



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



UNIwersYTET ŚLĄSKI
W KATOWICACH

PhD International Programme
Studies in English Literatures, Language and Translation

**An investigation into Shakespeare's Original Pronunciation (OP):
Systematising debates and data, and exploring OP at the Globe in
the 21st century**

PhD candidate

Emiliana Russo

Supervisor

Prof. Iolanda Plescia

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Prof. Rafał Boryśławski

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To Mum, Dad, Grandma and Mara

“Whether ‘tis Nobler in the minde to suffer
The Slings and Arrowes of outragious Fortune,
Or to take Armes against a Sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them”

(*Hamlet* Act III.i.1711-1714)

“There are more things in Heauen and Earth, *Horatio*,
Then are dream’t of in our Philosophy.”

(*Hamlet* Act I.v. 863-864)¹

¹ These quotations have been taken from the First Folio version of *Hamlet* (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019m).

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Conventions

While this thesis generally follows the Chicago referencing style (Author-Date), I have detached from it in some respects concerning formatting, style and punctuation. Therefore, I will outline the most significant conventions of this thesis:

Double inverted commas	titles of theatrical productions, staged readings and direct quotations
Single inverted commas	quotations within quotations and my emphatic use of words
Italics	titles of plays and books, spellings and my highlighted terms
En dashes	To emphasise phrases or various elements, in compliance with the British usage (Trask 1997)
Day-month format	Within the text in accordance with the British usage
Month-day format	In-text citation in accordance with Chicago referencing style
Arial Unicode MS	Diacritics and transcriptions

List of Abbreviations

Ado: *Much Ado about Nothing*
Ant: *Antony and Cleopatra*
AYLI: *As You Like It*²
Cym: *Cymbeline*
Ham: *Hamlet*
H5: *Henry V*
JC: *Julius Caesar*
Lear: *King Lear*
LLL: *Love's Labours Lost*
Mac: *Macbeth*
MDN: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
MV: *The Merchant of Venice*
MWW: *The Merry Wives of Windsor*
Oth: *Othello*
Per: *Pericles*
R2: *Richard II*
RJ: *Romeo and Juliet*
Shrew: *The Taming of the Shrew*
TN: *Twelfth Night*
Tro: *Troilus and Cressida*
WT: *Winter's Tale*
ME: Middle English
IME: late Middle English
EmE: Early modern English
PDE: Present-Day English
RP: Received Pronunciation
Chap.: chapter
Chaps.: chapters
Sec.: section

² For the abbreviations of Shakespeare's plays see *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Music* (Wilson and Cooke 2022).

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2015)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

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	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d			ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ	n			ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill	ʙ		r						ʀ		
Tap or Flap		ⱱ	ɾ			ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative			ɬ ɮ								
Approximant		ʋ	ɹ			ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant			l			ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Symbols to the right in a cell are voiced, to the left are voiceless. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible

CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks	Voiced implosives	Ejectives
◌ [◌] Bilabial	ɓ Bilabial	ʼ Examples:
Dental	ɗ Dental/alveolar	pʼ Bilabial
! (Post)alveolar	ɟ Palatal	tʼ Dental/alveolar
≠ Palatoalveolar	ɡ Velar	kʼ Velar
Alveolar lateral	ɠ Uvular	sʼ Alveolar fricative

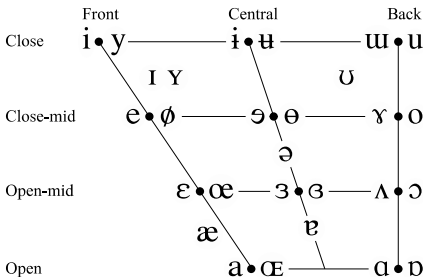
OTHER SYMBOLS

M Voiceless labial-velar fricative	ʈ ʡ Alveolo-palatal fricatives
W Voiced labial-velar approximant	ɮ Voiced alveolar lateral flap
ʋ Voiced labial-palatal approximant	ɥ Simultaneous ɟ and X
ħ Voiceless epiglottal fricative	
ʕ Voiced epiglottal fricative	Affricates and double articulations
ʢ Epiglottal plosive	can be represented by two symbols
	joined by a tie bar if necessary.

DIACRITICS Some diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. η

o Voiceless	ɸ ɸ	.. Breathily voiced	ɸ ɸ	ɸ Dental	ɸ ɸ
Voiced	ɸ ɸ	~ Creaky voiced	ɸ ɸ	ɸ Apical	ɸ ɸ
h Aspirated	ɸ ɸ	~ Linguolabial	ɸ ɸ	ɸ Laminal	ɸ ɸ
More rounded	ɸ	ʷ Labialized	ɸ ^ʷ ɸ ^ʷ	~ Nasalized	ɸ
Less rounded	ɸ	ʲ Palatalized	ɸ ^ʲ ɸ ^ʲ	ɸ Nasal release	ɸ ^ɸ
Advanced	ɸ	ʏ Velarized	ɸ ^ʏ ɸ ^ʏ	ɸ Lateral release	ɸ ^ɸ
Retracted	ɸ	ɣ Pharyngealized	ɸ ^ɣ ɸ ^ɣ	ɸ No audible release	ɸ ^ɸ
Centralized	ɸ	~ Velarized or pharyngealized	ɸ		
× Mid-centralized	ɸ	ɹ Raised	ɸ (ɸ = voiced alveolar fricative)		
ɹ Syllabic	ɸ	ɹ Lowered	ɸ (ɸ = voiced bilabial approximant)		
Non-syllabic	ɸ	ɹ Advanced Tongue Root	ɸ		
~ Rhoticity	ɸ ɸ	ɹ Retracted Tongue Root	ɸ		

VOWELS



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

SUPRASEGMENTALS

- | Primary stress |foʊnə'tɪʃən
- | Secondary stress
- ː Long eː
- ˑ Half-long eˑ
- ◌ Extra-short ě
- | Minor (foot) group
- || Major (intonation) group
- Syllable break .i.ækt
- ◌ Linking (absence of a break)

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS

LEVEL		CONTOUR	
ě	or ǃ Extra high	ě	or ǃ Rising
é	ǃ High	ê	ǃ Falling
ē	ǃ Mid	ě	ǃ High rising
è	ǃ Low	ě	ǃ Low rising
ě	ǃ Extra low	ě	ǃ Rising-falling
↓	Downstep	↗	Global rise
↑	Upstep	↘	Global fall

Introduction

Whenever one thinks of Shakespeare's language, one may instantly recall its distinctive vocabulary (e.g. *thou*, *yonder*, *eglantine*). The immediate association between the playwright's language and lexicon may not only be due to the divergence between (a few) present-day and Shakespearean lexical items but also to the "Shakespeare as word-coiner" myth (see Crystal 2008a) – to name but two factors. However, as striking as the Shakespearean vocabulary appears, the lexical plane was not a priority back in the playwright's day; the sphere of sounds was. As Norman Francis Blake remarks, "[t]he Elizabethans were more interested in the relationship between sound and writing. The focus of linguistic interest at this period was directed towards sound, not to vocabulary or syntax" (1983, 20). Blake also maintains that, while reading Shakespeare, we tend to pay too much attention to vocabulary or to establish a hierarchical relationship between lexicon and sounds; yet, in so doing, "we are in danger of judging Shakespeare's poetry on premises different from those on which it was written, and so we may ignore the reasons which led him to choose a particular word" (46). Thus, in Shakespeare's works (verbal) sounds¹ are of paramount importance, and, albeit in different terms, their centrality is also claimed by A. L. Rowse (qtd. in Rubinstein 1989, xii), Charles Barber (1997, 36-37) and Jonathan Hope (2003, 6-7).

