

THE CONTRIBUTION OF ORAL INTERPRETATION TO
THE COMPREHENSION OF SELECTED
SONNETS BY SHAKESPEARE

A THESIS

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INTRODUCTION

The twentieth century oral interpretation scholar Charlotte Lee defines oral interpretation as the art of communication to an audience from the printed page, a work of literary art in its intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic entirety. I accept the definition of Wallace Bacon, who says that oral interpretation of literature is the study of literature through the medium of oral interpretation. As Wallace Stevens says in one of his poems, "The reader becomes the book. . . ." This point of view illustrates the poem as a "felt form" though we often emphasize the difficulties in poetry rather than talk about the poetry itself (as Archibald MacLeish has put it).

Bacon regards literature as an art form to be enjoyed and felt as well as understood. One way that literature can be felt and enjoyed is through the medium of oral interpretation. This approach yields noticeable, favorable results both for the interpreter and for the audience in comprehension, perception, and enjoyment. Many aspects of the study of literature could be considered, but this paper focuses on the phonological, or sound, values and the syntactical values which improve comprehension and thereby

provide enjoyment for the interpreter as he prepares and presents for his audience and for the listeners who experience literature with the interpreter.

The first chapter traces briefly the history of the oral interpretation of literature, beginning in Ancient Greece, through the Roman civilization, medieval Europe and England, Renaissance England, the Age of Reason in England and America, Colonial America, and Twentieth-Century America.

The second chapter analyzes four Shakespearean sonnets, 29, 33, 73, and 116, to reveal the rhetorical effects which their delivery produces. The Renaissance selections contain many phonological values which are analyzed and discussed. Early Modern English poetry reveals some rhetorical and syntactic differences from the twentieth century so that its oral recitation contributes to comprehension for both speaker and listener.

The third chapter evaluates the contribution of oral interpretation to the comprehension of the literature through the analysis of some of Shakespeare's syntactical structures in the same selected sonnets. It supports the fact that oral reading contributes to the increased comprehension of the poet's intended meaning and feeling for the interpreter and audience.

The fourth chapter suggests methods of delivery which convey information to increase the comprehension of literature. It also suggests to teachers of English some methods of incorporating oral interpretation into classroom experiences which are readily adaptable without requiring a teacher to make radical departure from an already existing method of teaching.

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ORAL INTERPRETATION

The study of literature through the medium of oral interpretation yields noticeable, favorable results both for the interpreter and for the audience in comprehension, perception and enjoyment. It has been said that literature produces its full effect when it is read aloud; its full expression exists for the interpreter or reader as well as for the audience for which the interpreter has prepared. The aural-oral skills of human beings have always been important, but the history of oral reading began so long ago that no one can pinpoint its exact beginning. Language is primarily spoken; writing is a representation of that spoken word. Surveying the various facets of oral literature by looking at some of the epochs in its history that lead from ancient Greece to twentieth-century America illustrates the importance of the oral tradition.

ANCIENT GREECE

Ancient Greece boasted the importance of oral interpretation. The skill of reciting, or reading orally, concerned itself with the fifth canon of rhetoric,

pronunciatio, or delivery. The lack of information in rhetoric texts concerning pronunciatio should not be taken to mean that its position in ancient Greece was unimportant. Few Greek rhetoricians would have denied its importance; either they did not write about it, or what they did write has not survived. Greek schools, however, did lay down precepts "about the modulation of the voice for the proper pitch, volume, and emphasis and about pausing and phrasing."¹ Schools also trained students in eye contact, facial expression, proper stance and posture of the body.

Some of the earliest accounts of reciting are found in the writings of Homer. In the Odyssey, Homer describes a minstrel, Demodocus, who entertained at court. Seated upon a chair set with silver and given a goblet of wine, Demodocus received respect, for Odysseus believed that minstrels had been taught their art by a god, perhaps by Apollo himself. After the repast, Demodocus sang, and then the king asked him to sing again, this time about the siege of Troy.²

¹ Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), p. 39.

² Eugene Bahn, "Epochs in the History of Oral Interpretation," in The Communicative Arts and Sciences of Speech, ed. Keith Brooks (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1967), p. 277.

In addition to the minstrels described by Homer are the rhapsodes, who appeared somewhat later and who, for a long time, confined themselves to reciting Homer's Iliad and Odyssey. These rhapsodes, whose recitations, like the minstrels' recitations, held positions of importance in Greek life, are first mentioned by Cleisthenes (650-560 B.C.). They traveled about the country, reciting to crowds and competing at many festivals for prizes. The competition encouraged such rivalry that the law, to prevent each one from choosing only the most effective passages and to insure a logical sequence of events for the audience, required that each rhapsode take up the tale where the other left off.

Plato's writing a description of the rhapsodes suggests their importance in Greek society. Their importance seems a logical assumption since recitation was the only method of publishing literature. Because only the most learned could read, oral tradition necessarily was significant. Plato (?427-347?) writes that a rhapsode wore elaborate clothing and used a long staff of myrtle or laurel as a stage property to make gestures or to emphasize the rhythm. The method of delivery seems to have been a chant; however, Plato makes a distinction between "singers to the Harp" and rhapsodes. When a rhapsode used a lyre he

may have employed it to introduce his presentation or to set the pitch for his voice.

Another body of reciters important to the continuation of the oral tradition of literature were the poets. Hesiod, the second great name in Greek literature, wrote the earliest known didactic poem, Works and Days. Hesiod won the prize when, with staff in hand, he recited his verses at Chalcis. Solon, poet and lawmaker, wrote Elegy on Salamis as propaganda to rouse his countrymen to fight for the possession of Salamis. Theognis (ca. 500 B.C.), a poet, believed that he must share his skill by composing and reciting for others. Even the armies had a use for recitation--Spartan soldiers on campaign competed for prizes by reciting the verses of Tyrtaeus after the evening meal. The prize was an extra portion of meat. The use of oral interpretation with such varied speakers and audiences makes clear the importance of oral interpretation in Greek society. Its purposes ranged from education to entertainment.

Professional storytellers sometimes served dual roles as both educator and entertainer. Herodotus (b. 484 B.C.), the father of history, began his career as a professional storyteller. Like Homer, he used dialogue and divided his tale into episodes, but, unlike Homer, he told his stories

in prose and depicted the lives of real men. He recited at the Festival at Olympia in the fifth century B.C., when lectures were first included, and at other festivals including the Greater Panathenaea in Athens. The first person to give accuracy and a sense of order to a collection of incidents, Herodotus received an award from the Athenian assembly for his achievements after some of his chapters were given in public.

As writing developed, oral interpretation assumed an additional task which still remains in the twentieth century; that is, criticism. Plato recognized the use of oral reading of literature for critical purposes. He wrote his thoughts in dialogue form so that the interpersonal relationships could be retained. Though he had low estimate of rhetoric, Plato concedes, toward the end of the Phaedrus, the possibility of a true art of rhetoric if the speaker makes an effort to learn the truth about his subject and if he makes an effort to learn the truth about his subject and if he makes an effort to fashion his speech to suit the nature of his audience. Socrates (470?-399 B.C.) regularly used dialectic as a successful teaching technique. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) also indicated the value of oral literature. Considering knowledge basically oral, he expressed the idea that knowledge exists fully only when it is enunciated:

Human knowledge for Aristotle exists in the full sense only in the enunciation, either interiorized or exteriorized in language; the saying of something about something, the uttering of a statement, the expression of a judgment. . . .³

The philosopher Theophrastus (ca. 373-ca. 287 B.C.), who lectured to as many as two thousand pupils reported that students of his day would not tolerate a writer's failure to accept criticism and to revise on the basis of it. This "reading" and revision based on the criticism received from the reading implied reading aloud. Reading and reciting were common practices among the great, the learned, and the ordinary citizens. Aristotle's pupil Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) carried a copy of Homer with him on his campaigns; he so admired Euripides that he recited to his guests long passages from the poet's works. To encourage the arts he gave prizes to actors, musicians, and rhapsodes.

Demosthenes (385-322 B.C.), the greatest of the Greek orators, recited literature to strengthen his voice. His training under the actor Satyrus opened his eyes to the possibilities of expression. The actor would ask Demosthenes to recite some verses from Euripides or Sophocles. Then Satyrus repeated them so beautifully, with

³ Walter J. Ong, "Ramus: Method and the Decay of Dialogue," in The Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1958), p. 108.

appropriate tone, inflection, and gesture, that Demosthenes realized the importance of diction and delivery. Later, when asked what he considered to be the most important canon, he replied, "Delivery, delivery, delivery."

The oral tradition was an important means by which authors during the Greek civilization "published" their writings. Booksellers advertised their books by reading them aloud. The ability to recite even helped the captive Athenians after their defeat at Syracuse in 404 B.C. Their captors, eager to hear the dramas of Euripides, made great concessions to anyone who could recite from them; some even earned their freedom by teaching their enemies the verses of the great master. The oral traditions of reading and reciting, firmly implanted in the Greek mind, supplied the means of expressing the spiritual life, the emotional life, and the intellectual life--a testimony to the importance of oral interpretation to Greek civilization.

ROMAN CIVILIZATION

The oral tradition of literature continued to be popular in the Roman civilization. In primitive Italy various forms of oral interpretation were used for religious purposes even before there was any significant influence

from Greece. Greek influences, however, were not long in coming to Italy. Livius Andronicus, a Greek slave brought to Rome in 272 B.C., recited his own compositions, acting his words out in pantomime; a chanter recited his verses when he lost his voice. Later, he achieved additional fame by translating the Odyssey into Latin, thereby bringing a major Greek heritage to Rome.⁴

Cicero appreciated the value of reading aloud to others to obtain criticism. He often used literary selections to illustrate the emotions. When these selections were read or recited, they were akin to interpretation;⁵ he was responsible for developing a style in Latin prose that has become the basis of literary expression in European languages.

In Roman schools pupils read aloud and also recited passages they had memorized from Roman and Greek literature. Quintilian recommended that, because of their high moral quality, Homer and Vergil be the first reading material for youths. Quintilian believed that the teacher might declaim for his students, but held that a youth could gain more by reading great orations. Declamation was popular, and its

⁴ Bahn, p. 279.

⁵ Cicero, De Oratore III, LVII.

two forms, the controversia and suasorie, were both used in schools.

The Augustan Age (beginning with the death of Cicero in 43 B.C. and lasting until 14 A.D.) became the most flourishing age of poetry in Rome's history. Writing and publishing flourished but the Romans still valued recitation. The art of reciting was the poet's major means of publication just as it had been in Greece. In this period, Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Gallus, Tibullus Propertius, Pollio, Mesalla, and Maecenas were the leading figures.⁶ Eloquent speaking declined as a politically significant force when Augustus became emperor, but many Romans wanted to be entertained, inspired, and kept abreast of the literary progress of the age. Poetry recitals and declamations flourished as never before in Rome. One of the most important figures was Asinius Pollio, Vergil's patron, who received acclamations as the first Roman to bring the custom of recitation by authors before an audience. The poet Vergil, while not opposed to reciting, detested its abuse. Too many unqualified poet-reciters seized upon this new custom of reciting in public; with such people, Vergil had little patience. Vergil himself read aloud on occasion, but usually to a select audience. He especially appreciated

⁶ Bahn, p. 280.

the value of reading aloud to an audience to obtain criticism. In fact, in the process of reading aloud, he often stopped on the spot to alter the manuscript.

Another leading poet of this age, Horace (68-8 B.C.), rarely indulged in public recitals and then only on request. Like Vergil, he disliked the artificial delivery of the Sophists which emphasized performance rather than poetic values. Ovid started early on a career of composing and reciting, for he confided that he had scarcely shaved thrice when he first read his verses in public.⁷

Public recitations reached their height of popularity in the Silver Age of Latin Literature (14-180 A.D.). Poets continued to compose and to recite despite meager rewards. Like their Greek predecessors, many Roman poets also read to their friends to obtain criticism. Ovid, Terence, Pliny, and Horace acknowledged that reading aloud was a valid and valuable means of obtaining critical judgment of literature.

MEDIEVAL EUROPE AND ENGLAND

In the Middle Ages, the masses of people still gained knowledge of literature by means of the ear rather than the

⁷ Bahn, p. 280.

eye, by hearing other persons read or recite. Alaric the Goth stormed and sacked the city of Rome in 410 A.C. In 476 A.D. the Empire collapsed and the Middle Ages began. Something new added to European culture--Christianity--exerted profound influence on the oral arts.

