

A Study of Neologisms in Shakespeare's Hamlet

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Abstract

This paper attempts a linguistic description of all the neologisms created by Shakespeare in Hamlet: compounding, functional shift, and derivation and his extension of meaning. Neologisms which meet the following conditions are examined:

- 1) Word formation - The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc states that the word was first used by Shakespeare.
- 2) New meaning - The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc states that the new sense was first used by Shakespeare.

We can find 119 new words created by means of 42 compoundings and 18 functional shifts and 59 derivations, and 336 words which were used by him in new meanings. He used the productive methods of the Elizabethan period very effectively to develop a new semantic world.

Most of the words making up 'word areas' in this play are closely related to the theme of the play, especially the word areas 'sorrow,' 'family' and 'desire.' The word areas 'sickness' and 'desire' have the most striking images and they run throughout the play. 'Death' and 'fear,' as well as 'sorrow' and 'sickness,' may be word areas found only in tragedies. Shakespeare tried to emphasize background night with the words in 'night.' Thus, interestingly enough, some word areas are related either to a theme or a central image of the play, and it appears that certain word areas are unique to tragedies.

Key words: neologism, word area, Shakespeare, Hamlet

There was an intense interest in language in the Elizabethan period. Blake argues "There can be no doubt that the spirit of the age encouraged innovation in vocabulary for its own sake, and in all forms of literature this went beyond the strictly necessary or utilitarian. Poets and dramatists vied with one another to see who could introduce the most obscure and high-sounding words."¹⁾ Living at the time, Shakespeare was no exception. "Shakespeare is very much of his time in seeking to extend the vocabulary of the language of his time... he was able to write poetry which was densely packed with meaning but which did not seem strange or exotic."²⁾ Shakespeare was really a master of expressive English. His richness and eloquence were supplied by verbal enlargement. He himself sought to extend the range of vocabulary, using the most productive methods for word formation of the day: compounding, functional shift, and

derivation. In addition, he extended the meanings of words which already existed.

Gerber argues, "The contributions of William Shakespeare to English literature include Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, Othello, and King Lear, but many agree that his genius reached its peak with Hamlet.³⁾ This paper attempts a linguistic description of all these methods used by Shakespeare in Hamlet.⁴⁾ First, I will investigate Shakespeare's lexical invention appearing in this tragedy: compounding, functional shift, and derivation. Then I will look at how he extends meaning.

All words appearing in Hamlet which meet the following conditions are studied:

- 1) Word formation - The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc⁵⁾ states that the word was first used by Shakespeare.
- 2) New meaning - The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc states that the new sense was first used by Shakespeare.

Then I will investigate the use of these neologisms in the context or the dimension of their use. The word area to which some words may belong together will also be discussed. We can find limitless number of research papers on Shakespeare. Few researchers, however, have attempted a linguistic description in this manner. I will investigate the dramatist's works one by one through this method, and plan to make a comprehensive survey of these studies on neologisms. The final purpose of this study is to help to illustrate some aspects of Shakespeare's variegated style by this original method.

Word formation

i. Compounding

The compounds which Shakespeare invented in Hamlet are divided into two types grammatically: (1) Determinans + Determinatum, (2) Appositive Relation. For the first type, the compounds are subdivided according to the relation between the elements of each compound.

1) Determinans + Determinatum

- a. attribute + head word - beer-barrel, down-gyved, falling-off, fellow-student, head-shake, marriage table, out-break, overgrowth, over-leaven, over-office, oversize, overteemed, sandal-shoe, shrill-sounding, well-took
- b. object-relation - gallows-maker, grave-maker, grave-making, heaven-kissing, jig-maker, life-rendering, promise-crammed, self-slaughter
- c. locality - water-fly
- d. causal relation - fear-surprised, wonder-wounded,
- e. comparison - lazar-like, mermaid like
- f. purpose - murdering piece, shriving time

With regard to Adjective + Noun + ed compounds, the part Adjective + Noun is included in

(a) attribute + headword and the adjectival suffix is regarded as an additional element. An example is 'muddy-mettled.'

2) Appositive Relation

uncle-father

There is only one example of this type of compound in Hamlet, but this powerful word is very ironical and closely related to the theme of the play, as will be discussed later.

Moreover, we can also find compounds with transferred or special meanings. These meanings cannot be understood only by the grammatical relation between the elements alone. Such compounds include Noun + Noun + ed and Noun + Verb + ed.⁶⁾

chop-fallen 'fig., dejected, dispirited, miserable'

dead man's finger 'a local name for various species of Orchis'

free-footed 'not restrained in marching'

John-a-dreams 'a dreamy fellow'

out-Herod 'outdo Herod'

town-crier 'public crier'

Noun + Noun + ed, Noun + Verb + ed

peace-parted 'that has departed this life in peace'

periwig-pated 'wearing a periwig'

pigeon-livered 'meek, gentle'

promise-crammed 'stuffed with promises'