It is with Shakespearean sounds or, more precisely, pronunciation that this thesis engages. In particular, this work aims to systematise the 21st debates and information on Shakespearean pronunciation or Original Pronunciation, as it is also called, and on related theatrical productions, and to add small-scope studies to the picture.² A caveat is in order: by Shakespeare's, Shakespearean pronunciation or Original Pronunciation (henceforth OP),³ I do not mean the sounds ascribable to the man but rather to the playwright and, more precisely, his works. Yet, scholars do not always share the same views and, as will be seen, at times maintain that Shakespeare's personal pronunciation is inferable from his plays. Having clarified that, one may wonder why I have designated current debates and data on Shakespearean pronunciation as my object of enquiry. The following sections will

¹ Non-verbal sounds, considered to hold utmost significance in Shakespeare's works, have been the object of scrutiny in different studies such as Bruce Smith's *The Acoustic World of early modern England: attending to the O-factor* (1999) and Wes Folkert's *The sound of Shakespeare* (2014).

² This thesis does not deal with soundscapes, so musical cues and sound effects or even reactions to them have not been investigated.

³ Synonyms such as Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation will be used throughout this thesis.

attempt to provide an answer to this question, after looking into both past and contemporary scholarship.

21st-century scholarship: Previous reconstructions and theatrical experiments

If one starts to delve into the 21st-century scholarship on Shakespeare's sounds, one encounters an interest in past philological work and various experiments. Scholarly voices establish the beginning of the first systematic reconstructions of Shakespearean phonology – that is, the second half of the 19th century – and account for studies such as those by Helge Kökeritz, E. J. Dobson and Fausto Cercignani (Barrett 2013, Crystal 2013, Johnson 2019, Venegas Meza 2022). As can be assumed, these works are tackled by present studies to different extents, but, if scholarship is considered as a whole, a rather accurate portrayal is provided. Apart from previous philological output, current scholarship on OP also examines past radio programmes and theatrical performances employing the reconstructed sounds, the first of which reportedly corresponds to Daniel Jones' "Scenes from Shakespeare in the Original Pronunciation" (Barrett 2013, Crystal 2013, Meier 2016, Massai 2020).⁴

Given the existence of detailed studies, I will not engage with an analysis of the works and productions predating the 21st century, but I find it necessary to offer an overview of some of the major studies of the previous century. The main reason for

⁴ Historical documents suggest that, prior to "Scenes", some version of OP was employed in "Jacques's soliloquy" as spoken by W. J. Churchill, and in a lecture by Dr H. H. Furness. According to an article in *The Daily News* quoted in *Jahrbuch XXVI*, a certain "Mr W. J. Churchill" recited "Jacques's soliloquy" in his reconstructed version of Shakespearean pronunciation at the end of the 19th century, in all likelihood 1890 ("Shakespeare's Sprache bei seinen Lebzeiten" 1891, 119; see also "Shakespeare, Pronunciation" 1892, 163-164). The soliloquy – which followed a discussion of reconstructed sounds (for the possible text of the presentation, see Churchill 1890) – was "more respectfully listened to", although it was "clearly not one for mixed audiences" (*Jahrbuch XXVI* 1891, 119). As based on another source, an article in *Poet lore*, the use of OP for the *As You Like it* extract was preceded by another oral experiment with reconstructed pronunciation, in that H. H. Furness uttered Elizabethan sounds before Churchill did: "Philadelphians will remember Dr. H. H. Furness, several years ago, in the course of one of his lectures, gave his hearers the same example of the rotund Elizabethan oratory" ("Shakespeare, Pronunciation" 1892, 164). It is, however, not clear what he performed Shakespearean or Elizabethan passages were in such a case since the article omits any explicit reference to them. Considering both Churchill's and Furness's events and in particular the occurrence of Shakespearean sounds in lectures, it should be pointed out that these initiatives were not proper theatrical performances or performances from beginning to end. Nonetheless, as Churchill's and Furness's events entailed recited passages in Shakespearean pronunciation, they should be acknowledged as including the very act of performing in OP. Taking everything into account, it is likely that, before Jones's "Scenes", the first recorded adoption of OP in a (limited) performative sense was in Churchill's and Furness's events.

this digression lies in the fact that the scholarly texts introduced here will be mentioned in different capacities throughout my thesis, and a prior presentation may help orientate the reader. First of all, in addition to mounting selected scenes in OP in 1909, Daniel Jones published *The Pronunciation of English*, which is “a seminal work on the English language” (Barrett 2013, 201). The book is divided into two parts: the former deals with phonetics, “that is the analysis and classification of the elementary speech sounds of the English language” (1909, v); and the latter offers phonetic transcriptions, and references Wilhelm Viëtor for a passage from *Julius Caesar* (II.ii)⁵ in Shakespearean reconstructed pronunciation (103-104).⁶ According to David Crystal, in the 1950 edition of the work Jones had the “confidence to present his own transcription of the ‘Friends, Romans and Countrymen’ speech from *Julius Caesar*” (Crystal 2013, 12), but later on Jones acknowledged the presence of “several misjudgments in his earlier transcriptions” in response to Helge Kökeritz’s *Shakespeare’s Pronunciation* (1953) (Barrett 2013, 202),⁷ and revised his transcription (1956) with the help of A.C. Gimson⁸ and Randolph Quirk (Barrett 2013, 202; see also Crystal 2013, 13). Jones, however, did not accept all of Kökeritz’s indications; by way of illustration, he did not see words such as “speak” and “meat” as featuring the same vowel as “take” and “make” (Barrett 2013, 203).

Even if only negatively, Helge Kökeritz’s *Shakespeare’s Pronunciation* (1953) seems to have been influenced by Jones’ earlier work; specifically, as Barrett notices,

⁵ It is the famous “Friends, Romans and Countrymen” speech spoken by Antony. To have a rough idea of the lines, see the Folio version of *Julius Caesar* (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019l, 1610-1644).