The great scholars, now churchmen, preferred Holy Writ to the works of pagan poets. During this period reading aloud became an instrument for the propagation and preservation of religion. For example, St. Augustine (354-430) discussed elements of reading such as phrasing, figures of speech, and the three kinds of Biblical style--the calm, the moderate, and the majestic. He broke from the elaborate pedagogical tradition of the Sophists, who emphasized style, technique, and skill to the exclusion of thought and motive. In fact, he ignored sophistic, giving the counsels of Cicero a new emphasis for the urgent tasks of preaching the Word of God in the fourth book of his De Doctrina Christina. However, Sophistic emphasis on technique still dominated criticism and education. Even Augustine himself could not escape its tradition, for his own style exhibits elements of its tradition.

In spite of this inevitability, the great Christian orators of the fourth century curbed sophistic extravagance and turned it to more noble uses. Augustine strived to do

even more; he "set about recovering for the new generation of Christian orators the true ancient rhetoric."⁸

Augustine, however, does not attack sophistic--he ignores it by telling his students what to do rather than spending time on what not to do. He shows them how to learn from the Canon and the Fathers the rhetoric vital to homiletics, a rhetoric set forth by Cicero.

Other influences of reading aloud became common practices. For example, in monasteries, reading aloud at meals became an established custom. Benedict of Nursia (480-544) defined its uses in his famous Benedictine Rule which became a model for other orders. In 597, when St. Augustine left Rome to take Christianity to England, he introduced the Benedictine Rule there, thus establishing the practice of reading aloud in religious orders. In 680 A.D., the Abbott John went from Rome to England to teach oral reading and singing to the chanters.

Meanwhile in England, secular literature was being delivered by scops and gleemen, as described in Beowulf, Widsith, and Deor's Lament. In 1066, a new kind of minstrel appeared on the English scene. When William the Norman conquered England, the minstrel Taillefer, an excellent

⁸ Charles Sears Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (to 1400): Interpreted From Representative Works (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1959), p. 52.

example, went before the army chanting of Charlemagne, Roland, and Oliver. This elegant French minstrel entertained after meals in the great hall of the castle. Bringing news to town and castle, the minstrel also served as the newspaper of the day. Indeed, he became at times a propagandist, for he sometimes sang praises of those who paid him to do so! One of his major skills, however, remained storytelling--delivering literature orally.

In that delivery of literature orally, the frequent "use of direct address--not to the reader, but to those listeners who are present at the recitation"⁹ is the surest and most valid evidence that it is indeed oral. The medieval poet's works which contain direct address very often also contain repetitive phrases and words such as "introductory phrases, descriptive phrases, expletives, and formulas"¹⁰ as well as religious beginnings and endings which mark such works with the "evidence of the intention of oral delivery."¹¹ Both amateurs and professionals alike practiced storytelling and reading aloud.

⁹ Ruth Crosby, "Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages," Speculum, XI, No. 1 (January, 1936), 102.

¹⁰ Crosby, p. 102.

¹¹ Crosby, p. 109.

That some brilliant storytellers lived during the Middle Ages is made clear by the brilliant stories in Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. Storytelling reached a new level in the fourteenth century in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, which tell much about the storyteller's art. One of the earliest references to delivery in English secular literature is in "The Squire's Tale" when the stranger-knight stands before the king and gives his message:

He with a manly voys seide his message,
After the forme used in his langage,
Withouten vice of silable or of lettre;
And, for his tale sholde seme the bettre,
Accordant to his wordes was his chere,
As techeth art of speche hem that is leere.¹²

Chaucer, in the foregoing lines as well as in many others, reveals himself as one who:

. . . wrote primarily for a listening public, and that in doing so he naturally adopted many of the tricks of style familiar to him through his knowledge of literature intended to be heard.¹³

¹² Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Squire's Tale," Canterbury Tales in The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F. N. Robinson, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1957), Fragment V, (Group F), lines 99-104.

¹³ Ruth Crosby, "Chaucer and the Custom of Oral Delivery," Speculum, XIII (1938), 432.

Reading aloud continued as a means of literary criticism. Likewise, oral reading continued to be a vital part of religious life. For example, Gilbert of Sempringham required the nuns in his order to recite rather than to sing the psalms and hymns.¹⁴ Members of a family often read books that recounted tales of adventure as well as tales of the supernatural, love, or religion with eagerness not found in the theater audiences of that day.

RENAISSANCE ENGLAND

In Renaissance England, the royal court was the scene of the most spectacular displays of recitation, which were a part of the elaborate pageants celebrating a monarch's coronation. On one occasion, at St. Paul's Church in London, two hundred students regaled Anne Boleyn with translations from Latin poetry; persons representing cardinal virtues delivered orations to her at Ludgate Hall.

Not only in the royal court but also in the schools, oral delivery of literature composed an important part of the curriculum; this fact indicates the importance of the oral tradition even in the Renaissance period. The

¹⁴ Bahn, p. 284.

statutes of the Canterbury Cathedral School required teachers to instruct their pupils to speak openly, clearly, and in a fitting manner. Cardinal Wolsey proposed a systematic procedure of study at Ipswich, where the beginners were to speak distinctly and precisely. The upper level classes used Vergil's poetry, which they were to deliver "with due intonation of voice."

In addition, students wrote and presented their own verses, declamations, and themes, so oral interpretation abounded. Rhetoric books contained passages from literature to illustrate rhetorical principles. The pupil learned these principles by memorizing and reciting or by reading such selections aloud. The teacher's task lay in ascertaining that the pupil understood. Both the meaning and the emotions involved were conveyed by the voice and body.¹⁵

Certain principles of good reading were well known in the Renaissance. Stephen Hawer, who propounded one of the earliest theories of reading aloud in England, said the reciter must speak intelligently and pleasantly. The pupil learned characterization through certain rhetorical devices such as the ethopoeia, eidolopoeia, and the prosopopoeia. He learned to use the pause and emphasis effectively, "to pronounce every matter according to the nature of it, . . .

¹⁵ Bahn, p. 286.

chiefly where persons or other things are fained to speake."¹⁶ Sometimes he was advised to recite as if the material were his own.

The Renaissance gentleman was expected to express himself effectively in language and gesture. To do so he turned to the study of rhetoric and literature. Through the oral delivery of that literature, he sought to achieve excellence in word, phrase, voice, and diction. The ability to tell a story marked a Renaissance gentleman. Castiglione demanded that a speaker "set forth so well and without peine not onlie in woordes but in gestures, the thyng a man pourposeth to expresse, that unto the hearers he maye appeere to do before their eyes the thinges he speaketh of."¹⁷

The alert Renaissance man, interested in the Bible, wanted to read it. The King James Version, a translation of the Bible into English, also strengthened the use of the English language since reading aloud aligned itself once more with religion. The schools, too, fostered oral reading of the Bible. This practice strengthened the oral

¹⁶ John Brinsley, Ludus Literarius (London: Thomas Man, 1612), p. 212.

¹⁷ Baldassare Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Sir Thomas Hoby, 1561 (London: David Nutt, 1900), pp. 160-161.

interpretation of literature with the Bible considered also as great literature. School statutes, such as those of Winchester, required that the Bible be read aloud effectively at dinner and supper.

Reading aloud for therapeutic purposes was popular during the Renaissance. It supposedly helped to strengthen the lungs, to improve circulation, to rid the body of "superfluous humors"; and to soothe the troubled mind.¹⁸ Growing activity in oral reading continued into the eighteenth century and the Age of Reason.

AGE OF REASON IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA

During the Age of Reason (1600's-late 1700's), reading out loud gained recognition as an art; elocution and oratory acquired renewed status with the growth of democracy, since men needed more than ever to express themselves clearly. The clergy came under fire for their unsatisfactory preaching and poor reading of the liturgy. The Tatler blamed poor preaching and poor reading for the growth of unrest within the church, saying that if the preachers learned to preach and readers to read "within six months time we should not have a dissenter within a mile of a

¹⁸ Bahn, p. 287.

church in Great Britain."¹⁹ John Henley, for example, turned to elocution to improve rendering the liturgy because he felt it important that it be read with clarity.

The definitions and classifications of reading attempted by many orators reveal the status of oral interpretation during this period. William Cockin defined it as "the art of delivering written language with propriety, force and elegance"; Thomas Sheridan saw it as a reader communicating to his hearer the thought and sentiments of his author. John Walker called it "that system of rules which teaches us to pronounce written composition with justness, energy, variety, and case."²⁰

COLONIAL AMERICA

In Colonial America, English elocutionists exerted a strong influence. The need for a common language, democracy's need for able speakers, the need to train ministers, the interest in education and the arts, all provided a strong impetus for reading skills. In the eighteenth century, training for speaking lay with the colleges and

¹⁹ Sir Richard Steele, The Tatler, No. 66, ed. Lewis Gibbs (London: J. M. Dent., 1953), p. 87.

²⁰ John Walker, The Rhetorical Grammar (London, 1787), p. 29.

private schools. Many eighteenth century trends continued into nineteenth century America. The consensus of opinion during this period was that "a reader must not obscure the literature by obtruding his own personality but should cooperate with the author to create an illusion."²¹

Three major influences on the oral delivery of literature occurred from the Age of Reason to the twentieth century. The first influence was a physician, Dr. James Rush, with his publication of The Philosophy of the Human Voice in 1827. He described in great detail many aspects of voice, as related to its five main constituents: pitch, force, abruptness, quality, and time. Some of his contributions, such as his discussions of stress and the vocal qualities, carried weight well into the twentieth century. Rush particularly favored the "orotund" quality which he regarded as the only voice "appropriate to the master-style of epic and dramatic reading . . . the Church service, and the majesty of Shakespeare and Milton."²² To Rush, elocution meant the use of the voice "for the representation of thought and passion" and included "every form of correct Reading and of Public and Colloquial speech."²³

²¹ Bahn, p. 292.

²² Walker, p. 159.

²³ Walker, p. 86.

A second major influence was Francois Delsarte, a Frenchman who never saw America yet was to have greater popularity here than in France. Delsarte saw man as a trinity composed of life, soul, and mind:

A French teacher of vocal music and opera, Delsarte held that the human soul, governed by the Holy Ghost, required physical activity for its fullest expression. Under this reasoning elocution became a sort of mystical cult of gymnastics.²⁴

Delsarte's disciples were hailed as the "founders of the new elocution." Some of his followers pretended enthusiasm just to be in fashion, but some admitted the weaknesses of Delsarte's fashion.

The third influence was the advent of psychology. Psychological terms such as mental operations, habit, the nervous system, impulse, reflex action and the mind gradually appeared in speech books. Psychology gained momentum in the speech field after William James published The Principles of Psychology (1890) and Psychology--Briefer Course (1892); this momentum has continued well into the twentieth century.

²⁴ Gordon F. Hostettler, "Trends in the History of Rhetoric," The Communicative Arts and Sciences of Speech ed. Keith Brooks (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1967), p. 31.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICA

Actually, it has been only in recent times that emphasis has rested on silent reading, as opposed to oral reading, as a teaching tool. The recent times regard silent reading as the bastion for academic and social arts. However, oral interpretation of literature re-enters the realm of emphasis, though it never really left, as oral-aural skills re-emerge during the twentieth century. While I cannot go as far as Marshall McLuhan to say that the "medium is the message,"²⁵ I see, nevertheless, both speaking and listening as having definite contemporary significance.

Their significance stems from our living in a mobile society and training ourselves to distinguish different dialects. People in twentieth-century America, as a result, have developed a new awareness of the importance of perceptions developed through sight and hearing. The ever-growing influence of the radio, television, and the stereo has enabled Americans to increase perceptions through the medium of sight and sound. The aural-oral environment of

²⁵ Marshall McLuhan, "The Printed Word," in Contemporary Rhetoric: A Conceptual Background with Readings, ed. W. Ross Winterowd (Chicago: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1975), p. 199.

student and teacher, important as always, gives validity to the renewed importance of oral interpretation of literature for enhancing enjoyment, inspiring perception, and improving comprehension for both the interpreter and the audience.