Each of the examples has its own complicated deep structure and original meaning. Some of the words play very important roles in the contexts, as will be discussed later.

ii. Functional shift

The following are examples of Shakespearian functional shift. The first meaning is the original one and the second, Shakespearian.⁷⁾

1) Noun → Verb

character

1. a distinctive mark impressed, engraved, or otherwise formed; a brand, stamp
2. to engrave, imprint; to inscribe, write

drab

1. a dirty and untidy woman; a slut, slattern
2. to associate with harlots; to whore

film

1. a membrane, animal or vegetable
 2. to cover with or as with a film
- pander
1. a go-between in clandestine amours; one who supplies another with the means of gratifying lust
 2. to act as a pander to, to minister to the gratification of another's lust

posset

1. a drink composed of hot milk curdled with ale, wine, or other liquor
2. to curdle like a posset

2) Verb → Noun

avouch

1. to appeal or refer for confirmation to some warrant or authority
2. guarantee, assurance

curl

1. to bend round, wind, or twist into ringlets, as the hair
2. a lock of hair of a spiral or convolute form; a ringlet

sully

1. to pollute, defile; to soil, stain, tarnish
2. an act of sullyng, soiling, or polluting (lit. and fig.); a stain, blemish

supervise

1. to look over, survey, inspect; to read through, peruse
2. the act of supervising; inspection, perusal

3) Adjective → Verb

beetle

1. having prominent brows, having black and long eyebrows, having shaggy, bushy, or prominent eyebrows
2. to project like beetle brows, overhang threateningly

secure

1. feeling no care or apprehension
2. to make free from care or apprehension

sickly

1. ailing or indisposed; in a poor state of health
2. to cover over with a sickly hue

4) Verb → Adjective

hush

1. to make silent, still, or quiet
2. silent, still, quieted, hushed

5) Adjective → Adverb

instant

1. pressing, urgent, importunate
2. instantly

prodigal

1. given to extravagant expenditure
2. prodigally, lavishly

unequal

1. not equal in amount, size, quality, etc.
2. unequally

6) Adverb → Preposition

aslant

1. on the slant, in a slanting or sloping direction, obliquely
2. across in a slanting direction, athwart

round

1. of motion: with a circular course, so as to return again to the point of departure
2. of motion: so as to encircle, or make the complete circuit of; so as to go around

The deep structures of these words used by Shakespeare are very complicated and varied. He could not express these various ideas in ways which existed in current language.

iii. Derivation

Examples of Shakespeare's coinage in the Elizabethan period using the third method of word formation, derivation, are as follows. An explanation of the prefixes and suffixes in the OED and other sources are cited.⁸⁾ Shakespeare created new words with prefixes and suffixes for

variation.

1) Prefixes

The following are words of Shakespeare's coinage with prefixes:

benet 'Be' is forming trans. verbs on substantives used in an instrumental relation; the primary idea being;

besmirch 'Be' is forming derivative verbs, with sense of 'around'

bestill 'Be' is forming intensive verbs, with sense of 'thoroughly soundly, much, conspicuously, to excess, ridiculously'

co-mart, co-mingle, co-meddle, commutual
The general sense of 'co' is 'together,' 'in company', 'in common', 'joint, -ly,' 'equal, -ly', 'reciprocally', 'mutually.' It combines with verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and nouns.

incorpsed, inurn
'In' is used in combination with verbs or their derivatives, with the senses 'into, in, within; on, upon; towards, against.'

invidiable 'In' is prefixed to adjectives and their derivatives, rarely to other words, to express negation or privation.

respeak, reword
'Re-' is prefixed to ordinary verbs of action and to derivatives from these, sometimes denoting that the action itself is performed a second time, and sometimes that its result is to reverse a previous action or process, or to restore a previous state of things.

unaneled, unfledged, ungorred, unimproved, unpolluted, unsmirched, unweeded, unwrung
'Un' is prefixed to past participles, expressing negation.

unhand, unpeg
'Un' is prefixed to a noun, converting

it into a verb, adding the sense 'remove'

unpregnant 'Un' is freely prefixed to adjectives of all kinds. The form with 'un' is then purely negative

unprevailing 'Un' is prefixed to present participles, expressing negation.

2) Suffixes

abhorred, behaved, considered, defeated, hearsed, mobled, observed

'Ed' is the formative of the pple. of wk. Verbs.

fanged, nighted, sheeted
'Ed' is now added without restriction to any noun from which it is desired to form an adjective with the sense 'possessing, provided with, characterized by'

amazement, annexment, blastment, condolment, distilment, encompassment, excitement, extolment, impartment, strewment

'Ment' is used to form abstract nouns from verbs

buzzer, proposer, ratifier, survivor
'Er' is a formative of agent-nouns, and with this function it was added to verbal bases

e'nacture 'Ure' is denoted action or process, the result or product of this function, state, rank, dignity, or office, a collective body that by which the action is effected

horridly 'Ly' is the regular mode of forming an adverb of manner

indirection 'Ion' is forming nouns of condition or action, rarely formed from adjectives or nouns.