⁶ The passage is to be found in Wilhelm Viëtor’s, *Shakespeare’s pronunciation: A Shakespeare reader in the old spelling and with a phonetic transcription – Volume II* (1906, 131-133). This volume includes a multitude of phonetic transcriptions in Shakespearean pronunciation based on passages from poems (e.g. *Venus and Adonis*) and plays (e.g. *Romeo and Juliet*). On the other hand, the first volume illustrates the reconstructed phonological system by setting as its main goal “the pronunciation adopted by Shakespeare in his published works” (1906, viii; author’s emphasis), and by devoting much space to rhymes. For more information, consult Barrett 2013 (196-199) and Crystal 2013 (9-10).

⁷ Barrett does not make explicit reference to the third edition of Jones’s work (1950).

⁸ A.C. Gimson authored *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English* (1962), in which the ‘dagger’ speech from *Macbeth* is presented in reconstructed pronunciation (1962, 79). Crystal, who highlights the cooperation between Gimson and Jones, maintains that the selection of the monologue was due to Gimson’s linguistic work for “Macbeth” in OP in 1952 (2013, 13; REDACTED REDACTED). In his section on the reconstruction tools for Early modern English, Gimson illustrates, on a general plane, sources which he may have used himself for the Shakespearean pronunciation. In addition to acknowledging spelling and rhymes and implying the use of metre, Gimson depicts external evidence – the published works of the contemporary grammarians, orthoepists, and schoolmasters – as “the most important and fruitful evidence for this period [Early modern English period]” (1962, 77).

Kökeritz's "theories may have been formulated as a reaction to Daniel Jones's well-articulated, and in some respects over-conservative, version of OP and in some ways veer too far in the opposite direction" (2013, 205). *Shakespeare's Pronunciation*, which will reappear throughout this thesis, has as its main purpose the reconstruction of Shakespeare's acquired pronunciation, that is, "good colloquial English then spoken in London" (5), also regarded as "some kind of standard pronunciation" (4). The work – including a practical section with phonetic transcriptions – is extremely linear in its argumentation and discussion of evidence, both internal and external to the playwrights' works.⁹ Such a linearity is probably one of the greatest achievements of the text,¹⁰ which has been praised for its "care" by scholars such as Norman E. Eliason.¹¹ The book, however, has not only attracted flattering words, but it has also incurred both subtle and more open criticism. Among others, Hilda Hulme maintains that the reintegration of spelling evidence discarded by Kökeritz may lead to different findings in terms of consonants (1954, 368);¹² and Barrett laments the "mistaken premise" establishing a similarity between Shakespeare's and today's pronunciations and resulting in a manipulation of proof (2013, 204).¹³

As E.J. Dobson himself affirms, for his *English pronunciation 1500-1700* (1957) he did not rely that much on Kökeritz's text due to the late availability of *Shakespeare's Pronunciation* (1968 Volume I, xi).¹⁴ Compared with the latter, Dobson's work – made up of two volumes, *Survey of the sources* and *Phonology* – is much broader, in that it does not exclusively engage with Shakespeare's pronunciation and his time

⁹ Internal evidence is, however, of paramount importance in that, as Kökeritz affirms, his "study is based on and endeavours to treat *exhaustively* the phonological material to be found in Shakespeare's plays and poems (1953, 15; my emphasis).

¹⁰ Another achievement of the work may be its potentially pivotal role in the development of the theatrical production "The Merry Wives of Windsor". As Keith Johnson puts it: "His [Kökeritz's] interest in OP has practical outcomes, and in 1954 he coached a cast of actors at Yale for an OP performance of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*" (2019, Pos 3162).

¹¹ According to Norman E. Eliason, "the principal merit of the work lies in the thoroughness with which all kinds of relevant phonological evidence have been assembled and the care with which they have been interpreted" (1954, 413).

¹² "A consideration of some of the discarded occasional spellings of the First Folio, backed up by scores of similar spellings from contemporary manuscripts and by statements of some of the orthoepists, might well modify this conclusion" (1954, 368).

¹³ "Kökeritz begins his analysis of OP with the somewhat mistaken premise that Elizabethan English pronunciation was very close to modern English. From this starting point, he tends to bend the evidence to suit his own aims" (Barrett 2013, 204).

¹⁴ I have not had the chance to consult the 1957 edition, but in the 1968 edition the first preface is included. In this preface, Dobson admits that "[a] revised typescript was ready for press in the autumn of 1953, and it is for this reason that I take little or no account of several important recent works", before stating that Kökeritz's book was provided to him when he had finished revising his typescript (1968, xi).

period but spans from 1500 to 1700. Further, Dobson distances himself from Kökeritz in the importance (and attention) he ascribes to external evidence, his “main source” (Johnson 2019, 126); and he ends up resorting to “more than 50 orthoepists”, of whom “a good number” lived in Shakespeare’s day (127). According to Barrett, if *English pronunciation* is “read in conjunction with Kökeritz, very few stones are left unturned in these rigorous analyses” (2013, 206). Yet, despite its merits and indirect praise (Crystal 2013),¹⁵ Dobson’s book could be seen as encompassing flaws, among which are a great complexity potentially unappealing to non-specialists, and an outdated methodology (Dobbie 1958, 111).

Also quite distant from Kökeritz’s book is Fausto Cercignani’s *Shakespeare’s Works and Elizabethan Pronunciation* (1981).¹⁶ The departure from Kökeritz is already evident in its title, where there is no reference to Shakespeare’s pronunciation but rather to the period and Shakespeare’s works. In addition, and more significantly, Cercignani openly discusses (or rather, reviews) Kökeritz’s work, and sees its “handling and interpretation of Shakespeare’s rhymes, puns, and spellings” as “marred by a determined effort to prove, despite contemporary external evidence to the contrary, that the pronunciation adopted by Shakespeare in London was so far advanced as to be almost identical with that of present educated Southern English” (1981, vii). Apart from being critical of Kökeritz’s methodology and goal, Cercignani stands against the idea that Shakespeare’s works make use of an acquired pronunciation.¹⁷ To him, “[i]t is indeed demonstrably true that, not only in his plays but also in his poems, Shakespeare exploited different modes of pronunciation, either for dramatic purposes or because of technical expediency” (1981, viii). And, soon enough, Cercignani states that Shakespeare’s personal pronunciation “is now lost beyond recovery” (1981, 1).

Though proposing “a tentative phonemic system”, Cercignani’s text appears to be more directed towards an investigation into evidence in relation with Shakespeare’s works rather than a definitive determination of their sounds (1981,

¹⁵ Crystal mentions him several times and, when discussing Alexander Ellis, he says that “his account is unprecedented in its detail, and not to be surpassed until Dobson (1957) almost a century later!” (2013; REDACTED).

