 'sheal'd peascod' (200). The Fool is insistent:

> ...-Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two crowns.

...after I have cut the egg i'th'middle, and eat up the meat, the two

crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown I'th'middle, and

gavest away both parts, thou borest thine ass on thy back o'er the dirt:

thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gavest thy golden

one away. (1.4.161-165)

Here, he addresses to the King as 'thou' and 'thy'. When Goneril insults him,

Lear asks, "Does any here know me?" "Lear's shadow", replies the fool: shadow,

being the opposite of substance, is therefor a form of nothing.

After his frantic curse on Goneril (293), . The fool asks Lear a riddle:

"why one's nose stands I'th middle on's face ?" the answer to which is "to

keep one's eyes on either side's nose , that what a cannot smell out, he may

spy into' (I. V. 19-23)Then , he asks again a riddle to the King :' canst tell

how an oyster makes his shell ?'and 'why a snail has a house ? ' the answer

to which is 'to put's head in ; not to give it away to his daughters , and

leave his horns without a case'.

Shakespeare appears to enjoy the use of metaphors and similes in King

Lear. He uses them as often as possible: the fool addresses to Lear as ' a

sheal'd peascod ' after the King separated his kingdom an two. In act I scene

IV, The King addresses Goneril as 'detested kite'. In scene V, the fool makes

a resemblance between a crab and Regan and Goneril " she's as like this as a crab's like an apple", ... "she will taste as like this as a crab does to a crab". In act II , scene II, Kent resembles Oswald to a man made by tailor. As for Kent "a stone-cutter or a painter could not have made him so ill". Oswald couldn't have been a creature created by God. In (II, IV) the Fool resembles "Fortune" to "an arrant whore" as it is open to everybody but not constant. In the same scene , the King says "my rising heart", as he angry with his daughter, Goneril. Then he resembles her to a vulture: "she hath tied sharp-tootht unkindness, like a vulture".

He resembles Regan (II-IV) to disease , and says that : "a desease that's in my flesh, which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil, a plague-store, an embossed carbuncle, in my corrupted blood". (II-IV)

Best examples of metaphor and simile can be seen especially in acts III, and IV. For example, at the beginning of the Act III. scene IV, Lear resembles his daughters to the pelicans, babies of which beat their parent when grow up.

In the scene VII, Gloucester curses the villains when his eyes were taken off, and says that "I'shall see the vengeance overtake such children" referring to Gods. In the next act, Gloucester says his famous words which

are good examples of metaphor: "As flies to wanton boys, are we to the Gods, /-They kill us for their sport." Here, he means that "we are toys in the hands of God"; belief of fate is clear in these words.

In the next scene, after Albany blames Goneril for being a villain, Goneril says Edmund about her husband that "it is the cowish terror of his spirit" , thinking that he is a coward. Albany, then addresses his wife as "tigers, not daughters" referring both Goneril and Regan, and finishes his speech by saying " Humanity must perforce pray on itself, like monsters of the deep." He resembles humanity to monsters here. Later Albany addresses her as "devil". In the next scene when Gentleman mentions about Cordelia, he says " her heavenly eyes", as resembling her looks to the heaven which symbolizes purity and goodness.

In the scene IV, Cordelia worries about her father when she hears Lear to be "as mad as the vext sea". In the next scene, Edgar makes a resemblance between a thief and imagination.

"And yet I know not how conceit may rob

The treasury of life itself

Yealds to the theft" (IV . VI. 42 –44)

Here , a perfect example of metaphor can be seen. Shakespeare means by this resemblance that the imaginative power of mankind may cost one's life, in a way that turning the vivid life in to a dead life by making so much mistakes, as Lear and Gloucester did. Both of them realize their mistakes and in the same scene when Gloucester wants to kiss the King's hand after finding him, Lear answers "let me wipe it first ; it smells of mortality." (IV-VI- 135) Lear, after separating his kingdom between two elder daughters, he caused the spiritual death of himself and his dearest daughter Cordelia. That's why he needs to clean his hands. Through this scene Shakespeare provides us one of his most pathetic scenes: the mad King Lear and the blind Earl of Gloucester's meeting scene. The exchange between these two displaced men can be seen in this dialogue:

> LEAR: Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light.
> Yet you see how the world goes.
> GLOUCESTER: I see it feelingly.
> LEAR: What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. (4.6.143-7)

Lear, having himself travelled from metaphorical blindness into limited sight, tries to share this realization with his old friend.

When Edgar mentions Albany about his meeting with his father he resembles Gloucester's bleeding eyes to the rings of which precious stones lost.

> and in this habit
>
> Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
>
> Their precious stones new lost; (5.3.190-2)

Another technique of style that Shakespeare manipulates in *King Lear* is "apostrophes". To appreciate the dramatic language of *King Lear* is infect to discover how it dislocates ordinary talk while drawing attention to the dislocation. These locations are accepted as great artistic devices.[68] Lear is constantly addressing nonhuman objects as storm, winds, gods, instead of people around him during his period of insanity. In one such case, King Lear calls upon the storm to cast a lightning bolt down from heavens to kill him.

> Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! Rage! Blow!
>
> You cataracts and hurricanes, spout
>
> Till you have drencht out steeples, drown'd the cocks!
>
> You sulphurous and thouth-executing fires,
>
> Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
>
> Singe my white head! And thou, all shaking thunder,

---

[68] Adamson, p.134

Strike flat the thick rotundity o'the world!

Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,

That make ingrateful man! (3.2.1-9)

In the same scene Lear again addresses to the rain with the same psychology:

Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! Spout, rain!

Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:

I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;

I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,

You owe me no subscription: then let fall

Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,

A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man:- (3.2.14-20)

All these metaphors, similes, imageries, symbols and apostrophes are signs of Shakespeare's genius.

CONCLUSION

In this study, Shakespeare's use of language in *King Lear*, the language of which is considered to be the finest example of tragic lyricism in the English language, have been studied. Among all of Shakespeare's works, *King Lear* is the one, which has the most complex narrative structure. It is richly embellished by figurative language.

In *King Lear*, Shakespeare takes us into a world, which is upside-down. We enter a great and terrible feast of misrule where the king gives away his kingdom and becomes a subject, where parents become wards of their children. According to the Elizabethan thought, kingship is a duty that is given by God. Any disobedience to this duty means disobedience to the God. In this play tragedy arises from Lear's disobedience to God.

While setting this tragedy, Shakespeare uses a so attractive language that, the play becomes timeless and universal. He uses figures of language such as imagery, irony, pun, metaphor, simile and hyperbole, in order to be affective. These figures of language are everywhere in all of his plays, such as *Hamlet, Macbeth, Julius Ceaser, Romeo and Juliet, Antony and Cleapatra, Much Ado About Nothing, Marry Wives of Windsor*, and *King Lear*. Every Shakespearean character, weather as a villain or a tragic hero appreciates the language, the

affective power of images, the importance of context in the interpretation of a word, and usefulness of multiple senses.

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