detecting, disclaiming, in'truding
'Ing' is the suffix of the present participle, and of adjectives thence derived, or so formed

jointress 'Ess' is forming nouns denoting

female persons or animals palmy, primy, swoltery

'Y' is found appended to a noun to form an adjective

perusal 'Al' is a formative of nouns of action on verbs of Fr. or L. origin

sanctuarize 'Ize' is the suffix forming verbs, with the trans. sense of 'make or conform to, or treat in the way of, the thing expressed by the derivation'

skyish 'Ish' is the suffix forming adjectives and it is added to other nouns, with the sense 'of or belonging to a person or thing, of the nature or character of'

ventage 'Age' is the suffix of abstr. nouns from names of things, indicating that which belongs to or is functionally related to

Pseudo-etymological alteration

sate (i. v. 56)

New meanings

According to Ikegami,⁹⁾ there are three types of changes in meaning, specialization, generalization and transfer. Ikegami explains this using the following formulas;

1) specialization

$$S_1 = X \rightarrow S_2 = X + b$$

2) generalization

$$S_1 = X + a \rightarrow S_2 = X$$

3) transfer

$$S_1 = X + a \rightarrow S_2 = X + b \text{ or}$$

$$S_1 = X (+ \dots) \rightarrow S_2 = Y (+ \dots)$$

Shakespeare extended the meanings of words which were already in use. His semantic change is divided into three types by Ikegami. We can see 9 cases of specialization, 5 of generalization and 271 examples of transfer. 5 examples of each type are cited below. The first meaning of each word is the original meaning and the second one

is the new meaning used by the dramatist. The meanings are all cited from The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc. Following this, all the words are listed.

1) specialization

beat

1. The simple action: to strike repeatedly

2. a) predicated of the brain, etc. (iii. i. 182)

b) There is often a combination of the notions of the beating of the heart, the pulse, or chronometer with that of the beating of a drum, the beating of time, etc. (i. i. 39)

benefit

1. To be suited to, or fit for; to agree with, be in harmony with; to become

2. Of moral fitness: To be proper to, or incumbent upon, as a duty or task; to be right for (i.ii.2)

blue

1. The name of one of the colours of the spectrum; of the colour of the sky and the deep sea; cerulean

2. Said of the colour of smoke, vapour, distant hills, steel, thin milk (v. i. 277)

eternity

1. The quality, condition, or fact of being eternal (see the adj.); eternalness; eternal existence

2. The condition into which the soul enters at death; the future life. Also, eternal welfare (i. ii. 73)

exchange

1. The action, or an act, of reciprocal giving and receiving: of things in general

2. Of blows, passes, strokes (in fencing, games, etc.), salutations (v. ii. 280)

Others

dare (iv.v.133), defence (iv.vii.98), mouth (iii.ii.3)

(v.i.306), poll (iv.v.196)

2) generalization

bedded

1. Put to bed, having gone to bed; lying in bed
2. Laid or strewn in a smooth layer(iii. iv. 121)

confession

1. The confessing of sins to a priest, as a religious duty; more fully
2. The disclosing of something the knowledge of which by others is considered humiliating or prejudicial to the person confessing (iii. i. 9)

creation

1. The action or process of creating; the action of bringing into existence by divine power or its equivalent; the fact of being so created
2. The action of making, forming, producing, or bringing into existence (iii. iv. 138)

demand

1. An act of demanding or asking by virtue of right or authority; an authoritative or peremptory request or claim
2. The action of demanding; claiming (iii.i.178)

knowledge

1. Acknowledgement, confession
2. Cognizance, notice (ii.i.13)

3) transfer

actively

1. In action, as opposed to contemplation;practically, in practical life
2. With effective or vigorous action; energetically, busily; briskly, nimbly (iii.iv.87)

ambition

1. The ardent (in early usage, inordinate) desire to rise to high position, or to attain rank influence, distinction or other preferment
2. The object of strong desire or aspiration

(iii.iii.55)

assay

1. To put to the proof, try (a person or thing); to test the nature, excellence, fitness, etc. of To challenge to a trial of strength, skill, etc. (iii. i. 14)

assign

1. One to whom a property or right is legally transferred
2. An appurtenance, a belonging (v. ii. 157)

assume

1. To receive up into heaven
2. To take to oneself in appearance only, to pretend to possess; to pretend, simulate, feign (iii. iv. 160)