¹⁶ In focussing on the departure from Kökeritz’s *Shakespeare’s pronunciation*, I have not stressed the closeness between Cercignani’s and Dobson’s works, highlighted, for example, by Barrett (2013, 208) and Schäfer (1985, 420).

¹⁷ Cercignani criticises numerous aspects of Kökeritz’s work such as his use of puns, spellings and rhymes (1981, 4-30). Providing a meticulous analysis of Kökeritz’s book, Cercignani’s text configures itself as an actual response to the former.

viii and 2).¹⁸ As a proof of this, unlike Kökeritz and several of his predecessors, Cercignani does not try his hand at transcriptions in his work (“no attempt will be made to resuscitate the original sound of Shakespeare’s verse and prose by means of transcriptions such as those provided by Kökeritz, Viëtor, and Ellis” 1981, viii), but he ‘only’ provides reconstructed sounds as corroborated by abundant evidence. Over the years, Cercignani’s text has been showered with laudatory remarks from scholars. For Andrew Gurr, it was “the best work available” in 2001, and for Barrett it constituted “[t]he most rigorous study to date of Shakespearean pronunciation, which puts into perspective all the previous work on the subject” in 2013 (208). Still in 2013, for Crystal the work was “the latest and fullest attempt to review all the evidence of rhymes, puns, spellings, and metrics in the Shakespeare corpus” (2013, 13).

Finally, it is worth taking into account Charles Barber’s *Early Modern English* (1997). Its first edition dates back to 1976, and it was shortly depicted as “the most thorough study [...] of this period”, which “might also prove interesting to a wider audience, since it is written in a most readable style” (1977, 1761). Compared with most of the texts mentioned above, *Early Modern English* is of a broader scope, even surpassing that of Dobson’s work: it does not exclusively tackle phonology but also deals with other linguistic planes such as morphology and syntax of the general period (1500-1700). In terms of Shakespearean pronunciation, the text does not linger on a reconstruction, properly speaking, but provides references (133) and offers a thorough general portrayal of evolving sounds, of the Great Vowel Shift and suprasegmental features. Its great value for phonological studies arguably lies in these elements; and, as will be shown, this text constitutes an essential tool for scholars and reflections in this thesis.¹⁹

¹⁸ This is clear when one looks at Cercignani’s stated goals. In his Preface, the scholar states: “The first aim of this volume is [...] to ascertain to what extent Shakespeare’s works afford reliable evidence of the types of speech which we know from external testimony to have been current in London during his lifetime”; and “[...] the second aim of this volume is to provide a comprehensive discussion of all those rhymes, puns, spellings, and metrical peculiarities which, though useless in establishing contemporary phonemic systems, either require historical interpretation or somehow help to enrich the picture” (1981, viii). In his Introduction, Cercignani continues to define his aims and holds that “[t]he principal object of this investigation will therefore be to examine every bit of evidence from Shakespeare’s work with a view to establishing, with the help of contemporary external testimony and of earlier and later date, whether any particular rhyme, pun, or spelling can be assumed to provide information on Elizabethan phonological systems or whether it can at most be taken to reveal the use of a historical variant” (1981, 2).

¹⁹ I have not listed or described the theatrical experiments in the 20th century, since they are adequately examined in literature (e.g. Barrett 2013) and are not mentioned throughout my thesis.

21st-century scholarship: New reconstructions and performances

Having provided an outline of critical studies of the 20th-century that feature in my thesis, I intend to continue my brief exploration of the 21st-century scholarship. In the previous section, such scholarship has been referred to as looking into past reconstructions as well as theatrical performances and radio programmes. However, the 21st-scholarship also produces new work on Shakespeare's pronunciation: it shapes 'original' reconstructions (e.g. Crystal 2005a, Barrett 2013) and reflects upon their effects and performances in the new millennium (e.g. Barrett 2013, Massai 2020). Impetus for such research seems to have been the use of Original Pronunciation²⁰ at Shakespeare's Globe in 2004, when "Romeo and Juliet" was staged in both RP²¹ and OP thanks to the guidance of an eminent linguist, David Crystal.

Since then, there has been a scholarly and theatrical investment in the reconstructed pronunciation, led by David Crystal himself. In 2005, for example, a book on the staging of "Romeo and Juliet" authored by the scholar came out (*Pronouncing Shakespeare*), and a new production, "Troilus and Cressida", was mounted exclusively in OP at the Globe again with the linguistic expertise of Crystal. But, in spite of various publications and stagings in OP in the 21st century, no attempt has been made at systematising debates and information, and at looking into the OP experimentation at Shakespeare's Globe (2004-2005).²² In other words, no work exists that gathers and ponders upon scattered current debates and information on Shakespeare's pronunciation and on the use of OP in the Globe experiments, the first recorded performances in the 21st century. I therefore aim to address this scientific gap. One may ask why such a systematisation is needed. To put it simply, it would aid us in understanding what has been happening to the reconstructed pronunciation and in thinking about where it may and could go, both on a scholarly plane and on a theatrical level. This is, in essence, the rationale behind my thesis.

For the sake of precision, I have not captured *all* the debates and theatrical data on OP, but I have tried to delineate the main ones, i.e. those taking centre stage or

²⁰ The label was coined at this point.

²¹ Another label that is used to refer to this variety of English is "Standard Southern British English" or "Southern British Standard" considered, among the others, by John C. Wells (1982, 117). Yet, given the abundant use of "RP" in OP literature, I have opted for this. And, in line with OP studies, I will not make any distinction between internal subdivisions of this accent (e.g. *upper crust*, *adoptive* and *mainstream*, *upper* in Wells 1982 Volume 2, 279-286; see also Ranzato 2017, 28-39).

²² Crystal's *Pronouncing Shakespeare* only focuses on the production "Romeo and Juliet" (2004) and does not systematically concentrate on aspects such as audience responses.

having the potential to be developed. Even more importantly, I have not produced a sheer systematisation but rather one that is 'impure' or 'spurious'. The reason for such a choice lies in the gaps left by literature on OP, and by my goal to actively contribute to the field, by offering different points of view and concrete enrichment. As Chap. 2 will show, regional and foreign sounds are not always thoroughly discussed by OP texts, so, even though I could have exclusively dealt with the OP field, I have also resorted to other debates such as those marking dialect literature. In this way, my intention has not only been to supply further data but also (and above all) to expand the field and show other ways of enriching OP research. This does not mean that I have covered all the literature on, for example, regional or foreign sounds; in the case of Shakespeare, given the vast amount of studies, this would have been a titanic enterprise. Rather, I have 'appropriated' elements from essential debates capable of providing food for thought and of generating alternative thinking.