CHAPTER II

THE SENSE OF SOUND

Robert Louis Stevenson's illuminating essay on "Style in Literature" emphasizes the importance of sound in literature and, in turn, points directly to the importance of sound values in the oral production of literature when he writes:

Each phrase in literature is built of sounds, as each phrase in music consists of notes. One sound suggests, echoes, demands, and harmonizes with another; and the art of rightly using these concordances is the final art in literature.¹

The subject of sound value in language has been argued for centuries, mainly by two extreme factions which might be called the "musicalists" and the "dictionary people."² The musicalists hold that each vowel and each consonant contains in itself some musical property, some magical essence, which it distills into the words and lines of a

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson, "Style in Literature," in Brander Matthews, A Study of Versification (Chicago: Houghton-Mifflin, 1911), pp. 100-101.

² Christopher Collins, The Act of Poetry: A Practical Introduction to the Reading of Poems (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 115.

poem. On the other extreme, the dictionary people, most of them rigidly rational, maintain that sound has virtually no effect on our experience of a poem and that a poem consists of word meanings alone.³

The highly mechanized world of the twentieth century has the potential to mold us all into dictionary people; we have greatly reduced our experience of communicating with the expressive human voice. The electronic equipment makes us sophisticated and isolated. Most of us cannot even in privacy recite a poem without a twinge of stage fright. An acute sort of self-consciousness makes us aware of the poem as a feeling, a body-mental-emotional event which we, in our totality, perform. That performance produces a learning situation for the performer and for the audience.

Because both performer and audience benefit from the perceptions gained as a result of oral presentation, I embrace the viewpoint of the musicalists. The sense of sound provides an essential dimension to the experience of reading poetry aloud. One is tempted to call it the sense of hearing, but this is deceptively simple. The "hearing" involved in poetry is a specialized activity because, of

³ Collins, p. 115.

all the sounds audible to the human ear, poetry utters only the sounds of words.

Furthermore, he who reads aloud senses the sounds of words in two distinct parts of his body: his mouth and his ears. Even if he is reading silently, his vocal apparatus regularly responds to the words to some degree, and his mind imagines the sound of his voice pronouncing the syllables. It may be that the image projected is poor, however, so the preferred and the most effective means to this experience is to actually hear the sound of the human voice.

Producing the sound of poetry is an intricate two-part process: the formation of sounds by the mouth, and the recognition of sounds by the ear. When we speak, we actually feel in our mouths the sounds we are making. The vocal instrument, shaped for the appropriate sound, allows air forced out of our lungs up through the adjustable cavity. The result is the simplest sound element--the phoneme.

Sidney Lanier cites the importance of the simple sound element in English verse:

A formal poem is always composed of such sounds
and silences (or of the signs, or of the

conception of such sounds and silences) as can be co-ordinated by the ear.⁴

This chapter uses the literary form of the sonnet to substantiate the contribution that oral interpretation makes to the understanding of literature by analyzing four sonnets by William Shakespeare according to the sound values charted in Table 1. Shakespearean sonnets show great literary value and exhibit notable oral value. The analyses reveal the phonological effects which the delivery of these Renaissance selections produces. Interpreting the early Modern English poetry should reveal differences phonologically and syntactically from the daily speech of the twentieth century, so that its oral recitation contributes to comprehension of that poetry for both speaker (interpreter) and listener (audience).

The phonological entities of the sonnet which contribute significantly to the communication of meaning and emotion are categorized simply in the following table from Christopher Collins' textbook, The Act of Poetry. Let us examine the various aspects of the phonology of poetry for the purpose of showing the contribution that oral interpretation makes toward the understanding of the sonnets for

⁴ Sidney Lanier, The Science of English Verse (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), p. 33.

Table 1

A CHART OF VERBAL SOUND VALUES

Type	Sounds	Traditional English Meaning-Associations
Long vowels (rounded)	<u>o</u> as in "no"; oo as in "ooze"; diphthong ou as in "cow"	Resonance, completion, solemnity
Long vowels (straight)	a as in "day"; e as in "bee"; diphthongs i as in "sigh" and oi as in "joy"	Brightness, speed, unimpeded motion
Short vowels (open)	a as in "alms"; o as in "raw"; o as in "hot"; oo as in "foot"	Depth, hollowness
Short vowels (closed)	a as in "act"; e as in "set"; u as in "up"; i as in "kick"	Sharpness, narrowness, precision (light)
Semi-vowels	w, y	Speed; smoothness
Liquids	l, r	Smoothness, sleepiness; calm, warmth, and brightness; r, if "rolled"; often sug- gests harshness
Nasals	m, n	Sleepiness; inarticu- late sound; hollowness

Table 1--Continued

Type	Sounds	Traditional English Meaning-Associations
Sibilants	s, z	Whispering, hissing; sliding motion
Fricatives	h, f, v, sh, th, ch, j	Impeded motion, fric- tion, rubbing, scraping (soft, gentle, lulling)
Plosives (voiced)	b, d, "hard" g	In general: the dull impact of two objects Specifically: b = a dull collision or explosion d = the striking of something g = the scraping of something
Plosives (unvoiced)	p, t, k, "hard" c	In general: the sharp impact of two objects Specifically: p = small sharp col- lision or explosion t = the striking and piercing of something k and "hard" c = the cutting and piercing of something

both interpreter and audience. We also must consider diction and emotion, meter and rhythm, and literary devices.

DICTION AND EMOTION

The author's diction chosen to convey images and to establish atmosphere and mood is a choice often based on the very sound of the words, intended to produce the desired emotional reaction in the reader. The reader who does not cooperate by imaginative reading fails to attain the pleasure he might have had. He may learn what happens in the narration, but he will miss a fascinating aesthetic experience. Atmosphere and mood can be created in great part by control of sound in words and rhythm in phrases. For example, if consonants appear in difficult combinations, the effect (as always) is governed by the meaning of the words. It may be harsh and contorted or it may be precise, depending upon the context. Colliding consonants can express outrage and disgust or conflict.

Also these combinations of sounds produce forms which are related to the form of music. The music cannot be understood or enjoyed unless it can be heard or at least imagined (exteriorized or interiorized). To read silently without concentrating on the sound value compares to reading

the notes of music from the page without hearing them. Imagine a dancing couple moving silently around the floor as they read the music silently. Something is definitely missing!

One of the elements missing in that scene is the emotional experience of music and poetry through sound. Plato illustrates the impact on the hearer's emotion of sound; not insensitive to art, but at the same time, not sympathetic to it, he proclaims in The Republic that "Poetry waters and nourishes emotions which ought to be desiccated."⁵

Capturing the significance of emotion in literature which in his day was likely to be read orally, Longinus writes:

For the effect of genius is not to persuade the audience but rather to transport them out of themselves. Invariably what inspired wonder casts a spell upon us and is always superior to what is merely convincing and pleasing.⁶

Oral reading captures the emotional elements by providing an interpreter who, rather than explaining, transmits

⁵ Plato, The Republic, tr. Benjamin Jowett, rev. ed. (New York: Cooperative Publication Society, 1901), 606D.

⁶ Longinus, On the Sublime, tr. W. Hamilton Fyfe (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1927), p. 127.

the emotions, or feelings, through voice and bodily movement. In addition to the emotional elements, the choice of good diction is an essential to good poetry and the key to the success of Shakespeare's sonnets.

Probably one who influenced Shakespeare, Aristotle carefully discusses diction, the power of the language, in The Poetics:

The merit of diction is to be clear and not commonplace. The clearest diction is that made up of ordinary words, but it is commonplace. That which employs unfamiliar words is dignified and outside the common usage. By "unfamiliar" I mean a rare word, a metaphor, a lengthening, and anything beyond the ordinary use. . . . We need then a sort of mixture of the two. For the one kind will save the diction from being prosaic and commonplace, the rare word, for example, and the metaphor and the "ornament," whereas the ordinary words give clarity.⁷

He also discusses the use of metaphor as an element of diction in The Rhetoric of Aristotle when he said:

. . . a metaphor must be derived from something beautiful; and the beauty of a word, or its ugliness, as Licymnius in his Art of Rhetoric says, will lie either in the sound or in the sense.⁸

⁷ Aristotle, The Poetics, tr. W. Hamilton Fyfe, p. x.

⁸ Aristotle, The Rhetoric of Aristotle, tr. Lane Cooper (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1932), p. 189.

He contends that metaphors must be drawn from the province of things that are beautiful in sound, or in effect, or to sight or some other of the senses. One word may come closer than another to the thing described; it may set it more distinctly before our eyes.

William Shakespeare, the poet who penned the sonnets analyzed in this chapter, captures the beauty of diction in both the characterization of his plays and in his sonnets. Wallace Bacon analyzes Shakespeare's diction through an analysis of his characters. When he delves into the characters of his plays, he also finds the success of the sonnets. He concludes:

But it is characteristic of Shakespeare's people that, at moments of highest emotion, they are likely to find words enough to express their feelings. Furthermore, Shakespeare's vitality depends in large part upon his success in getting feelings into language.⁹

In our attempt to evaluate the close proximity of Shakespeare to his characters' real emotions which transcend time barrier and human emotion, we discover the vitality which is grasped quickly when either his plays or his poetry is read aloud.

⁹ Wallace Bacon, "Problems in the Interpretation of Shakespeare, The Speech Teacher, XXII, No. 4, 1973, 273.

METER AND RHYTHM

Sidney Lanier points to Shakespeare as a competent user of rhythm for desired effects by explaining that Shakespeare uses rhythm to wrap up his idea with a perfect fit:

. . . Shakspeare, just like the nursery rhymmer, does not hesitate at a rhythmic intention which requires a rest to be supplied in the body of the line, while, far in advance of the nursery-rhymmer, he uses this device with special purpose, where he desires that the rhythmic dress of his idea should not flap about its body but clothe it with absolute fitness.¹⁰

Aristotle discusses meter in The Poetics; he summarizes by saying while both "the iambic and the trochaic tetrameter are lively, the latter suits dancing and the former suits real life."¹¹ Aristotle considers the use of the heroic to be dignified. However, he says it lacks "the harmony of ordinary conversation; the iambic is the language of the many, wherefore of all metres it is most used in common speech. . . ."¹² Since it is the language of many, iambic

¹⁰ Lanier, p. 194.

¹¹ Aristotle, The Poetics, XXIV, 9-17.

¹² Aristotle, The Art of Rhetoric, p. 383.

pentameter is the meter most often used by Shakespeare. Oral reading heightens the experience of the ordinary language while using the language and power of the poet to lift the experience out of the ordinary.

Ralph Waldo Emerson also wrote about the correlation of Shakespeare's verse and the thought which is understood by reading for sense because "the thought constructs the tune, so that reading for the sense will best bring out the rhythm."¹³ Perhaps this correlation appears basic since all nature is rhythmic. The tides rise and fall; day follows night; and the seasons recur one after the other, year after year. Human nature is rhythmic also; and emotion, the subject matter of poetry already discussed, expresses itself rhythmically.

Claes Schaar explains the meter of the sonnets:

The author of the Sonnets combines stressed and unstressed syllables, rising and falling rhythms so as to make his verse . . . sensitive and supple. Versification and other aspects of sound-pattern contribute to the expressive meanings of the poem.¹⁴

¹³ Brander Matthews, A Study of Versification (Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911), p. 41.

¹⁴ Claes Schaar, An Elizabethan Sonnet Problem: Shakespeare's Sonnets, Daniel's Delia, and their Literary Background (Copenhagen: Elmar Munksgaard, 1970), p. 152.

LITERARY DEVICES

Literary devices, in addition to diction, meter, and rhythm, by their very nature, serve as communicating devices. The repeated sounds may appear in any of three forms: if the sound is a vowel, the device is usually called assonance; if it is a repetition of consonants, especially at the beginning of words, it is called alliteration; and if it is a repetition of a whole syllable, that is, a combination of a vowel(s) and consonant(s), it is called internal rhyme.

A poet may repeat sounds merely to

- 1) create an affective unifying texture,
- 2) help develop an idea with which it is associated, like a motif in music
- 3) imitate directly the action or sound it describes:

imitate actual auditory sounds, termed onomatopoeic or echoic words.¹⁵

This repetition offers one of the most pleasant experiences of reading poetry aloud. In fact, not enunciating these repeated sounds leaves the reader with an incomplete experience. The feeling is eliminated; hence, part of the experience is missing. He should read with his whole being. A

¹⁵ Collins, p. 116.

poem is not merely a calculated one-level expression of a writer. It calls upon the experience of the reader to formulate the visions which transcend the commonplace and ordinary. The poem transports us to other countries and ages and transmits an experience which alters and magnifies the reader's understanding of a situation.