Others

affront (iii.i.31), arouse (ii.ii.510), attribute (i.iv.22), ban (iii.ii.269), batten (ii.iv.67), bellow (iii.ii.36), beteen (i.ii.141), bisson (ii.ii.529), blazon (i.v.21), bourne (iii.i.79), bring (v.ii.204), broad (iii.iv.2), canopy (ii.ii.311), capable (iii.iv.127), carriage (i.i.94, v.ii.161), cast (i.i.73, iii.i.85), caviare (ii.ii.457), cellarage (i.v.151), circumstance (i.iii.102), clutch (v.i.80), coinage (iii.iv.137), combined (i.v.18), confine ((i.v.11), conjunctive (iv.vii.14), consummation (iii.i.63), contagion (iv.vii.148), contend (iv.i.7), contract (i.ii.4), cry (iii.ii.289), dear (i.ii.111), dearth (v.ii.123), declension (ii.ii.149), devoutly (iii.i.64), diameter (iv.i.41), directly (iii.ii.219), dirt (v.ii.90), disa'ppointed (i.v.77), disaster (i.i.118), discourse(n.) (iii.i.108), discourse (v.) (iii.ii.374), dismantle (ii.ii.293), dispatch (i.v.75), distracted (i.v.97), distrust (iii.ii.175), dizzy (v.ii.119), doom (i.v.10), drain (i.iv.10), dreadfully (ii.ii.276), drink (iv.vii.182), eager (i.iv.2), effect (iii.iii.54), emphasis (v.i.278), encumber (i.v.174), engage (iii.iii.69), entreatment (i.iii.122), essentially (iii.iv.187), eternal (i.v.21), exception (v.ii.242), exchange (v.ii.340), exercise (iv.vii.98), expectancy (iii.i.160), expel

(v.i.239), express (ii.ii.317), extravagant (i.i.154), fashion (iii.i.161), fitness (v.ii.209), flagon (v.i.197), flash (v.i.210), flat (iv.vii.31), flight (v.ii.371), flush (iii.iii.81), follow (ii.ii.349), free (iii.ii.252), fretful (i.v.20), frontier (iv.iv.16), fruitful (i.ii.80), gain-giving (v.ii.226), german (v.ii.165), glimpse (i.iv.53), grass-green (iv.v.31), groundling (iii.ii.12), hand-saw (ii.ii.367), harrow (i.i.44), heart-ache (iii.i.62), heraldry (i.i.87), honey (iii.iv.93), immediate (i.ii.109), im'pone (v.ii.155), infusion (v.ii.122), instrumental (i.ii.48), jangle (iii.i.166), jig (iii.i.150), kettle (v.ii.286), kettledrum (i.iv.11), learning (v.ii.35), machine (ii.ii.124), main (ii.ii.56), mass (iv.iv.47), matin (i.v.89), mazard (v.i.97), million (ii.ii.457), mince (ii.ii.537), mockery (i.i.146), motion (iv.vii.158), negligence (iv.v.134), nutshell (ii.ii.260), obligation (i.ii.91), observant (i.i.71), odd (v.ii.185), office (iii.i.73), oppose (iii.i.60), opposition (v.ii.178), paddle (iii.iv.185), Polack (v.ii.388), presentment (iii.iv.54), prettiness (iv.v.189), primal (iii.iii.37), private (ii.ii.238), process (iv.iii.65), provided (v.ii.210), provincial (iii.ii.288), put (v.ii.408), puzzle (iii.i.80), quality (ii.ii.452), queen-mother (iii.i.190), quietus (iii.i.75), quill (i.v.20), rage (iv.iii.68), rant (v.i.307), raw (v.ii.129), really (v.ii.132), recover (iii.ii.371), redeliver (v.ii.186), reel (i.iv.9), relative (ii.ii.633), remember (iii.i.90), rend (ii.ii.509), report (v.ii.350), resolute (i.i.98), resolve (i.ii.130), responsive (v.ii.159), retrograde (i.ii.114), Rhenish (i.iv.10), rime (iii.ii.296), rivet (iii.ii.90), roar (v.i.211), rose (iii.ii.288), round (ii.ii.139), sable (iii.ii.138), sadness (ii.ii.147), sanity (ii.ii.214), scandal (ii.i.29), scarf (v.ii.13), season (iii.iii.84), seat (iii.iv.55), secure (i.v.61), sensible (i.i.57), sheen (iii.ii.167), shot (i.iii.35), shoulder (i.iii.56), shuffling (iv.vii.135), sickly (iii.iii.96), silver (v.) (i.ii.242), silver (n.) (iv.vii.174), snatch (iv.vii.178), solemn (i.ii.78), solidity (iii.iv.49), southerly (ii.ii.397), spacious (v.ii.90), speak (v.ii.286), speechless (ii.ii.507), spirit (iii.ii.63), sponge (iv.ii.22), spurn (iii.i.73), start (iv.vii.194), stithy (iii.ii.89), strict (i.i.71), stuff (ii.ii.324), subject (i.ii.33), suspiration (i.ii.79), sweet (v.i.266), table