My research can also be regarded as 'impure' in respects other than its use of non-OP scholarship. Apart from examining scholarly sources, it has built new material (e.g. my transcription for "Henry OP") and integrated, with scholarly output, testimonies theatrical in nature (e.g. reviews) and newspaper articles, as Chap. 3 and Chap. 4 will make clear. To put it differently, as my work is not only interested in pursuing scholarly voices concerning OP but also OP itself, a consideration of non-scholarly perspectives has been deemed fundamental to discuss responses to productions. To be sure, non-scholarly voices have not taken over, but have always been connected to, or 'guided' by, scholarly debates.

One may then counter that the scope of my thesis is too broad, and that, given my specialisation in English linguistics, I should have limited myself to selecting the 21st-century reconstructions without an exploration of the theatrical sphere and its debates. Yet, setting aside the subsequent failure in filling a scientific gap, in so doing, I would not have done any justice to the close link between OP and theatre in the new millennium. Even more crucially, I would have confined my study to a highly specialised, technical field without the concrete possibility of reflecting on OP, theatre and society.²³ We live at a time when some maintain that Shakespeare's language is too difficult and should be translated in Present-Day English (Bassnett 2001; Play on Shakespeare 2024), so why should we use OP in theatrical

²³ My project has always set the theatrical dimension as pivotal, even more than the philological one. In fact, originally, my thesis was supposed to investigate the intelligibility, comprehensibility and appreciation of OP productions with a special focus on "King Lear" (2021) at Baltimore Shakespeare Factory. However, the Covid-19 pandemic prevented me from carrying out field research, so I was unable to further proceed with my plan.

productions? What are its advantages and disadvantages? But, above all, what is the value of OP? These are the additional questions that my thesis will attempt to answer in my conclusion, after having brought order to the main debates and data on OP.

Technical aspects and structure of the thesis

I have already made reference to the corpus for this thesis, but I will now offer a clearer view of it and shed light on other technicalities of my work: my object of investigation, time frame and the type of analysis conducted. So far, I have acknowledged debates and information on OP, performances and the Globe experimentation as my object of investigation, and these all fall under the umbrella term of OP literature. My working definition of OP literature reads as follows: 21st-century texts in English²⁴ discussing OP and making use of such a label or those writings dealing with an equivalent expression (e.g. Shakespeare's pronunciation) and focusing on either the phonological/phonetic dimension of the Shakespearean works or OP performances or both.²⁵ As my definition reiterates, the 21st century is my time frame, but, to be more precise, my OP material covers the years from 2000 to 2022. However, for specific theatrical investigations I have selected a shorter period in response to the first recorded performance in OP in the 21st century (2004), and the time when my small-scope studies were performed (2021).²⁶

This determination of OP literature and of my time frame has enabled me to build my corpus, which consists of books, essays, academic articles and reviews and theses, dealing with OP and/or performances in OP;²⁷ and of video recordings, newspapers articles, reviews, interviews, show reports still tackling OP, particularly performances. Yet, as mentioned before, I have also included texts, especially books and articles, belonging to other fields such as dialect literature, and – I should point out – literary studies, especially when dealing with the plays *Romeo and Juliet* and *Troilus and Cressida* and their stagings at the Globe.²⁸

²⁴ Occasional references to non-English texts have been made, but these are not OP texts; only Vitória M. T. Rufino's thesis (2019) is.

²⁵ Literature on the reconstructions of sonnets and poems in OP has not been investigated, since my main focus is Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation in relation to theatrical performances.

²⁶ Some interviews and personal correspondence date back to 2023, but they refer to previous performances and experiences.

²⁷ All the material has been gathered through online bibliographical searches, short stays at the British Library and the Globe Theatre.

²⁸ It should be clarified that non-OP literature does not follow the 21st-century principle or 2022 as *terminus ad quem*. For example, major literary studies relevant to my points were compiled in the

In terms of methodology, the OP material under scrutiny has been examined qualitatively. To identify the main debates and data, I have prioritised recurring themes relating to OP or critical elements worth dissecting. To collate data and observations and give a proper shape to the debates, I have interpreted, summarised and critically analysed scholarly and, whenever possible, non-scholarly content. Lastly, to prepare my small-scope investigations aimed at developing the OP field, I have designated parameters (e.g. references to comprehensibility in reviews) serving specific purposes, which will be illustrated each time.

By now, it should be clear that OP and OP performances – filtered through scholarly and non-scholarly lenses – form the core of my thesis. For greater clarity, they will be devoted separate chapters, before they are made to interact with each other towards the end of my work. This thesis is then structured as follows:

The first two chapters focus on phonological and phonetic aspects of OP by looking into selected 21st-century works. Initially, in an attempt to build a bridge between the past and the present, Chap. 1 explores references to 20th-century works on the part of current scholarship reconstructing Shakespearean sounds. After that, the chapter scrutinises the object(s) of reconstruction and tools of selected 21st-century studies, but, even more importantly, it tackles the segmental dimension as presented by scholars and attempts to systematise Shakespeare's reconstructed sounds and compare them, whenever possible. On systematising and comparing phonemes and phones, I could have delved deeper into technical issues in order to express an ultimate judgment on the correctness or plausibility of the reconstructed sounds. However, this was not my objective; the search for clarity and order of existing content was. As for Chap. 2, it is configured as a natural continuation of Chap. 1, tackling the suprasegmental dimension of the pronunciation still by resorting to pivotal works. But, as previously stated, it also considers regional and foreign sounds and, to such an end, I transcend the boundaries of OP literature to provide some more elements and reflections concerning the 'deviant' Shakespearean sounds.

If the first two chapters, especially Chap. 2, only touch on theatre by means of hypotheses and the latest findings on the pronunciation used in performances in Shakespeare's day, Chap. 3 and Chap. 4 are fully immersed in the theatrical world. Chap. 3 takes a careful note of the debates on theatrical productions, namely the resonances and effects of OP and audience responses, whilst offering a systematisation of data on performances and an analysis of reviews, both covering

previous century and Carmen Gallo's introduction to her *Romeo and Juliet* translation, which I have included in my analysis of rhymes, was published in 2023.

the time span from 2004 to 2021. This chapter also paves the way for the following one by introducing fundamental ideas such as the comprehensibility and appreciation of OP.

In general terms, Chap. 4 offers a micro-systematisation within a macro-systematisation (or a systematisation within a systematisation). In fact, it provides a 'reconstruction' of the OP dimension of the productions "Romeo and Juliet" (2004) and "Troilus and Cressida" (2005) at Shakespeare's Globe and of the OP experimentation at the theatre, within a broader work aimed at systematising general debates and information on OP. In particular, this chapter presents an investigation into the rationale and features of the two performances by exploiting existing literature, especially that authored by Crystal, and my own observations. It also examines some of the recovered rhymes and their effects resulting from my own research, and the reception of the OP in both productions and in the Globe experimentation altogether. Lastly, Chap. 4 allows the reader to have a quick look at the 'afterlife' of OP at the Globe through the staged readings "Macbeth" (2014) and "Henry V" (2016) and to further reflect on Crystal's *Dictionary* – recurring throughout my work – as a practical tool thanks to my transcription of "Henry V".