Four sonnets of Shakespeare, with a brief paraphrase of each sonnet, allow for ample analysis of sound values and for meaning communicated by interpreting the sonnets orally; this experience relates organically to the sense of the sonnet. The reader may refer to the sonnets in the appendices.

SONNET 29 PARAPHRASE

When I am not doing well financially and I don't seem to have any friends, I am all alone as I mourn my situation. I blame heaven in my mourning, but that does me no good.

I wish that I was like a person who is optimistic and handsome with many friends. I envy one man's artistic ability and another man's admirable flexibility.

When I feel so despondent, I almost despise myself. In the midst of this depression, I suddenly think about you and then my mood quickly changes so that it resembles a

lark flying upward from the earth to sing songs at the gate of heaven.

In fact, when I remember your love, I have such wealth that I would not change my place for a king's place.

SONNET 29 EXPLANATION

The sincerity shines through this famous sonnet. What we know about Shakespeare and his sonnets suggests that the emotions expressed were his own emotions. Whether or not this is true is not especially important to the thesis of this paper. The sonnet appears to be extremely revealing, psychologically and autobiographically. Ben Jonson describes Shakespeare as, above all, "of an open and free nature." We learn about Shakespeare's resentment at the circumstances of his life; these years, 1592 and 1593, were a period of extreme discouragement, with the closing of the theaters making it difficult for him to earn a livelihood--a period of hazardous existence. And in 1592 there came, in addition to the disgrace of fortune, the disgrace in "men's eyes" of Robert Greene's deathbed attack on him in print, which Shakespeare was much upset by and much resented. It would be likely, psychologically, in moods of depression, that he found most dissatisfaction in what gave him most

dissatisfaction in what gave him most pleasure: his acting. It is probable that Shakespeare is referring to the fortunate young Earl of Southampton when he thinks "on thee."

The sonnets certify that he was not always discouraged and that the intensity of his discouragement, when it existed, was not constant. Usually the friendship between Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton is regarded as compensation for the ills the poet endured. The best expression of the compensatory aspect of the friendship is the twenty-ninth sonnet. In it the unestablished writer, finding himself unfavored by Fortune and without the hoped-for approval of his fellow men, wishes he were more like the friend--that he had more cause for hope, were more handsome, had more friends, and that he had this man's craftsmanship and that man's range. But when he is least contented by what he most enjoys (that is, his work), the recollection of the friend takes him out of himself, and he is at ease.¹⁶

SONNET 29 PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The vowels reveal the depth and hollowness which the poet transmits through the first lines of Sonnet 29: the

¹⁶ Edward Hubler, The Sense of Shakespeare's Sonnets (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1952), pp. 121-122.

"in disgrace," or "in fortune" coupled with the next line's vowels: all, alone, beweep, outcast state, all transmit the long rounded sounds that express solemnity. The lines which follow are dominated with the long and open sounds which suggest solemnity and hollowness.

The consonants likewise affect the intended mood of the sonnet. The impeded, frustrating motion of disgrace (the striking of the nerve of discord) coupled with the internal scraping g in "disgrace" communicates the compounded frustration of the moment when contemplating his difficult situation. The colliding consonants found in the difficult combination of sounds in outcast state found internally in "outcast" followed immediately by the initial sibilant s in "state" communicates the difficulty of the situation by the difficulty of the mouth pronouncing those words in order. Interruption must take place in the mouth; interruption has taken place in the life of the poet. The alliteration particularly effective in "this man's art and that man's scope" and "these thoughts" in line 9 unifies the totality of the depression which the poet experiences. The sharp contrast of the initial consonant of "haply" as the first word in line 10 reveals his change in thought which is completely overwhelming.

The alliteration following in the same line "I think on thee, and then my state" communicates the totality of

the change of mood. The liquid l's of the following line "Like to the lark" complete the smoothness or tranquility of the sudden thought. The long vowels of the same line "like to the lark at break of day arising" transmit the light and happy feeling which he aptly compares to the lark, symbol of a carefree adventure. The alliteration of the line "from sudden earth sings hymns at heaven's s gate" connects the depths of despair with the tranquility of heaven. The long vowels in line 13 "for thy sweet love remembered" colors the bright, gay emotion that the poet immediately feels when remembering the love of that friend. The short vowels are used effectively to reflect that change: "That then I score to change my state with kings."

SONNET 33 PARAPHRASE

I have often seen a glorious morning light up the hills, bathe the green meadows in golden sunshine, and play tricks with the stream's color.

Then, low clouds float across the sun's face, hiding it from the world as it moves unseen to the west.

In that same way, one morning, my sun shone magnificently; however, it was only an hour.

A cloud concealed him, but my love did not lessen.
 When the sun in heaven is overcast, so may be the suns
 beneath him.

SONNET 33 EXPLANATION

This sonnet announces the first cloud over the friendship, gently enough. The Elizabethans often called the hills of the West Country or the Penines, mountains. We need not go further than the Cotswolds for the mountaintops that Shakespeare had often seen touched with the morning sun; they extend a sickle-shaped high ridge to the south and west of Stratford, beyond the meadows and streams that also figure in the picture. This cloud, like everything else, Shakespeare puts to good use for his patron's amusement. "Disgraced" in the sonnets means lowered in estimation, as when the clouds "disgrace" the sun.¹⁷

SONNET 33 PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Shakespeare interweaves the sense of solemnity and completion that the long rounded vowels give with the precision of light, a characteristic expressed through the

¹⁷ Hubler, p. 114.

short closed vowels. Notice the delicate combination of sounds in the first two verses:

Full mānŷ ā glōrīōŷ mōrning have ī sēēn
Flāttēr thē mōuntāin-tōps with sōverēign ēye

A beautiful, majestic picture completes the quatrain. In lines 3 and 4, the morning awakens the green meadows and decorates the colorless stream. The interwoven vowel sounds combine again to communicate the dual message the dawn brings: the gradual presence of light and the quiet solemnity that is at its best just at that moment. Each line of the quatrain begins with a short vowel sound to shatter the dark with sunlight, but each line ends with a long rounded sound to anchor the quiet solemn moment. Look at the balance in lines 3 and 4:

Kīssing wīth gōldēn fāce thē mēādōws grēēn,
Gīldīng pālē strēāms wīth hēāvenly ālchēmŷ

The second quatrain contains more short closed vowels, particularly the first sentence of the quatrain which changes the scene by introducing clouds that hide the face of the sun. The predominance of short vowels at the beginning of the line with long rounded vowels at the end of line 5 shows a change, but glide the clouds along at the end of the sentence to effect the suggestion of floating

clouds that ride in front of the bright sun. "Stealing unseen to west" suggests the unimpeded motion and speed with which the sun appears to be traveling. Shakespeare uses this phrase at the beginning of the line, with its long straight vowels which can easily effect that effortlessness.

The third quatrain begins with long straight vowel sounds in "Even so my" with the long rounded vowel in "so" combining to signal another change. The most outstanding signal appears in line 11 with a conglomerate of short vowels to help the consonants communicate the abruptness of the line: "But out, alack! The couplet utilizes the short closed vowels at the beginning of both lines: "Yet him for this" and "Suns of the world."

The consonants particularly make this sonnet a pleasant experience. Many of the dominant words in the first quatrain use the nasal sounds, m and n for sleepiness and gentleness:

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
 Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye.
 Kissing with golden face the meadow green
 Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.

He also makes excellent use of the hissing sibilants to suggest the whispering that we sometimes feel we should do at dawn so that we will not disturb people or nature. Some of

his whispering words are: "seenu," "tops with sovereign eye," "Kissing meadows green," "Gilding pale streams," "basest clouds to ride," "on hisi celestial," "hisi visage hide," "Stealing unseen with thisi disgrace," "Even so my sun . . . did shine" (this /sh/ will be discussed with fricatives, although it suggests a similar idea), and "Suns of thisi world may stain when heaven's sun staineth."

In general, the voiced plosives, /b/, /d/ and hard /g/, suggest the dull impact of two objects. Shakespeare makes special use of the /g/ in the first quatrain by using such words as glorious, golden, green, and gilding. None of these words dominate the quatrain; they modify the name words. The "hard" /g/ connotes a scraping which, for our purposes, amplifies the gradual change taking place in the heavens. There is change for a fact, but the overriding idea is the solemnity of the hour.

The fricatives maintain a dominant position in the sonnet. The initial sound in lines one and two, the /f/ in "full" and "flatter" lull us quietly into the breaking of day. Other key words using fricatives that suggest the gentle lulling event when read in context are "have," "visage," "hide," and "shine."

The controlling sounds are repeated through alliteration. We enjoy the consonant /g/ sound particularly in

line 3 and the initial sound of line 4: "Kissing with golden face the meadows green, / Gilding pale streams." The sibilant /s/ is repeated in many positions--initially, medially, and finally. One example of his alliterative use is line 14, which leaves the audience in quiet repose: "Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth."

SONNET 73 PARAPHRASE

What you see in me can be compared to autumn, the time of year when a few yellow leaves, or perhaps no leaves, hang on the limbs of the trees and shake as the cold wind blows them like empty choirs in which the birds once sang.

What you see in me can also be compared to twilight, the time of day that sunset creates; night, the image of death, extinguishes it gradually.

What you see in me can also be compared to glowing embers, the image of death. The ashes of my youth lay dying, consumed by the very matter that fed it and gave it life.

Seeing this phenomenon increases your love and makes you value that with which you must soon part.

SONNET 73 EXPLANATION

This extremely beautiful and much admired sonnet offers no real difficulties. "Bare, ruined choirs" brings to the eye the roofless shells of monastic churches which stood out sharply to anyone traveling around England in the latter part of the sixteenth century. This seems to be a winter sonnet--1592 and 1593.

Its fourteen lines are divided into the usual three quatrains and a concluding couplet. In the first quatrain, the poet compares himself to autumn leaves; in the second quatrain to twilight; and in the third, to dying embers (with a pause after each, the greatest pause coming after the third quatrain). From the gathering together of these images, and the poet's application of them to himself, there emerges the idea of approaching death. Then comes the couplet directed to the friend to whom the poem is addressed and states the idea to be derived from the situation set forth in the quatrains.¹⁸

SONNET 73 PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The vowel sounds in Sonnet 73 produce a single, controlling impression. The predominance of short vowel sounds

¹⁸ Hubler, p. 18.

project a hollow, empty tone throughout the entire sonnet. The words are mostly short and clipped with very little resonance or staying power. Line 2 is an excellent example of choppy, tense diction which communicates a devoid, somewhat cold exterior: "When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang." The use of short vowels increases as the poem progresses so that line 12 has only two long vowels in the entire line. Notice again the predominance of the short vowel sounds: "Consumed with that which it was nourished by." These short words also connote lack of warmth.

The couplet employs the vowels for an interesting effect. The single optimistic line is the first line of the couplet; it is also the single line which contains an equal number of long vowels as short vowels. The predominance of short vowels returns in line 14 which also voices the resignation of a sad, but inevitable event--the parting of two lovers or friends:

This thōu perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong
To love that well which thōu must leave ere long.

Likewise, the consonants unify to produce the effect of this sonnet through the predominate utilization of the plosives and fricatives. The voiced plosives send the sensation of dull impact of two objects; the unvoiced plosives communicate the sharp impact of two objects.

Specifically, the /p/ suggests a small sharp collision; the /t/ suggests the striking or piercing of something (the lover's heart?); the /k/ connotes the cutting or piercing of something. Line 4 shows beautiful contrast "Bare ruined (here the /r/ feels harsh in its environment) choirs" project a hopeless condition which contrasts the lulling sounds of the initial consonants coupled with the long straight vowel sounds; Hence "where late the sweet birds sang."

One of the best lines to demonstrate the effect of the plosive is line 7: "Which by and by black night doth take away." Line 11 contains the colliding consonant effect which jumps off the page when verbalized because it is the most important word in the sentence and is surrounded by short words that contain short vowels. Three of the words begin with a vowel, a factor which completes a combination to maximize the strength and impact of the leading word, "death-bed." Consonants colliding in the mouth communicates sensually harshness and discord.