(v.i.211), tame (iii.ii.18), tenable (i.ii.248), tend (i.iii.83), thaw (i.ii.130), theatre (iii.ii.31), thing (i.i.21), tinct (iii.iv.91), touch (iv.vii.147), towering (v.ii.80), trade (iii.ii.346), train (i.i.117), truant (i.ii.169), tumble (iv.v.62), tyrannically (ii.ii.356), umbrage (v.ii.125), unbated (iv.vii.139), uncharge (iv.vii.68), understand (i.iii.96), unfold (i.i.2), unite (iii.ii.170), unmask (i.iii.37), unre'claimed (ii.i.34), unvalued (i.iii.19), upshot (v.ii.395), utterance (iii.ii.378), vacancy (iii.iv.117), valanced (ii.ii.442), validity (iii.ii.199), vengeance (ii.ii.510), vouch (v.i.117), wager (iv.vii.135), waist (i.ii.198), wart (v.i.306), wassail (i.iv.9), wave (ii.i.93), weakness (ii.ii.148), weedy (iv.vii.175), wharf (i.v.33), whensoever (v.ii.210), whore (v.ii.64), witching (iii.ii.406), woundless (iv.i.44), youth (i.iii.7)

With regard to the type of transfer, we can find examples of figurative use in context. There are 41 cases of this, as shown in the examples below. All other words appear in the list that follows.

attractive

1. Having the attribute of drawing or sucking in; absorptive
2. *fig.* Drawing as by magnetic influence
Here's Mettle more attractiue. (iii. ii. 117)

braze

1. To make of brass; to cover or ornament with brass
2. *fig.* to harden to impudence
And let me wring your heart..If damned Custome haue not braz'd it so, That it is proofe and bulwarke against Sense.(iii. iv. 37)

candied

1. Preserved or incrustated with sugar
2. *fig.* 'Sugared', 'honied', flattering, glozing
The Candied tongue(iii. ii. 65)

carve

1. To cut: formerly the ordinary word for that action in all its varieties
2. fig. To help or serve (oneself or others) at one's own discretion, to do at one's pleasure, indulge oneself
Hee may not, as vnuallued persons doe, Carue for himselfe. (i. iii. 20)

comma

1. A phrase or group of words less than a colon
Hence, A short member of a sentence or period
2. fig. Break of continuity, interval, pause
As Peace should still her wheaten Garland weare, And stand a Comma 'twene their amities.(v. ii. 42)

Others

cudgel(v.i.63), eyas (ii.ii.355), eye (i.ii.185), fatness (iii.iv.153), forehead (iii.iii.63), forest (iii.ii.286), fret (ii.ii.313), frock (iii.iv.164), gambol (iii.iv.144), gate (i.ii.31), grained (iii.iv.90), hoop (i.iii.63), inoculate (iii.i.118), market (iv.iv.34), moult (ii.ii.306), mutine (iii.iv.83), pressure (i.v.100), pury (iii.iv.153), rank (iii.iii.36), rise (i.ii.257), roast (ii.ii.483), skin (iii.iv.147), splinter (iii.i.159), split (iii.ii.12), springe (i.iii.115), sprinkle (iii.iv.124), stew (iii.iv.93), sulphureous (i.v.3), unction (iii.iv.145), unfortified (i.ii.96), unhatched (i.iii.65), unkennel (iii.ii.86), unsifted (i.iii.102), unsinewed (iv.vii.10), whirling (i.v.133)

We can also find 51 words which were first used by Shakespeare in special phrases, some examples of which are cited below with other whole phrases appearing thereafter.

The meanings are all cited from OED.

best

in the best = at best (i. v. 27)

call

to call on or upon = To pay a short visit to, to make a call on (iii. iii. 34)

card

to speak by the card= to express oneself with care and nicety; to be exact to a point (v. i. 149)

coil

mortal coil= the bustle or turmoil of this mortal life. A Shaksperian expression which has become a current phrase (iii. i. 67)

core

heart's core: a Shaksperian expression, perh. orig. a play on core and Latin *cor* (iii. ii. 78)

Others

command to (iii.ii.377), go to cuffs (ii.ii.373), speak daggers (iii.ii.414), divulge (for refl.)(iv.i.22), give an edge (iii.i.27), blow (something) in (a person's) face (ii.ii.599), falling off (i.v.47), at a pin's fee (i.iv.65), friendling (i.v.185), go along with (i.ii.15), God's bodykins (ii.ii.254), hail to (i.ii.160), heart of hearts (iii.ii.78), at help (iv.iii.46), hoist with his own petard (iii.iv.207), hold off (ii.ii.302), gall (one's) kibes (v.i.153), to the manner born (i.iv.15), mend (one's) pace (v.i.64), moreover that (ii.ii.2), music (attrib)(iii.i.164), the nation (ii.ii.370), niggard of (iii.i.13), give pause (iii.i.68), in pause (iii.i.42), great pith and moment (iii.i.86), play upon (iii.ii.380), the rear of (i. iii.34), relish of (iii.i.120), saw the air (iii.ii.5), equal scale (i.ii.13), set coldlhy (iv.iii.65), set by (v.ii.295), shark up (i.i.98), of shreds (iii.iv.102), silence (refl.) (iii.iv.4), something (comb.)(iii.i.181), start up (iii.iv.122), the stealers (iii.ii.349) stick off (v.ii.168), planet stricken (i.i.162), too much (iv.vii.119), the top of (ii.ii.355), turn (one's) colour (ii.ii.542), unmixed with (i.v.104), yeoman's service (v.ii.36)

Word area

Some of the Shakespearian coinage and the words Shakespeare used with new meanings may be classified in terms of word areas.¹⁰ In Hamlet, we can find the word areas, 'death,' 'sickness,' 'night,' 'sorrow,' 'fear,' 'marriage,'

'family' and 'desire.' Within each word area, we can see the words that appear below. The use of these neologisms is examined in the context or their dimension of use. The neologisms are underlined.