At the very end of this work, the Conclusion takes stock of the analysed debates and data, and adds insights – because debates constantly lend themselves to further expansion. Ultimately, this concluding segment addresses my questions regarding the advantages, disadvantages, and the value of OP, and points out the future directions and limitations of my research.²⁹

²⁹ My thesis is also made up of a second volume which gathers various appendices. They are generally referenced throughout the current volume.

CHAPTER 1

Original pronunciation in the 21st century: From past studies to the segmental dimension

Introduction

This and the next chapter intend to introduce and analyse debates and information on methodological and phonological aspects of Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation in the 21st century. In particular, this chapter will outline the main points of reference, tools and objectives of pivotal work on OP – the work of David Crystal, David Barrett, Roger Lass and Paul Meier. It will also attempt to systematise the selected scholars' reconstructed segments, that is, vowels (short, long and diphthongs) and consonants or elements concerning the latter. In performing the aforementioned study, I aim to thoroughly reflect on the reconstruction process/es for the playwright's pronunciation, bring order to available knowledge, and ultimately enrich the field of OP reconstructions.

1.1 Reconstructing Shakespeare's sounds

The 21st-century studies regarding Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation neither encountered a "misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms" nor worked in a vacuum. Before delving into the reconstructed sounds of OP,¹ I will shed light on the influence of previous investigations, presented in the very Introduction to this thesis, and to provide insight into the object of reconstruction and the tools utilised by the studies selected here as a point of reference, that is, David Crystal's, David Barrett's, Roger Lass's and Paul Meier's.

¹ From now on, Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation will often be referred to as OP. The use of such a label is rooted in its explicit adoption on the part of REDACTED, Barrett (2013) and Meier and in at least two occurrences in the case of Lass ("if they [the words]'re read with an attempt at the *original pronunciation*" and "in a reconstructed *original pronunciation*" 2001, 264; my emphasis).

1.1.1 The influence of previous studies

Complete adherence to any previous investigations and reconstructions is not conceivable nor observed in the major texts under investigation, but reliance on antecedent writings is claimed to a greater or lesser extent.

While Meier and Lass have been excluded from this investigation – the former declares to follow Crystal on the cover page of his booklet (n.d.)² and constantly refers to him in a description of OP sounds (Meier 2016, 179),³ and the latter limits himself to recommending Kökeritz (1953) and Lass (1999) as further readings (2001, 268)⁴ – Crystal and Barrett or, more precisely, their words will be subject to scrutiny. Both scholars weave what appears as a thread tying their reconstructed pronunciations to Kökeritz's, Dobson's and Barber's.⁵ In fact, Crystal labels Helge Kökeritz's *Shakespeare's Pronunciation*, E. J. Dobson's *English Pronunciation 1500-1700* and Charles Barber's *Early Modern English* as the "several powerful sets of shoulders" he leaned on (2005a, 19). Barrett, on the other hand, acknowledges his debt to Crystal in terms of transcription (2013, 10 and 231),⁶ but he also depicts Kökeritz, Dobson and Barber as major sources for his transcription policy (2013, 10 and 231; see also 2020, 10)⁷, detailing their contribution (2020). In particular, he claims that:

² The text may have been published simultaneously with Meier's production "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (2010) or certainly before the publication of *The Oxford Dictionary of Original Shakespearean Pronunciation* by David Crystal (2016a). In the Introduction to his transcription for "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (n.d. (b)), Meier lists preparatory material for his cast, which includes this booklet (2).

³ Based on the cover of his booklet, Meier relies on Crystal's reconstruction of OP, rather than shaping Shakespeare's pronunciation himself. However, I have recently noticed that Meier quotes some scholars in a publication of his, though not acknowledging his debt to them: "[...] modern linguists such as David Crystal, E. J. Dobson, A. C. Gimson, Daniel Jones, Helge Kökeritz and J. C. Wells tell us with confidence how our Elizabethan ancestors pronounced their words" (2016, 179).

⁴ It is not clear in what way Lass deploys the texts, since they "often disagree with each other" (2001, 268). With reference to Roger Lass's *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, it should be noticed that Crystal consulted the book, which seems to frame language and "pronunciation change" from a historical perspective (2005a, 19-20).

⁵ Both Crystal and Barrett are, to some extent, influenced by Daniel Jones and Arthur C. Gimson. Barrett engages with and has admittedly learnt from their transcriptions (2013, 10 and 231), whereas, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, Crystal claims that Barton's transcriptions were extremely akin to his own, which is a result of Jones being both Barton's and Gimson's teacher, and Crystal being one of Gimson's students (2005a, 21; see also Meier 2011a, 214). Regarding Barton's influence, it must be pointed out that Crystal leaned on his and Peter Hall's theatrical experiments as valid points of reference for his reconstruction (2005a, 20).

⁶ Unless otherwise specified, "Barrett 2013" refers to his thesis; whenever Barrett's appendices will be used, this information will be provided.

⁷ Among the sources consulted, Barrett also includes Terttu Neviläinen (2006) (2013, 231).

My main go-text was EJ Dobson's *English Pronunciation 1500-1700*. This falls into two volumes, the first being a survey of the contemporary sources, those writers of the period who described contemporary pronunciation in some detail (albeit without a standard phonetic alphabet), sometimes in justification of a standardized spelling system. These writers are known as the Orthoepists. The second volume of Dobson consists of a detailed discussion of the phonology of the two-hundred-year period. Also very useful was Helga [Helge] Kökeritz's *Shakespeare's Pronunciation*. As well as including a survey of Shakespearean phonology, Kökeritz also includes a rhyming dictionary, a list of common syncopations (words containing elided syllables, which affect the metre) and evidence of Elizabethan pronunciation in Shakespearean puns. Cercignani's *Shakespeare's Works and Elizabethan Pronunciation* is useful for cross-referencing pronunciations and for an alternative perspective, although it is harder to use to look up individual pronunciations. Finally, Charles Barber's *Early Modern English* gives a wider view of the language of the time but includes a really useful chapter on phonology. Understandably, these four works do not agree all aspects of the pronunciation (Barrett 2020, 9).

As can be seen, Barrett assigns the above-mentioned writings different functions in his reconstructed sound system – with Dobson's being his “main” asset – and makes them all interact with an additional text, Cercignani's. Whilst this book is quoted elsewhere by Barrett as a further guide for his transcription (2013, 231), REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED.