The neglect of alliteration certainly enhances the overall emotion of the sonnet. Alliteration is found in line 7, but repetition of the /b/ sounds counters the pleasure of repeated sounds:

Which by and by black night doth take away.

The alliteration found in line 14 registers contrasting emotions by the use of the lulling /l/, the smooth semi-vowels /w/ and /wh/ with the friction of the fricative /th/ to communicate the hollow, sad emotion:

To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

This sonnet disturbs the equilibrium through the use of uncomfortable sounds and sound combinations. Shakespeare inserted just enough pleasing sounds to create an additional dissatisfaction with the conflict of sound ringing in our ears and traveling through our bodies.

SONNET 116 PARAPHRASE

I will not admit the fact that obstructions can mar a marriage of like minds. What is called love is really not love at all if it changes because it meets a change or attempts to help the agent that seeks to eliminate that love.

Of course not! It is a fixed beacon that looks on storms and is not shaken; it is the easily seen star to every voyaging ship, whose altitude can be measured, but whose value cannot.

Love is not the joke of Time, even though rosy lips and cheeks of youth change because of Time. Love, however,

does not change with a few brief hours or weeks, but continues on to eternity.

If I am proved to be wrong, I've never written anything and no man ever loved anyone.

SONNET 116 EXPLANATION

Shakespeare comes clear with this famous sonnet after the note of dubiety and apology in the sonnets preceding this one. All the same, in spite of its confession of faith, or because of it, it sounds like a farewell speech. Lines 1 and 2 reflect the marriage-service in the Prayer Book.

In general the couplet is used expertly when its idea follows in logical sequence from the thematic structure of what has gone before, or when its function is a clear and positive summary or application of the preceding matter. Sonnet 116 accomplishes this task.¹⁹

SONNET 116 PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Sonnet 116 sports an overflow of short vowel sounds, particularly the closed vowel sound. The decisiveness of

¹⁹ Hubler, p. 26.

the poem is communicated by these emphatic, precise sounds. The intent of the poet sustains itself throughout the poem by the sharp, clipped tones of the short open vowel. The consistency of the vowel sounds reflects the singular theme and overshadows other vowel sounds. Its dominance controls and unifies the poem. For instance, line 2 contains no short vowel sounds while line 3, which is a continuation in thought of line 2, contains only two long vowel sounds.

Sometimes when Shakespeare does use long vowels, he intends emphasis through that contrasting sound. Line 1 ends in two long vowels, one rounded and one straight, to point up the essential ingredient of this ideal love--like-mindedness. Again in line 5, "Oh no!" contains the long rounded vowel sound to underscore the interjection. The use of the word "doom" in line 12 also marks a contrast to the beautiful, unchanging picture of the love relationship of true minds. Line 9 boasts a number of long vowels:

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks

The enigma of the statement reflects the changing body in contrast to the unchanging mind and emotion. The phrase "though rosy lips and cheeks" also contrasts with the following line which contains all short vowels.

The consonant nasals are used effectively in line 1 to blend the line in the harmony that he describes in the sonnet. Three /m/ words lull us into the second line.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds / Admits
impediments

Love is the theme; therefore, the calm smoothness of the /l/ sound adds to the establishment of the tone; the /r/ sound is also used: "remover to remove" (line 4), and "rosy lips" (line 9).

Shakespeare's use of alliteration reflects the noticeable feature of consonantal utilization. Often, he is repeating the root word or the same word to please the ear and tickle the mind. Some examples:

love is not love / which alters when it alteration
finds / Or bends with the remover to remove.

The /m/ sound unifies the sound of the first line and immediately attracts attention to the sonnet. Actually, it's just fun to say--or hear: "Let me not to the marriage of true minds." Two additional /m/ sounds in line 2 contribute to the sensation, though they could not be considered alliterative since they do not appear in the initial position: "Admit impediments." Line 10 interweaves the sibilant /s/ with the unvoiced plosive /k/ which is

alliterated: "sickle's compass come." The alliteration of the hard /k/ sound compounds the impact of such an awesome phenomenon: the sickle of Time that wields its influence on man.

The voiced plosives are subservient to the other sounds already described, but they are present. The /b/ sound explodes softly once or twice in lines 10-13:

Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:
If this be error . . .

The gentle undercurrent can be heard, but it is very subtle: the undercurrent can be called a dull collision or explosion.

It is possible, of course, to gather much of this information if the interpreter or audience is accustomed to listening and sensing the intended mood and meaning without really being able to articulate any of the above reasons. However, when the interpreter can use the sound devices effectively to analyze poetry, he has enhanced and communicated the poetry.

The phonological analysis of these sonnets point out the importance of sound to the sense of the sonnet. Every poem has not only a structure of sounds, but also a syntactic structure. In fact, the sound structure in poetry can be so dominant in its rhyme and rhythm that the thought

groupings give way to the controlling sound values. This dominance can inhibit understanding, particularly when an inexperienced reader stresses the meter by strongly emphasizing the stressed foot or stops at the end of every line to accentuate the rhyme. In doing so, he ignores the thought and concentrates on the rhyme and rhythm--the sound.

Certainly the rhythm and rhyme of a poem are significant; they hold together and interrelate the lines so that there is a certain unity to a poem. Unfortunately, many times, the meter and rhyme are the primary foci for the study that is called poetry interpretation. When a sterile, unfeeling dissection is perfunctorily performed on a poem to the exclusion of "sensing" the poem and feeling a poem's sound through its oral production, much of that poem's meaning and enjoyment have been ruefully neglected. Using sound devices effectively enhances the experience of literature rather than inhibiting it.

Complex syntactic structures unfamiliar to the reader can also inhibit his comprehension and enjoyment. An analysis of the syntactic structures of the same four Shakespearean sonnets that are analyzed in this chapter determine the effect that oral interpretation can have on the understanding and enjoyment of these sonnets. Chapter III is devoted to that task.

CHAPTER III

THE SENSE OF SYNTAX

Gary Esolen explains how oral interpretation aids the understanding of syntax for both interpreter and audience to illuminate the meaning of the literature read. He points out that reading aloud isolates the areas where a person may be confused:

The process of oral reading will tend to isolate those things you're likely to see or to sense points where there is missed syntax, where someone simply is confused about the way a sentence reads.¹

Missed or misunderstood syntax results in confusion about the meaning of a sentence. Discussing the difficulties in comprehending literature when various aspects of grammar are not understood, Aristotle cites important characteristics of grammar:

It is a general rule that a written composition should be easy to read and therefore easy to deliver. This cannot be so where there are many connecting words or clauses, or where punctuation is hard, as in the writings of Heracleitus. To

¹ Gary Esolen, "Advantages of the Oral Study of Literature," Oral English, 1, No. 3, Summer, 1972, 3.

punctuate Heracleitus is no easy task, because we often cannot tell whether a particular word belongs to what precedes or what follows it.²

Language is thought, but for the thought to be conveyed, the reader (as an interpreter or as his own audience) must understand the surface structure. Deep structure, the poet's intent, remains unchanged regardless of the mode of expression--Early Modern English or Late Modern English. The difficulty arises when the reader (interpreter) or audience has acquired a set of grammatical structures which differ from the poet's grammatical structures.

Where there are many definitions of grammar, we can rely on Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle's definition:

. . . we use the term "grammar" to refer both to the system of rules represented in the mind of the speaker-hearer, a system which is normally acquired in early childhood and used in the production and interpretation of utterances, and to the theory that the linguist constructs as a hypothesis concerning the actual internalized grammar of the speaker-hearer. No confusion should result from this standard usage if the distinction is kept in mind.³

² Aristotle, Rhetoric and Poetics, Trans. W. Rhys Roberts and Ingram Bywater (New York: The Modern Library, 1954), p. 176.

³ Noam Chomsky and Morris Halle, The Sound Pattern of English (Evanston: Harper and Row Publ., 1963), p. 3.

Each of us has internalized some system of Late Modern English which differs, considerably in some instances, from the Early Modern English of Shakespeare's England. This fact is significant when we consider the process of the oral interpretation of literature of that period. The interpreter reads, or signals, meaning to his audience or hearers. If syntax is confusing for either reader or listener, so will be the meaning. Chomsky and Halle describe the phenomenon:

The speaker produces a signal with a certain intended meaning; the hearer receives a signal and attempts to determine what was said and what was intended. The performance of the speaker or hearer is a complex matter that involves many factors. One fundamental factor involved in the speaker-hearer's performance is his knowledge of the grammar that determines an intrinsic connection of sound and meaning for each sentence.⁴

Oral interpretation illuminates the meaning of literature by aiding the understanding of its syntax. To interpret literature aloud calls on the interpreter to transcribe the printed word to intelligible language which is understood when it is heard. The colloquial language employed in Shakespeare's England makes this process quite difficult in twentieth-century America. The difficulty is eased when

⁴ Chomsky and Halle, p. 3.

the poetry is placed in the medium which employs aural sense as well as visual sense.

The printed line of poetry projects itself quite differently from the same line when it is spoken. Its visual projection displays gaps between each word; therefore, stops or pauses are indicated. As the syntax of a living language demands, there are no gaps between every word spoken, but rather a continuum of speech that stops at logical breathing points. The oral interpreter must not consider the visual projection as the primary focus of the interpretation. The thought groupings, or the phrases, must be coordinated with the breathing pauses.

The syntax employed by Shakespeare, difficult for twentieth century readers, can be relieved by interpreting orally that literature. In general, the literary English of Shakespeare's time was in a more flexible state, closer to the looseness and freedom of colloquial speech than is our written, formal literature.⁵ Its oral nature, then quite naturally, yields itself to oral interpretation.

Shakespeare's grammatical structures distinguish themselves from ordinary or normal twentieth-century writing.

⁵ Raymond Macdonald Alden, A Shakespeare Handbook (New York: F. S. Crofts and Co., 1935), p. 96.

Claes Schaar considers the complexity of Shakespeare's syntax when he observes:

. . . about half of these poems [sonnets] present a comparatively high degree of complexity . . . in which the concentrated interweaving of clauses reflects a corresponding complexity of thought.⁶

One way Shakespeare's verse distinguishes itself from ordinary or normal twentieth-century language is his effective utilization of pause. Raymond Alden discusses the dependence that Shakespeare's verse exhibits on phrasing through the utilization of lesser and greater pauses:

. . . the structure of Shakespeare's verse is dependent upon phrasing; that is, the grouping of syllables and words, according to their grammatical significance by means of lesser and greater pauses such as are normal in our speech.⁷

Alden also affirms the complexity of Shakespeare's syntactic organization. His phrasing or thought groupings are often non-linear. Frequently, readers attempt to read linearly. The result is too often frustration and confusion because Shakespeare did not always conclude his

⁶ Claes Schaar, An Elizabethan Sonnet Problem: Shakespeare's Sonnets, Daniel's Delia, and their Literary Background (Copenhagen: Elmar Munksgaard, 1960), p. 27.

⁷ Alden, p. 86.

thought grouping at the conclusion of the line held to a rhyming or meter pattern; rather he extended it to the following line or lines.

Also, readers often read linearly when Shakespeare has concluded a thought in the middle of a line. The temptation to ignore a change of thought, mood, or scene, if it occurs internally, plagues many readers. A Shakespearean sonnet can be divided into three quatrains and a concluding couplet. Often the thought changes between the quatrains; a pause can communicate that change. Listening to someone read with effective use of pause contributes significantly to one's understanding of the literature.

However, it must be acknowledged that understanding syntax will not always make the works of Shakespeare clear and lucid. Other difficulties exist. The vocabulary problem rears its ugly, ever-present head. Some words used may not be understood because of fluctuating semantics. The vocabulary can be understood more readily when heard in context accentuated by tone and mood revealed through vocal inflections and facial expressions.

Differences in spelling of Early Modern writers also may pose problems for the silent reader. Correct oral production alleviates that problem for the audience. A listener has little concern for the spelling of the word he

just heard; however, an ordinary word contracted or spelled differently can evoke confusion and bewilderment to the silent reader who isn't hearing the word. The writer certainly recognizes the barriers that semantics and spelling can erect, but these barriers will not be considered in this paper. This chapter considers only the advantages of oral interpretation to the syntactic understanding of four of Shakespeare's sonnets.