We can also see some neologisms which are collocates of the words in each word area.

The words in the word area which are not Shakespeare's neologisms are underlined and italicized, and their collocates, which are the dramatist's neologisms, are underlined.

1) death

Compound

Like the kinde Life-rend'ring Politician. (iv. v. 146)

Oh..that the Euerlasting had not fixt His Cannon 'gainst Selfe-slaughter.(i. ii. 132)

O my deere Gertrude, this, Like to a murdering Peece in many places, Giues me superfluous death.(iv. v. 95)

Long Purples.our cold Maids doe Dead Mens Fingers call them. (iv. vii. 173)

To sing sage Requiem, and such rest..As to peace-parted Soules.(v. i. 261)

Derivation

Tell Why thy Canoniz'd bones Hearsed in death, Haue burst their cerments. (i. iv. 48)

Why the Sepulcher Wherein we saw thee quietly enurn'd, Hath op'd his ponderous and Marble iawes, To cast thee vp againe? (i. iv. 49)

New meaning

When he himselfe might his quietus make With a bare bodkin. (iii. i. 75)

Tell Why thy Canoniz'd bones Hearsed in death, Haue burst their cerments. (i. iv. 47)

Collocate

Compound

He should the bearers put to sodaine death, Not shriuing time allowed. (v. ii. 47)

Functional conversion

The bold windes speechlesse, and the Orbe below As hush as death. (ii. ii. 508)

Derivation

Her Brother wants not Buzzers to infect his eare With pestilent Speeches of his Fathers death. (iv. v. 90)

A father kill'd, a mother stain'd, Excitements of my reason, and my blood. (iv. iv. 58)

Laer. To cut his throat i' th' Church. *Kin.* No place indeed should murder Sanctuarize; Reuenge should haue no bounds. (iv. vii. 128)

The sheeted dead Did squeake and gibber in the Roman streets. (i. i. 115)

New meaning

Murther most foule, as in the best it is. (i. v. 27)

All that liues must dye, Passing through Nature to Eternity. (i. ii. 73)

I doubt it is no other, but the maine, His Fathers death, and our o'er-hasty Marriage. (ii. ii. 56)

For in that sleepe of death, what dreames may come,..Must giue vs pawse.(iii. i. 68)

Oh my offence is ranke, it smels to heauen, It hath the primall eldest curse vpon 't,

A Brothers murther.(iii. iii. 37)

And England, if my loue thou holdst at
ought,..thou maist not coldly set Our
Soueraigne Processe, which imports at full..The
present death of Hamlet.(iv. iii. 65)

A hope of something after death? Which
pusles the braine and doth confound the
sence. (iii. i. 80)

Goodness, growing to a plurisy, Dies in his
own too much.(iv. vii. 119)

The dread of something after death, The
vndiscovered Countrey, from whose Borne No
Traueller returnes. (iii. i. 79)

'Life-rendering' suggests Laertes' own death after playing with Hamlet in the final act, Act V. Hamlet's wish for 'self-slaughter' we learn of in Act I and 'quietus' in Act III adumbrates his tragic death in the last act. Polonius' death tortures Claudius 'like a murdering-piece.' This compound is suggestive of Claudius' own death. 'Cerments,' 'enurn'd,' and 'Hearsed' suggest unnatural death of the late king. These Shakespearean neologisms are very suggestive. Interestingly enough, 'dead mens finger,' Shakespeare's invention for a flower's name 'with a sexual image'¹¹⁾ is too suggestive of Ophelia's death and its cause. 'Peace-parted' sounds pathetic because Ophelia's death is far from this epithet. We can also see some collocates in the word area 'death,' which also help to describe the essence of death.

2) sickness

Compound

And a most instant Tetter bak'd about, Most
Lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust, All
my smooth Body.(i. v. 72)

Functional conversion

Thus the Natiue hew of Resolution Is sicklied
o're, with the pale cast of Thought. (iii. i.
85)

New meaning

Like the Hecticke in my blood he rages. (iv.
iii. 68)

This Physicke but prolongs thy sickly dayes.
(iii. iii. 96)

Collocate

New meaning

Heauens face doth glow, Yea this solidity and
compound masse..Is thought-sicke. (iii. iv. 49)

The crust is 'lazar-like' as an effect of juice given by Claudius. This powerful word 'lazar-like' mentioned by Ghost upsets Hamlet as nothing else does. But the upset Hamlet cannot determine to die. His resolution is 'sicklied' and he 'rages' in Claudius' blood. So Claudius drags out 'sickly' days. The late king, Hamlet and Claudius all become slaves to 'sickness,' and 'solidity,' which is figuratively used to denote solid earth, is also 'thought-sick.' Thus we can see from Shakespearean neologisms that the entire world is afflicted with disease.