It should be noticed that, before the release of the *Dictionary*, Kökeritz looms large in Crystal's works. Unlike Barrett, who immediately declares distance from Kökeritz's “advanced” vowel system (2013, 143), uncontested acknowledgement of Kökeritz's impact on Crystal's work is evidenced in the following lines, in which Dobson's contribution is also recognised:

Fortunately, I did not have to do the basic work myself. That is the splendid achievement of Kökeritz, Dobson, and other historians of the language, over the past fifty years. I meant what I said when I talked about standing on shoulders (Crystal 2005a, 54).

Reconstructions of this kind are based on four kinds of evidence, meticulously collated by scholars such as Kökeritz and Dobson (Crystal 2011a, 3).

Other instances suggest Crystal's greater indebtedness to Kökeritz: the consideration of the latter's analysis of rhymes (Crystal 2008a, 132) and the

mentioning of his retrieved puns (144). This dependence on Kökeritz's work on the part of Crystal may seem to confirm the former as responsible for "the recent surge of interest in OP", as depicted by Jonson (2019,120).

That said, as an exploration of Crystal's later scientific output reveals, his acceptance of Kökeritz's findings does not translate into blind acceptance and utter rejection of alternative evidence. As a matter of fact, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED:

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In closing, Barrett and Crystal — by their own admission — look back at similar studies, but it can be inferred from Crystal's written production that the scholars' use of previous investigations diverges in at least the consultation of and the value attributed to Dobson's, Kökeritz's and Cercignani's works. Still considering Crystal's writings, difference does not only result from a comparison with Barrett's production but also with itself: as Crystal's reconstruction work evolves or simply changes throughout time, it reveals 'new' influences – Cercignani's – absent in earlier works (e.g. 2005a).

1.1.2 Object of reconstruction

Having briefly illustrated the different and varying impact of previous works on those produced in the 21st century, I will now take into account the scholars' object of investigation or, more precisely, reconstruction. Then I will proceed to identify the actual tools employed.

Although one may be tempted to see the reconstructive works and efforts as delimiting their field of investigation similarly or pursuing the very same objective/s, such is not the case. To begin with, in Barrett's writings, a subtle line between Shakespeare's pronunciation and the sounds utilised in theatre is drawn, but both are claimed as objectives of the study. Specifically, while maintaining that devices such as rhymes and puns give insight into Shakespeare's pronunciation, the scholar states that his "project was concerned not solely with Shakespeare's own pronunciation but with that of the London stage in his era" (2013, 226; 2020, 9). Consequently, a distinction between Shakespeare's and the theatre's pronunciations is inferable, and, at least on the surface, this does not penalise either, since both are declared as Barrett's object of reconstruction. In practice, however, the linguist does not seem to put the collection and assemblage of the sounds of Shakespeare on an equal footing with the general – dramatic – pronunciation of the time. On the contrary, by not indulging in the exemplification of the Shakespearean 'personal' pronunciations, featuring only occasionally (e.g. 2013, 217), Barrett can be regarded as favouring the construction of a sound system ascribable to the Shakespearean works, rather than to the writer.

On the other hand, Lass does without the distinction highlighted above and arguably suggests a tacit equivalence between Shakespeare's personal pronunciation and the one adopted in theatre at the time. In fact, one can infer a conflation of the two categories as a result of the unspecified object of its enquiry, the title of the chapter "Shakespeare's sounds" and claims such as "[i]f we could be transported back to Elizabethan London and actually hear Shakespeare's own speech" (2001, 257). Rather than annulling Barrett's distinction, as Lass in all likelihood does, Crystal subtly proposes another dichotomy whilst clarifying the object of his reconstruction. REDACTED, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED: REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. As Crystal himself reveals, his real object of reconstruction is rather REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, "an underlying system for Early Modern English" (Crystal qtd. in Barrett 2013, 158) or "the Shakespearean phonology — the sound system of Elizabethan English, as evidenced in the plays and poems" (Crystal 2012b). Thus, whilst not making any passing mention of the English language used on the stage, Crystal differentiates Shakespeare's own, and unreconstructible, pronunciation from the one he means to look into, which is simultaneously ascribable to a historical period and the

Shakespearean works. Lastly, unlike Lass and Barrett, Meier seems to embrace Crystal's equivalence between the pronunciation for Shakespeare's works and Early Modern English: the already mentioned cover page of his booklet reads "[b]ased on the work of David Crystal in Early Modern English (EME)" (n.d.) and in his "Pronunciation and OP on the modern stage" the expression "the Early Modern English of Shakespeare's time" (2016a, 179) is deployed. Considering all the scholars' stances, it can then be noted that, in addition to similarities, there exist divergences between 21st-century reconstructions in terms of aims and conceptualisation of what the pronunciation of the Shakespearean works corresponds to.

It is worthwhile to linger on the label "Shakespearean phonology" and, more precisely, on the fact that Crystal designates as his ultimate goal the reconstruction of the phonology of Shakespeare's works and his time. As the scholar himself states:

One has first to appreciate the difference between phonetics (the study of human-produced sound) and phonology (the study of the sound system of a language). OP is (my attempt to establish) the phonological system of Early Modern English, and it allows the same kind of phonetic variations as happen in Modern English. No two people have exactly the same accent, because of their voice-quality differences. And people from different parts of the English-speaking world have more or less the same phonological system, despite their many regional differences. (One has to say "more or less" because some accents are more different than others.)" (Crystal, in the interview by Meier 2011a, 212).

In other words, Crystal does not primarily engage with phonetics or the exact realisation of sounds of Shakespeare's works,⁸ but he prioritises their existence within a system where they have semantic and discriminating value, an engagement which will be reprised in Chap. 2 for some clarifications.

This focus on phonology is especially important in order to understand why and to what extent performers can colour OP with their personal and regional nuances or their accent (Chap. 3). It would then go without saying that said pronunciation does not constitute an accent, which Crystal peremptorily makes it clear: REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Nevertheless, on at least one occasion, Crystal himself defines OP as "an accent that has been reconstructed by linguists, a four-hundred-year old accent"

⁸ As will be seen later (Sec. 1.2), this does not mean that Crystal does not engage with them.

(GB 3316 SGT/ED/LIB/REC/2014). However, in such a case the utilisation of the label may be put down to its contextualisation: as the event in which Crystal deployed the terms was a workshop also addressed to non-specialists, a possible – but not definitive – reason for what could be regarded as a ‘simplification’ of OP resides in the immediacy and evocative power of the word “accent”, and the probable lack of mastery of linguistic concepts on the part of many audience members.