Although Shakespeare definitely belongs in the Modern English period, most beginning readers of Shakespeare hasten to mention differences whether they can actually verbalize them or just respond intuitively, "We don't talk like that." Shakespeare's writing is a transition from Middle English to Modern English.

Acknowledgment of differences in syntax from Shakespeare's usage to Late Modern usage is acknowledgment of one of the difficulties which readers of Shakespeare experience as they interpret him. George Dillon suggests in Language Processing and the Reading of Literature that "consciousness of clause and sentence structure should give way to other units or modes of perception."⁸ However, if a

⁸ George L. Dillon, Language Processing and the Reading of Literature: Toward a Model of Comprehension (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1977), p. 114.

person is reading unfamiliar transformations, he may be unable to "give way" to other methods of perception.

The following analyses of Shakespeare's syntax in Sonnets 29, 33, 73, and 116 support the theory that hearing the literature allows the interpreter and his audience to experience the literature and understand it; enjoyment of the literature likewise increases.

SONNET 29

The internal punctuation in line 1 suggests a pause because the prepositional phrases following are inverted from the natural order. (Some translations do not have a comma following "When.") Lines 2 and 3 contain no internal punctuation, so the flow of sound and thought continue uninterrupted.

A pause between lines 4 and 5 will indicate a new thought grouping--his wishes and desires that reflect comparison and covetousness of others. The difficult construction of line 5 yields difficulty in understanding. The objective case "me" followed by "like to" instead of the twentieth-century modern construction that uses "that" to introduce the dependent clause "wishing that I was like one. . . ."

The prepositional phrase "with friends possessed" in line 6 uses a verb as an adjective complicated by its position following the noun that it modifies rather than preceding it. Modern construction would probably use "possessed" as a verb in a dependent clause, such as "like the one who possesses many friends."

In line 9, the position of the reflexive pronoun "myself" in "Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising" is difficult to understand because Late Modern usage would reflexize, but place the reflexive at the end of the sentence: "I almost despise myself." "Myself" in an awkward sentence position can be communicated effectively by saying the word "myself" with the same emphasis one would give the noun in the sentence with brief pauses before and after the word. Its reference is then communicated, and the audience has time to register the fact that the poet almost despises himself. Line 9 can also have extensive use of pause. A pause following the word "yet" signals a change. "Yet" begins a new quatrain and, likewise, a new thought.

In line 10, the word "haply" is actually a contraction of the word "happily." Vocal tone could be lighter to indicate a happier, lighter state of mind. The purpose of the word "haply" is well served: to change the mood and

still fulfill the metrical requirements. "Happily" would not fit the slot. Even if "haply" connotes "by chance" Shakespeare still fulfills his purpose by the use of the word. However, such adverbs are generally placed in close proximity to the word modifier rather than serving as the lead word; vocal tone color, facial expression and general body tonus use this word early in the sentence to indicate a drastic change of attitude.

The use of "on" as a preposition in line 10, "on thee" probably is not the same usage as Modern English. Modern English would probably use "about thee."

The frequent usage of the singular second person "thee" erects an immediate barrier that an oral reader can hurdle simply by indicating with his/her eyes where the imaginary person to whom he addresses himself is standing. Without a word, the reader's focused eyes can be placed so that the audience "sees" the person or the reader may choose to make a direct confrontation with the audience as the recipient of his accolades.

"Like to the lark at break of day arising" places several prepositional phrases between the noun "my state" from its verb "sings." Modern transformations place noun and verb in close proximity. Enjambement occurs in line 12 indicating a pause. The thought continues from line 11

without pause and takes a brief pause in the middle of line 12.

The inverse word order in line 13 places the prepositional phrase first. The use of the preposition "for" in twentieth-century syntax would probably substitute "when." Shakespeare omits the progressive "is" in the dependent clause. Late Modern usage might read, "When your sweet love is remembered." The use of pause places the phrases together so that the last two lines read: For thy sweet love remembered / such wealth brings // That then / I scorn to change my state / with kings. (The single bar (/) indicates brief pause; the double bar (//) indicates about twice as long a pause; the double cross (#) indicates much longer pause.)

SONNET 33

Sonnet 33 begins with inverse word order on line 1, "Full many a glorious morning have I seen." The word order for most Late Modern English places the noun and its modifiers first with the verb and its components last. In this word order the pronoun subject divides the verb from its auxiliary. Line 1 contains the main sentence or "kernel

sentence."⁹ "Morning" is actually the direct object of the verb "have seen"; it is the subject of the embedded sentence "Morning is full and glorious." If the sentence were rephrased in Late Modern usage it would read "I have seen a very full, glorious morning flatter the mountain-tops with a sovereign eye."

Lines 1 and 2 should be read as one continuous flow of sound because both lines express one primary thought; the embedded thoughts subordinate the ideas related to the morning.

The phrase "the meadows green" places the adjective "green" following the noun that it modifies. In Late Modern English, the usual adjective position occupied is between the determiner and the noun modified.

Lines 5 and 6 read as one continuous thought: "Anon permit the basest clouds to ride with ugly rack on his celestial face." The pronoun antecedents in line 6, "his celestial face" and in line 7, "his visage hide" are obscure when read silently. Each pronoun refers back to line 1, to the noun "morning." The structure of the first two quatrains contains interwoven phrases and clauses so that dissecting its parts produces much frustration. For

⁹ Jeanne Herndon, *A Survey of Modern Grammars*, 2nd ed. (Dallas: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), p. 131.

instance, the first eight lines refer to the morning; this fact can be communicated by an oral interpreter to an audience by coloring the descriptive words like "kissing," and "gilding" so that the audience pictures in his own mind the beautiful sunrise contrasted by the darker tones in the voice when he reads "anon permit the basest clouds to ride with ugly rack on his celestial face / And from the forlorn world his visage hide" to communicate the hiding of the sun by the clouds.

By adding a soft, quiet whisper sound when reading aloud "stealing unseen" and slight head movement from side to side while adding "to west with this disgrace" to suggest movement in the sky from east to west the interpreter communicates infinitely more than can be read linearly.

The inverted sentence structure of line 7 places the prepositional phrase "from the forlorn world" before the kernel sentence "his visage hide." Lack of subject-verb agreement may not always be recognized consciously, but we all know when our internalized grammar rules have been violated even if we cannot state exactly what violation has occurred. To honor the rhythm and meter, "his visage hide" appears at the end of the sentence, with a prepositional phrase preceding. The lack of proximity of the subject

"clouds" (line 5) which "hide" the visage of the sun make it difficult to understand exactly what was hiding.

In line 9, the phrase "one early morn" is injected between the subject "sun" and the verb "did shine." Line 10 follows without interruption so that it reads: "Even so my sun one early morn did shine with all triumphant splendor." Emphasis on the meaning words or name-words in the sentence provides additional information to the audience. Emphasis can be placed on words by stressing the word or by pausing before or after the word.

The enjambement, "But out, alack!" calls for interruption and thus a pause of considerable length in the early part of line 11. Just as one would tell a story emphasizing the high emotional moments; this line calls for that despair of the moment.

Line 12 contains a contraction that twentieth-century readers rarely encounter. Shakespeare has contracted the verb "masked" to read "mask'd." Late Modern English contraction transformation allows us many contractions but Shakespeare allowed himself to contract whatever he pleased. His sense of freedom with contractions sometimes makes a beginning reader of Shakespeare feel ill-at-ease, but the audience feels little concern for the contraction. The audience hears it as it is pronounced. It feels uneasiness,

perhaps, from the unfamiliar only when the contraction is seen on the printed page.

SONNET 73

Line 1 suggests the general topic at the beginning of the sentence, but the word order is inverted to provide emphasis on "that time of year." Line 1 extends to line 2 in thought. The internal punctuation in line 2 calls for three double bar pauses; the pauses suggest hesitation for the poet persona and give the audience time to consider his description both of the time of year (autumn) and the time of his life. Line 2 continues through line 3, so that the sonnet should read: "That time of year thou mayst in my behold when / yellow leaves // or none, // or few, // do hang upon these boughs which shake against the cold. #

The oral interpreter must convey barrenness and emptiness and cold as he reads the first three lines. "Bare ruin'd choirs" intensifies the barren description. The verb "ruin'd" is contracted as it is spoken, so the audience has no difficulty unless the poetry is perceived visually first.

Shakespeare transposes the adverbial phrase "in me" in lines 5 and 9 to emphasize the subject of the comparison.

He again contracts the verb "see'st" in two lines that beautifully describe a sunset that is gradually overtaken by night. These lines must reflect the gentleness and coolness of the early evening hours through the relaxed face and body along with the low, gentle vocal quality of the voice.

Line 9 begins with the parallel adverbial phrase "in me." The word order of the English sentence begins with subject and its modifiers; however, this sentence inverts the order by placing the adverbial phrase in the place reserved for the noun or its modifiers.

This quatrain can be communicated through the emotion employed by the interpreter. The interpreter communicates the futility of keeping alive the last sparks of a once bright (youthful) fire. Its somberness, akin to the frigidity and isolation of winter reveals itself in the eyes, face, body tonus and intensely cold vocal quality.

The couplet conveys the moral. He misplaces "this" in line 13; it would probably be read in Late Modern English usage: "Thou perceivest this." The internal punctuation indicates a pause. Line 14 can be read orally so that the line emphasizes the significant words on the line:

To love that well / which thou must leave ere long.

The phrasing and pausing hold the key to communicating meaning and emotion to an audience.

SONNET 116

Sonnet 116 can be understood readily when interpreted orally. Shakespeare employs a negative transformation in Line 1, "Let me not." We have internalized a transformation which requires the negative to follow directly the imperative verb. The direct object "me" has been sandwiched between the verb and its negative. Line 1 should flow into line 2, stopping at the period for a double cross bar pause (long pause). Line 2 continues into line 3 with continuous sound. It should be marked as follows in the script: "Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments # Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds" //

The interjection should be read exactly as it is spoken "Oh no!!" # The rest of line 5 should flow without pause in sound to line 6 as: "It is an ever-fixed mark that looks on tempests and is never shaken."

The contractions that he employs in lines 8 and 9 pose potential problems for beginning Shakespeare readers. If, however, the sonnet is read aloud, the contractions are

decidedly clear because they employ the sounds that we utilize in spoken language, but avoid in written language. In line 8, the contraction "worth's unknown" has contracted "worth is" and in line 9, "Love's not Time's fool," "love" and "is" are contracted, but "Time's fool" is a possessive. These distinctions are clear to an audience to which the sonnet is read but the silent reader may have difficulty.

In line 11, "Love alters not" does not utilize the tense bearer "does" as modern constructions do. Late Modern usage would probably read, "Love does not alter." The use of the voice makes this Shakespearean construction readily understandable.

The use of the subjective form "be" instead of the verb of the correct declension might make it difficult for an uncertain Freshman or Sophomore who would feel much better if he read "If this is an error" rather than "If this be error."

He frequently employs the double negative, as he does in line 14: "I never writ, nor no man ever loved." Since two negatives don't make a positive in English they do in physics, the silent reader could be confused because he did not write "I never wrote or no man ever loved." Shakespeare also used "writ," the archaic past tense form of "write," but it is hardly noticeable when read aloud.

Surely there is more than one way to interpret literature. By adding tones in the voice appropriate to the mood, descriptive tones to the color, one enhances the meaning and enjoyment of the literature. The tone and the mood of these lovely lines capture an audience in its spirit through an oral interpreter who uses appropriate vocal expression and bodily movement.

The voice of the interpreter determines to large extent the communication of the intended meaning of the poet. The volume, tempo and pitch, each with variety, communicate various shades of meaning. Chapter IV illustrates accurate phrasing, appropriate emphasis, and adequate emotion. Also, bodily movements which include gesturing, eye contact, facial expression and total body tonus contribute to the total meaning of the poetry. Chapter IV deals with these aspects of the total communication process. It also suggests methods that the teacher of English can employ to utilize oral interpretation in the English class.

CHAPTER IV

THE SENSIBILITY OF SUGGESTIONS

Although many teachers of English may be inexperienced in effecting his advice, many would agree with Northrop Frye that validity and power accompany literature interpreted orally:

Literary education should lead not merely to the admiration of great literature, but to some possession of its power of utterance. The ultimate aim is an ethical and participating aim, not an aesthetic or contemplative one, even though the latter¹ may be the means of achieving the former.