3) night

Derivation

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off.
(i. ii. 68)

Collocate

New meaning

What, ha's this thing appear'd againe to
night? (i.i.21)

The king doth wake to night and takes his
rouse, Keeps wassels and the swaggering
vpspring reeles.(i. iv. 9)

That monster custome..to the vse of actions
faire and good..giues a frock or Liurey
That aptly is put on to refraine night. (iii.
iv. 164)

The verie witching time of night, When
Churchyards yawne, and Hell it selfe breaths
out Contagion to this world.(iii. ii. 408)

In the dead wast and middle of the night. (i.
ii. 198)

Ile be your foile Laertes, in mine ignorance,
Your Skill shall like a Starre i' th' darkest
night, Sticke fiery off indeede.(v. ii. 268)

Sick Hamlet is visually depicted with the new epithet 'nighted.' 'Thing' denoting the supernatural Ghost and 'wassels,' 'reeles' and 'frock' are Shakespeare's neologisms as things peculiar to night. The dramatist tried to express new aspects of night with the neologisms 'witching,' 'contagion' and 'wast.' By using new meanings of the words in relation to night, he tried to emphasize the background night. The expression 'stick fiery off' contrasts remarkably with 'the darkest night' and it emphasizes the darkness of night and the brilliance of Laertes' skill and Laertes himself figuratively.

4) sorrow

Compound

Where be your Jibes now? Your Gambals?
Your Songs?.. Quite chopfalne. (v. i. 212)

Derivation

To perseuer In obstinate Condolement, is a
course Of impious stubbornnesse. (i. ii. 93)

New meaning

The Heart-ake, and the thousand Naturall
shockes That Flesh is heyre too.(iii. i. 62)

Nay then let the Diuel weare blacke, for Ile
haue a suite of Sables.(iii. ii. 138)

[He] Fell into a Sadnesse. (ii. ii. 147)

You must not thinke That we are made of
stuffe, so flat, and dull, That, [etc.]. (iv. vii.
31)

Collocate

Derivation

The Suruiuer bound In filiall Obligation..To
do obsequious Sorrow. (i. ii. 90)

New meaning

He..Fell into a Sadnesse...thence into a
Weaknesse. (ii. ii. 148)

Bound In filiall Obligation, for some terme
To do obsequious Sorrow.(i. ii. 91)

Shakespeare depicts Hamlet's mortal grief at his father's death with neologisms: 'condolement,' 'heart-ake,' 'sables,' 'sadness' and 'weakness.' Shakespeare could not fully express Hamlet's bitter grief without these. The dramatist created a new semantic world for Hamlet's deep sorrow with his own words. Claudius thinks of the son's grief at his father's death as 'obligation' of the 'suruiuer.' It denotes he is completely callous towards the bereaved son. He is not 'flat' at all. Ophelia's skull is depicted with a new compound, 'chopfallen.' This figuratively denotes Ophelia's sheer misery.

5) fear

Compound

He walkt, By their opprest and feare-surprized
eyes. (i. ii. 203)

Collocate

New meaning

It harrowes me with fear and wonder. (i. i.
44)

Anon the dreadfull Thunder Doth rend the region. (ii. ii. 509)

The inexpressible fear of Ghost is expressed with the Shakespearean neologisms, 'fear-surprised' and 'harrows.' Absolute horror at nature is depicted with the word 'rend.' Thus, fearfulness of both natural and supernatural things is expressed with these neologisms.

6) marriage

Compound

The Funeral Baktmeats Did coldly furnish forth the Marriage Tables. (i. ii. 181)

New meaning

Since..Hymen did our hands Vnite comutuall, in most sacred Bands.(iii. ii. 170)

...But, woe is me, you are so sick of late, (iii. ii. 173)

Collocate

New meaning

Quoth she before you tumbled me. You promis'd me to Wed. (iv. v. 62)

I doubt it is no other, but the maine, His Fathers death, and our o'er-hasty Marriage. (ii. ii. 56)

'The funeral baked meats' are suddenly transformed into something to furnish forth 'the marriage tables.' This passage shows that what appears to be 'marriage' is, in reality, a 'funeral.' 'Baked meats' is a link between the two. To 'unite comutuall, in most sacred bonds' soon becomes 'woe' and 'sickness.' This also denotes that 'marriage' in appearance is far from 'sacred bonds' but is rather woe. And 'before you tumbled me, you promised me to wed' clearly describes the very nature of determination to wed. The cause of Hamlet's distemper, the main theme of the play, is the 'over-hasty marriage' of his mother and Claudius.