Many advantages accrue from using that "power of utterance," or oral interpretation, in the English classroom. About the power of oral interpretation in the experience of literature, Wallace Bacon concludes, after extensive research, that "sounds, rhythm and rhymes are aspects of meaning, not separable from it in the body of the poem."²

¹ Northrop Frye, The Well-Tempered Critic (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1963), p. 47.

² Wallace Bacon, "Literature and Behavior: Interpretation," Oral Interpretation and the Teaching of Literature in Secondary Schools (Urbana, Ill.: Speech Communication Assn., 1974), p. 43.

For example, slow children who have never been excited about reading a book can, through seeing and hearing an oral interpretation in various forms such as Reader's Theater or Chamber Theater, for example, watch literature come alive through the experience. Their improved interest affects their self confidence which, in turn, can improve their reading ability.

Teachers of oral interpretation regard its inestimable value to literature to be common knowledge. Gary Esolen's contribution to this discipline is particularly well suited to express the synthesis of ideas found in this writer's research. He suggests several practical reasons for involving students in oral performance.

First, oral performance increases tremendously and immediately the involvement of the student. It is a very effective ice-breaking technique. Although the experience for most students to perform for the first time is traumatic because it involves self-exposure, taking the first step makes it easier for them because they are already emotionally extended through the act of oral reading. The next step, being emotionally honest and personally honest in the discussion about a selection of literature, is even easier.

Second, oral interpretation is helpful because maintaining a sufficient amount of contact with students over the text is often difficult for the teacher. The teacher can ask precise questions which are revealed through the technique of oral reading as puzzling or difficult or likely to cause problems for the people who are reading them. Very often the experienced teacher who teaches the same great works of literature every semester, or at least once a year, adding each time to his/her body of knowledge and observations, may have difficulty understanding the mind of a student reading that work for the first time. Analysis of the vocal qualities employed by the reader and bodily movement brings a natural discussion (whether conversational or in the form of essay questions on exams) of the tone, mood, and prevailing theme in a piece of literature.

Esolen admits that oral performance will probably reduce the number of works covered in a genre or period, but he concludes that it is worth the exchange in time--doing fewer things, but doing them more comprehensively and more deeply than the superficial overview of an assigned work that the students may not have even read.³ It is not possible to cover all of any literature in a single course,

³ Gary Esolen, "Advantages of the Oral Study of Literature," Oral English, 1, No. 3, Summer, 1972, pp. 1-4.

so I concur with Esolen that it is valuable to choose carefully in an attempt to create habits that carry over-- habits like reading for pleasure in leisure time, and reading in the period of genre after the course ends.

In addition to that fact, a student who has learned particular poems (or other literary works of art, for that matter) through the process of being involved actively in oral performance will remember more deeply what he has learned for two related reasons: he simply has richer sensory experience, and he tends to remember situations that he has experienced from the point of view of a participant.

Esolen perceives oral performance as "the one way I know that it's possible to achieve an almost total fit between student, teacher, and text."⁴ Related to that are the reasons that people speak and enjoy eloquence in speech and enjoy reading poetry: people enjoy a social action. Most poets like to read their own poetry aloud to a group of receptive, interested people. The social reinforcement and involvement have, in the past, been confined to the elite who could read or to the teacher and a few gifted students who are confident enough to participate in a work of art. Now all students who desire can participate.

⁴ Esolen, p. 5.

Most teachers have had the experience of feeling that they did not really know a text until after they had taught it. Perhaps in the process of teaching, they organize their thoughts. Perhaps a text is not really clear to them until they have had to explain it to someone else--because they actually verbalize it out loud to a group of people who are listening and who respond. The social reinforcement is pleasurable and remains longer.

Also, the process of saying a poem or saying a piece of literature out loud is repeatable when the student is unable to grasp the subtlety. Most often, teachers attempt to alleviate the problem with criticism and analysis. However, the words, repeated and experienced, probably would have a more dynamic effect because the preparation for oral presentation requires the student to give his full attention to the actual sensory experience of saying and hearing the words of the text. Many times, the student must struggle to define and understand such terms as mood, tone, and images, but he easily understands the emotions felt. The repeatability and the provision of experience in sensory images can be labeled with the correct terminology later to enhance understanding.

Reading orally also carries the advantage of possible re-interpretation. Esolen, for example, reports his experience when he read a selection aloud to a different

audience. He varied the emphasis and produced an entirely different interpretation, one actually closer to the poet's intent than one he had attached for many years. Much as the writer sometimes hardly knows what he wants to say until he writes it down, so the oral interpreter finds understanding in the very act of performing, or perhaps even by repeated practices in preparation for performance. Actors recognize the value of reading lines aloud with varying emphases and expressions; oral interpreters likewise value the repeated act of preparing and presenting lines of poetry for enhanced enjoyment and understanding both for reader and audience.

Whether or not a good oral interpretation is necessary to achieve the increased pleasure and comprehension discussed in the two previous chapters and earlier in this chapter is a topic for another thesis. It is the purpose of this chapter to provide information and suggestions so that a good interpretation can occur. The chapter includes information for the interpreter to use in preparation for presentation. Whether the interpreter is the English teacher or a student, this brief body of information can stand him in good stead.

Perhaps the single most important factor that contributes to effective oral interpretation is the use of the

voice. An effective voice for the oral interpretation of literature is one which supplements the total impact of the selection by avoiding the errors of the vulgar and the pretentious, refraining from calling attention to itself, and achieving grace by performing a maximum amount of work with a minimum amount of energy.

VOLUME AND RESONANCE

The volume of the voice involves both projection and emphasis. The interpreter can be considered as a lens for the audience to see or experience the literature. Nothing blurs the lens more quickly and causes attention to be directed to the reader rather than to the selection than does inadequate projection.⁵ A voice that lacks sufficient energy or carrying power to allow the audience to listen with ease is a major distraction. A voice that is too loud is also poor. For example, to begin Sonnet 29 with a loud bombastic voice when the poet expresses the low, somber depths of despair confuses the audience and reflects the interpreter's lack of understanding of the sonnet.

⁵ Chloe Armstrong and Paul D. Brandes, The Oral Interpretation of Literature (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1963), p. 130.

Resonance, or the weight or power in a voice, distinguishes the quality of the voice. It bears the emotional tone and color of the voice which translates the meaning of the literature read through the pleasant vibrations produced through the vocal activity. While a speaker cannot control his basic resonant quality, recognizing the deviations in good resonance helps in grasping the significance of resonance.

The first deviation of good resonance that the interpreter must recognize is excessive nasality. Overly nasal voices may be found in all dialects, particularly in Texas. If the interpreter produces an excess of nasality, he is trying to develop the wrong areas of the vocal cavity. The interpreter has not learned to adjust the valve (or sphincter) which separates the mouth and the pharyngeal cavities from the nose cavity during the resonance vowels, so that sound waves enter the nasal chamber.

Mumbling, like nasality, is associated with the uneducated. It connotes carelessness, introversion, and self-centeredness. That self-centeredness says the speaker is not interested enough in other people to make the effort to be understood. The converse of mumbling, however, is the overmellow voice, an error which occurs among persons skilled in speech. (Consider the artificiality of the

language of the eighteenth century.) The happy medium is the desired object.⁶ Using the vocal instruments correctly maximizes the possibility of achieving that goal.

VARIETY

Not only must the oral interpreter learn to use sufficient volume, but he must also vary the volume of his projection to provide variety. Sir George Young emphasizes the importance of variety of expression in the aural experience:

All speech consisting of divers sounds and kinds of sound verse is speech of a kind divided into lengths or lines and intended to please the ear by some recurrency in the sounds of it. Since our sense of hearing is so constituted that mere regularity in the recurrences of sound is at first pleasing, then indifferent, and finally intolerable, variation of the recurrency is as essential to verse as regularity.⁷

Attention is renewed when change occurs. A variety of volumes, all of them well projected, results in effective emphasis. A lack of variety results in a lack of emphasis

⁶ Armstrong and Brandes, p. 144.

⁷ Sir George Young, An English Prosody on Inductive Lines (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), p. 14.

and boredom. A constant change of volume must also be interpreted as a lack of variety. The television anchorman who is always enthusiastic and always modulating his voice may be well received initially, but his very variety becomes monotonous. Therefore, the interpreter should be able not only to speak both loudly and softly with effective projection, but he must also use loudness and softness to achieve emphasis.

In both body and voice, the interpreter should remain secondary in importance--unobtrusive. To define unobtrusiveness in relation to voice, Samuel Johnson, who points out the disadvantages of the two extremes of style and advocates the adoption of a style to be sought in the "common intercourse of life":

If there be, what I believe there is, in every nation, a stile [sic] which never becomes obsolete, a certain mode of phraseology so consonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its respective language as to remain settled and unaltered; this style is probably to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood, without ambition of elegance. The polite are always catching modish innovations, and the learned depart from established forms of speech, in hope of finding or making better; those who wish for distinction forsake the vulgar, when the vulgar is right; but there is a

conversation above grossness and below refinement, where propriety resides. . . .⁸

The best advice for the teacher of English is to encourage the interpreter to style his voice as Johnson advised the writer to style his words, to seek a voice which is above grossness and below refinement, in order that he may not fall into the traps that Johnson lists--of catching modish innovations of enunciation and pronunciation, or departing from the established forms of enunciation and pronunciation in an effort to bring glory on himself, of departing from the vulgar when the vulgar is acceptable.

Aristotle's more ancient comments on the use of the voice can also be applied to any communicator:

. . . delivery is a matter of voice, as to the mode in which it should be used for each particular emotion; when it should be loud, when low, when intermediate; and how the tones, that is, shrill, deep, and intermediate, should be used; and what rhythms are adapted to each subject. For there are three qualities that are considered--volume, harmony, rhythm. Those who use these properly nearly always carry off the prize in dramatic contests.⁹

⁸ Samuel Johnson, "Preface to Shakespeare," in The Great Critics. Ed. J. H. Smith and E. W. Parks (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1949), p. 451.

⁹ Aristotle, The "Art" of Rhetoric, Tr. John Freese (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1939), III, 1. 3-6.

Furthermore, Aristotle makes the very important point that "the speech, if it does not make the meaning clear, will not perform its proper function."¹⁰

TEMPO

In addition to volume, changes in tempo must conform to changes in mood. There are no rules about what mood is associated with what tempo, but slow tempo is most often associated with conservatism, seriousness, even somberness; a fast tempo is most often linked with frivolity, liberalism, and comedy.

The pause provides the necessary outlets both for the interpreter and the audience:

1. The pause gives the listener time to digest what has preceded before more complications are added.
2. The pause gives the audience time to enjoy what it is hearing.
3. The pause provides emphasis to what precedes and what follows.

¹⁰ Aristotle, p. 351.

4. The pause provides time for the reader to gain his bearings and move with ease through his selection.¹¹

The oral reader should always consider pausing after difficult phraseology or complex material. If the listener becomes frustrated because he has yet to grasp what has already been said when the reader is busy adding more stimuli, he is not in the proper mood to listen effectively.

The pause also permits the reader to keep a perspective on the reading and make any decisions necessary about changes in style of delivery. A reader must give himself an opportunity to gauge the mood of the audience and permit himself time to respond to that mood. Although the pause can be very effective, it becomes artificial when it is worked for rather than felt.

The reader needs to overcome the temptation to let the rhythm drown the thought and use the pause to emphasize the meaning rather than to subdue it. Some interpreters have a basic rate of delivery which is too fast or too slow. All readers should remember that they are producing a single stimulus that must be grasped by the audience at the time it is given. There are no second chances for that particular moment. An audience becomes frustrated if the

¹¹ Armstrong and Brandes, pp. 134-135.

interpreter reads so quickly that ideas bump into each other and cannot be properly sorted and absorbed. However, the speed should be fast enough to give the audience a sense of achievement.

The contrast in thought in Sonnet 29 requires effective use of pause. The first two slow and mournful quatrains need the same slow tempo. The first line of the third quatrain provides transition of thought. The transition is easily achieved by increased speed of the delivery of those lines. The last three lines of the third quatrain need still faster delivery to communicate the quickening of the pulse, an excited, lighthearted emotion that accompanies the reflection of the poet on his beloved. A brief pause between the thoughts (between quatrains two and three) gives the audience opportunity to register the change. Variety in tempo is just as important as variety in volume. It must be planned to fit the selection.