7) family

Compound

My Vnckle Father, and Aunt Mother are deceiu'd. (ii. ii. 393)

New meaning

Let his Queene Mother all alone intreat him To shew his Greefes. (iii. i. 190)

Collocate

New meaning

Bound In filiall Obligation, for some terme To do obsequious Sorrow. (i. ii. 91)

The counterfet presentment of two Brothers. (iii. iv. 54)

Euen his Mother shall vncharge the practice, And call it accident. (iv. vii. 68)

He that hath kil'd my King, and whor'd my Mother.(v. ii. 64)

'Uncle-father' and 'aunt-mother' are shockingly ironical: Hamlet's uncle becomes a father and his mother becomes his aunt at the same time. 'Queen-mother' is used by Polonius in honor of her, as 'his mother' may sound too familiar. But this honorable mother can 'vncharge' not only the 'practice' but a completely different 'presentment' of the two brothers. And she is disgracefully 'whor'd.' So the author's creation, honorable 'queen-mother' also sounds ironical. These ironical words are closely related with the theme of the play.

8) desire

Functional conversion

Since Frost it selfe, as actiue doth burne, As Reason panders Will. (iii. iv. 88)

Pseudo-etymological alteration

So Lust, though to a radiant Angell link'd, Will sate it selfe in a Celestiall bed, & prey

on Garbage. (i. v. 56)

Collocate

New meaning

Keepe within the reare of your Affection; Out of the shot and danger of Desire. (i. iii. 3)

Hamlet's mother's desire, which is one of the main causes of this tragedy, is expressed with the dramatist's neologisms: 'paners' and 'sate.' Laertes advises his sister Ophelia to keep 'out of the shot of desire' to protect herself, but this advice will prove to be in vain. The neologisms in this word area tell us the desire of women, and this leads to tragedy, which is one of the main themes of the drama.

Conclusion

We have examined carefully all the words Shakespeare created and all the words used by him with new meanings in Hamlet. We can find 119 new words created by means of 42 compoundings, 18 functional shifts and 59 derivations. We can also find 336 words which were used by him with new meanings, among which 41 cases of figurative use are found. We can also find 51 special phrases which were first used by Shakespeare. He used the productive methods in the Elizabethan period very effectively to develop a new semantic world. He tried to express new ideas that no one had expressed before in his own original way.

Most of the words making up word areas in this play are closely related with the theme of the play, especially the word areas 'sorrow,' 'family' and 'desire.'¹²⁾ And 'the most striking imagery is that of bodily corruption and disease'¹³⁾ The word areas 'sickness' and 'desire' have these images and such images run throughout the play. 'Death' and 'fear' as well as 'sorrow' and 'sickness' may be word areas found only in tragedies.¹⁴⁾ Shakespeare tried to emphasize background night by using words in the word

area 'night.' Thus, interestingly enough, some word areas that the dramatist's neologisms create in Hamlet are related to a theme or a central image of the play, and such word areas are unique to tragedies.

I hope this study may illustrate some aspects of Shakespeare's variegated style. I intend to continue to investigate this attractive language of the genius.

Notes

- 1) Blake, N.F.: Shakespeare's Language p.19, Macmillan Press, London (1983).
- 2) Ibid., p.55
- 3) Gerber P.L.: The Growth of English p.62, Wadsworth Publishing Company, California (1968).
- 4) Shakespeare W.: Hamlet : John Dover Wilson ed. Cambridge University Press, London (1977).
- 5) The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc: Oxford University Press, Oxford (1994).
- 6) The following meanings are quoted from The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc except 'periwig-pated' and 'promise-crammed.' They are quoted from Schmidt A.: Shakespeare Lexicon, Walter de Gruyter & Co., Berlin and Leipzig (1923).
- 7) All the following meanings are quoted from The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc.
- 8) The following meanings are quoted from The Oxford English Dictionary Second Edition on Compact Disc, except the second 'un,' 'ment' and 'y.' The second 'un' and 'ment' are quoted from Brook G.L.: The Language of Shakespeare, p.132, p.136, W & J Mackay Limited, London (1976). 'Y' is quoted from Abott E.A.: A Shakespearian Grammar p.326, Macmilan and Co., Limited (1929).
- 9) Ikegami Y.: Imiron p.233, Taishukan Shoten, Tokyo (1975).

- 10) The names of word areas follow Robert J.L.:
Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases, Gulf
& Western Corporation, New York (1922). and
Spevack M.: A Shakespeare Thesaurus, Georg
Olms AG, Hildesheim (1993).
- 11) Kinjo S.: Shakespeare's Flowers p.178, Tohoshuppan,
Osaka (1996).
- 12) Shakespeare for Students: Mark W. Scott ed.,
p.74, Gale Research Inc., London (1992).
- 13) Ibid. p.75
- 14) Some word areas unique to comedies and
tragedies are discussed in Kawagoe E.: A Study
of Functional Shift in Shakespeare's Language,
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