The oral reader should practice until he is able to read quickly and slowly at the appropriate places. When the tempo is fast, as in lines 10-12 in Sonnet 29, the reader must be careful to enunciate clearly. The excitement of the loved one remembered excites the heart and the voice. The tongue, lips, teeth and jaw must be active in the process of vowel and consonant formation with crisp

movements to distinguish one from another. Fast tempos should seldom be maintained for long periods of time. The tempo slows with the security that the memory brings, so lines 13 and 14 require a return to a slow tempo.

Slow tempo, instead of emphasizing the consonants, requires a prolongation of the vowels. It is often awkward to try to prolong a consonant (else the result is a hissing sililant, etc.), but the length of vowels is easily varied without artificiality. The tempo may also be slowed down by pauses between the phrases and by pauses between the sentences. There are, therefore, three ways to slow down reading speed: prolonging vowels (and, when possible, consonants), pausing between phrases and pausing between sentences.

PITCH

There are three factors relating to pitch which the oral interpreter must consider: sufficient variation in pitch, allowance for responsiveness to the mood of the selection, and awareness of the pitch patterns he is using. Variety in pitch is equally as desirable as is variety in volume and tempo. We most often associate the unfavorable connotations of the word "monotone" with inflexibility of pitch.

Pitch communicates. High pitches are associated with excitement, instability and merriment. Low pitches are associated with somberness, stability and sobriety. Music illustrates the direct association between pitch and mood. Weber's "Invitation to the Waltz," intended for dancing and frivolity, features high pitches; Beethoven's famous funeral march from the Eroica Symphony (No. 3) features low pitches and slow rhythms.

Abrupt changes in pitch often connote instability; constancy of pitch, whether low or high, often signify stability. Conservatism uses relatively constant pitch; more variety in pitch than is his custom indicates impatience with society; extreme lack of variety indicates senility and obstinacy. Extreme use of variety often indicates nervous instability and weakness of character.

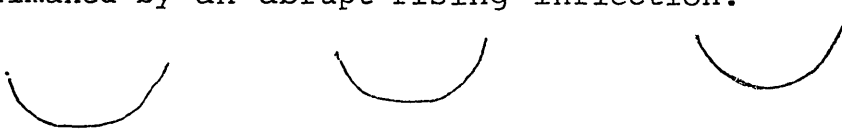
Pitch pattern may be defined as a regularly reoccurring sequence of pitches. Steady pitch which is maintained on each sentence until the last few syllables, when the pitch drops off can be called "the preacher's waltz."



"The preacher's waltz" is a frequent flaw in poetry reading. Reading aloud Sonnet 73, for instance, using a "preacher's waltz" on the important couplet which

communicates the imminent parting mentioned only in the couplet would severely impair the overall understanding of the sonnet because the conclusion would have been lost.

"Eternal surprise" involves a gradual rise in pitch climaxed by an abrupt rising inflection.



The "puncher" involves a periodical, abrupt rise in pitch, usually on syllables and/or words that are accented. It can also be called "over the waves." It is often used to excess with undesirable results because the pattern becomes annoying.¹²



The "puncher" pattern is perhaps the single most frequent pattern employed by oral poetry readers because the interpreters are aware of the rhythm. To accentuate the stressed syllables in any of the sonnets can impair the comprehension and enjoyment because thought patterns defer to rhythm patterns.

¹² Armstrong and Brandes, p. 140.

BODILY MOVEMENT

Bodily movement is another important aspect which the teacher of English can use to enhance the oral interpretation of the literature studied in class. Bodily movement can be subdivided into three categories: eye contact, gestures, and facial expression which culminate into the all-encompassing total bodily response. Any physical response to the selection must be unobtrusive and subordinate to the total impact of the selection.

Eye contact--direct or indirect--must be determined by the selections itself. Very familiar passages, such as Sonnet 29 and Sonnet 116, should be read with minimal direct eye contact. Many persons will have established previous associations with the sonnet which they prefer to rekindle, instead of lighting a fire under a new association.

There is no set rule for gesturing. Individual readers must establish for themselves the boundaries between reinforcement and distraction. Some are not comfortable using their hands while managing a script while others are not comfortable when they cannot.

Facial movement must be gauged by the interpreter by the amount of pleasure he feels such movement will give his audience. The interpreter must be in control of his own emotions if he wishes to direct the emotions of his audience.

Bodily movement through muscle tonus complete the total body response of the reader to the selection. The reader cannot afford to respond to his selection only from the neck up. His whole body is a sounding board for his presentation. The extent to which the reader responds is again governed by the reader and his selection. When reading Sonnet 29, the interpreter may respond by manifesting some tenseness of muscle which would reflect in the frame of his body in lines 1-9. When the reader "Haply thinks on thee," the body relaxes, the face brightens as it relaxes.

Sonnet 33 requires a relaxed but controlled body in the introductory lines. However, when the clouds arise to hide the sun, the furrowed brow and tense body of the reader communicate the gloomy feeling. Also, the dark, somber vocal tones communicate the obscurity of the sun.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

How can this knowledge of the basics of oral interpretation be incorporated into a class of English (or another discipline)? Is it already being done? Donna K. Townsend, after a comprehensive survey of fifty-one state supervisors of English and from an extensive review of pedagogical literature (dissertations, journal articles, books on the

teaching of English) concludes that oral interpretation has received little attention as a method of understanding literature:

. . . little attention has been given to the application of oral interpretation as a method of literary study to the problem of teaching literature. . . .

.....
Literature and oral activities are rarely brought together either in discussions or actual classroom practice.¹³

Although oral interpretation is seldom used in the English classroom, oral interpretation classrooms and English classrooms still have much in common. Wallace Bacon suggests the common bonds between the two departments. He says:

Not everything can be done in an English classroom. . . . The performance of literature, as a way of studying and experiencing literature, demands attention in its own right. . . . But beyond that, there is surely room . . . for joint effort by teachers of interpretation and teachers of English to lead students to the sustaining life of literature. Their interests are mutual; they must be shared. . . . Interpretation is process, becoming; it is a

¹³ Donna K. Townsend, "Oral Interpretation of Literature: A Theoretical and Practical Approach to the Study of Literature in Secondary School English," Ph.D. Dissertation, Austin: The University of Texas, 1971, p. 40.

cognition; it is a means of making literature and life speak for the moment, as one.¹⁴

The following is a partial list of suggestions for teachers of English in the secondary schools as well as for teachers in higher education:

1. Cooperation between the speech, or interpretation, department and the English department produces desirable results. For example, students enrolled in the interpretation classroom can work up selections that are based on the literature studied in the English classroom. The English class, as well as fellow speech students, becomes their audience. The literature is prepared for presentation in the speech class and used also in English class as discussion for characterization, tone, mood, point of view, or whatever the English teacher happens to be stressing for that story or poem. This is especially useful if the English teacher does not feel prepared to handle "reading aloud" to his/her class or assigning oral lessons for students. Some teachers feel that poor oral reading is worse than no oral reading. This paper does not embrace that question, but rather focuses on the good interpretation.

¹⁴ Wallace Bacon, Oral Interpretation and the Teaching of English in the Secondary Schools (Urbana, Ill.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, 1974), pp. 33-35.

While reading aloud might hold some value even if it is impromptu and a last minute thought of the instructor as he enters the classroom, advance assignments (either in the form of extra credit or substituted for other daily work) insure prior preparation--consideration of voice and bodily movements appropriate for the selection. This safeguard increases the likelihood of good, well-prepared oral interpretation.

2. Students should be allowed to respond to a poem in a variety of ways. One meaning is not necessarily as good as another, but there is more than one way to responding to a poem. This approach stimulates confidence in the student's own response.

3. The following are some suggestions for variations of oral interpretation that can be utilized effectively in a class of English:

a. Improvisations. Students invent or compose lines based on the literature studied. They explain the narrative, provide dialogue, or create a scene to amplify understanding. One example is the improvisation of the trial of Hester Prynne during the study of The Scarlet Letter.

b. Pantomime. Two different sets of participants--the ones who pantomime a scene from a play or short

story, and the "voices" who have previously recorded or stand unseen behind a screen both feel free to express themselves when they might not feel free at all if standing alone or in front of their peers.

c. Presentation of group work. A group or class poem or play may include original work composed by the group or traditional work arranged for presentation by the entire group. The possibilities are exciting.

d. Performance for younger groups. If a student appears to have an interest, but does not have the confidence to appear before his peers, select a younger group for his interpretation. For example, have him put the literature being read in class on the level of the child to which he plans to read. Mythology or Charles and Mary Ann Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare or other works from which the reader as well as the audience can learn. A preschool group can be challenging--even humbling.

e. Reader's Theater. A group assignment, in which the literature is presented by the different characters, or even a group of narrators. Specific lines are assigned to various "characters."

f. Chamber Theater. A staged reading of undramatized fiction for the stage presents good literature in a living, dramatic manner.

g. Verse Choir. An arrangement of some solo reading of lines and some group reading of lines can use all sorts of combinations of voices and solos for maximum variety.

h. Solo Reading. The prepared reading of any type of literature by a single individual teaches a student and class emphasis of vocal projection and bodily movements for maximum effectiveness.

How students may view the contribution of oral interpretation to the perception, comprehension, and enjoyment of literature poses an interesting question. The students of Speech 1013.03 at Texas Woman's University, Spring Semester, 1982 participated in an informal, anonymous survey. They were asked to interpret Sonnet 29 after reading it silently. After they recorded their comments, the instructor interpreted orally the sonnet for them, using vocal technique and bodily movements to communicate its meaning. Then the students were requested to write a second paragraph noting if they had changed their interpretation and drawing conclusions on the value of having had the sonnet interpreted orally.

From a class in which there was no advance preparation in oral interpretation, here are representative samples which indicate the general response:

The oral interpretation helped me in clarifying this sonnet. The words fell in place and made the poem more meaningful.

Your interpretation made the poem more interesting and especially easier to understand.

The oral interpretation gave the poem's speaker more character. It made that person come alive, and show human characteristics. I believe the oral interpretation enhanced the poem.

. . . The oral interpretation was much easier to understand, because the poem came alive. I think the oral interpretation also made it easier to understand the tone and mood of the poem.

I still feel the same way I did before. But the oral interpretation [sic] made me think I was even more so right in the frist [sic] place. My oral interpretation [sic] would have been just the same. (This student's interpretation was adequate in his first paragraph.)

The oral interpretation put much more meaning into certain lines. What I read into them the first time was little emotion, but hearing it make [sic] a lot of difference.

(Second paragraph showed much increased comprehension.)

I still get the same interpretation that I had before the poem was read, but I think that oral interpretation is very helpful in getting the full meaning of the poem or whatever and helps clarify [sic] meanings.

I had already said almost the same thing. I had read the poem in almost the same way in my mind, so my interpretation really did not change. (Could this be an example of internal verbalization?)

My interpretation of Sonnet 29 has changed completely.
(Second paragraph showed considerably more understanding of the poet's intent than first paragraph.)

The oral interpretation helped. I missed parts in the sonnet that come [sic] out when listening. The man, I believe, cursed his friendless self and his gift for writing. I understood more and it wasn't as confusing as when on paper.

The overwhelming majority of the students expressed increased understanding, perception, and/or enjoyment of the sonnet. With no lecture on the advantages of employing oral interpretation in the study of literature, students verbalized the concept of Wallace Bacon: Literature is an art form to be enjoyed and felt as well as understood. As one particularly perceptive participant concluded:

I feel all poetry should be read out loud and several times. I feel your reading helped me feel the poem more fully.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Sonnet 29

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweepe my outcast state
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
And look upon myself and curse my fate 4
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least; 8
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate; 12
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

APPENDIX B

Sonnet 33

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy; 4
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace: 8
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all triumphant splendour on my brow;
But out, alack! he was but one hour mine;
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now. 12
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun
staineth.

APPENDIX C

Sonnet 73

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare, ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang. 4
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest. 8
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourished by. 12
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

APPENDIX D

Sonnet 116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments: love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove. 4
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark
that looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken. 8
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom: 12
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

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