Returning to the scholars’ object of reconstruction, although it is at least partially different, in all cases it is meant to also and foremost account for the Shakespearean works. Yet, identifying the sounds of the latter is not an easy task in that, albeit not immediately evident from the distinct purposes of the aforementioned studies, one may find oneself dealing with a plethora of pronunciations. As Lass puts it:

[...] the pronunciation as a whole would be much more variable than we’re now used to. Since ‘standard’ English had not been codified or fixed at this time, there were many different varieties in use in London at the same time, even by the same speakers – some rather archaic or conservative, some fashionable and ‘advanced’, some more ‘popular’ or ‘vernacular’ than others. There was a greater availability of forms from neighbouring dialects as well, so a London speaker could use a characteristically south-western or Kentish rhyme if needed (a common practice at least since Chaucer) (2001, 257-258).

The supposedly greater variability of the time, as highlighted above and implied by Barrett (2013) and Crystal (2005a, 2008a), is made to rest on the lack of ‘standard’ English, a lack which did not entail “much anxiety about variation” (2013, 91); yet, it can also be associated with the Great Vowel Shift. Even without denying the availability of different pronunciations, I will reprise and question the absence of a standard or, rather, model pronunciation for the stage in Chap. 2.

Meanwhile, it can be said that, in order to reconstruct Shakespeare’s sounds, scholars must sort through the phonological wealth of the period and select those sounds more prone to be ascribed to the Shakespearean texts. The tools through which linguists carry out such an undertaking will now be examined.

1.1.3 Tools

As shown previously (Sec. 1.1.1), Barrett and, to a lesser degree, Crystal detail the uses of the prior studies that informed their reconstructions (e.g. Kökeritz and Cercignani) and, in doing so, identify said investigations as sources for evidence such as rhymes and puns. Assembling the two scholars’ evidence with that highlighted by Roger Lass, two macro-categories – already familiar to previous

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Albeit problematised, the regionality of sound experts may however prove to be a resource, determining the assignation of greater or lesser value to the orthoepists' reflections; for instance, whenever sources are in disagreement, Barrett accords priority to Charles Butler and Alexander Gil as a consequence of their regional provenance, that is, southern England (Barrett 2013, 225-226; Barrett 2020, 9).¹² The (perceived) limitations and possibly divergent value of the orthoepists' evidence might have impacted the scholars' reconstructions and be partially responsible for their differences (see Sec. 1.2); in fact, it can be speculated that, in response to these elements, the same data was read and utilised differently by Barrett and Crystal.

So far, external evidence has been associated with the testimonies of orthoepists; however, to a limited degree, this kind of evidence also derives from other sources. Lass refers to writings by non-orthoepists such as Queen Elizabeth and diarist Henry Machyn (Lass 2001, 265). To cite an instance, by reporting Henry Machin's spellings like *and* (*hand*) and *elmet* (*helmet*) and "inverse spellings" such as *holyyff* (*olive*), Lass corroborates the omission of the *h* sound (2001, 265). Barrett dwells on in *The Letters of Queen Elizabeth and James VI of Scotland* (Bruce, J. 1849) as a source for spellings (Barrett 2013, 215 and 217), and acknowledges the actual inclusion of other literary and non-literary texts in his study such as *Henslowe's Diary* (Ed. Greg, W. 1907), the aforementioned *Diary of Henry Machyn* (Ed. Nichols, J.G. 1968) and Elizabethan and Jacobean poetry (Barrett 2013, 215). Lastly, Crystal inserts the orthoepists' works within a broader group, the "contemporary accounts" (Crystal 2008a; see also Crystal 2005a, 49), and links George Puttenham's *The Art of English Poesie* (2008a, 130) to this grouping but no other literary and non-literary voices.

While presenting the types of external evidence used by scholars, I have made several references to the purposes they serve; for instance, Levin's work helps to identify stress and Queen Elizabeth's letters provide information in terms of sounds

¹² Crystal comes to recognise external sources as "the most important kind of evidence" (Meier 2011a, 211), REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. While it may be speculated that the attribution of greater or lesser importance varies in response to a different engagement with primary evidence, it would be worthwhile to look into the Crystal's variation systematically so as to identify possible reasons for Crystal's oscillation.

by means of their spellings. As my discussion progresses, the use of external evidence, both real and possible, will continue to emerge.

1.1.3.2 Internal Evidence

1.1.3.2.1 Spelling

As has been mentioned before, internal evidence represents a composite group including, among the others, spelling in Shakespeare's works. REDACTED:

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Therefore, due to the coeval lack of standardisation, orthography still relied on pronunciation, and such a reliance enables us to make inferences on sounds of the period. To Crystal, 'anomalies' are especially important, but these do not include "isolated spellings" (Crystal 2008a, 142) nor REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. If Crystal's spellings tend to be taken from this text and the Quartos (2005a, 2008a), it should be emphasised that such spellings are not self-sufficient. To be decoded, they must rely on other evidence; REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. While the interaction between types of evidence will be seen later, at this stage I wish to concentrate on the sources for spelling as presented by the other scholars.

Unlike Crystal, Lass and Barrett go beyond Shakespearean spellings. Lass highlights the usefulness of spellings available in "the original editions", referring to Shakespeare's (2001, 258), but, as seen in Sec. 1.1.3.1, he also mentions spellings retrievable in other texts such as Machyn's diary, thereby showing that he does not restrict spelling to the playwright's works. Barrett, instead, seems to be rather dismissive of Shakespearean spellings; he equates Shakespearean evidence with rhymes, puns and metre ("We [...] have internal evidence in the rhymes, puns and metre of the texts"; 2013, 232). One may then hypothesise that Barrett does not make any use of Shakespearean spellings and that he *only* employs those from non-Shakespearean texts, especially in light of Sec. 1.1.3.1. Yet, upon closer inspection,

Barrett proposes a comparison between external and internal spellings (“one might study the letters of Queen Elizabeth I and the contents of Henslowe’s Diaries and compare the findings with Shakespeare’s usage”; 2013, 217), followed by relevant examples (217 and 219).

Along with Shakespearean spellings, others from non-Shakespearean sources are then considered by scholars. Whether the use of non-Shakespearean spelling may be necessary is a question that cannot receive any ultimate answer here, but nonetheless needs to be addressed. As Rita Queiroz de Barros shows in a study comparing spellings from the Second Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet* (1599) and the First Folio edition of the play, the two versions do not present significant differences or even major internal variation – the terms with invariant spelling corresponding to 80-79,1% in 2Q and 83,2% in FF – so “spelling standardization was already significant by the end of the sixteenth century” (2007, 104). In addition, the plays curated by the actors John Heminge and Henry Condell¹³ may have been given some more homogenous orthography once in the hands of printers, so they may offer only limited support. Thus, if spelling was close enough to its definitive shape and the Shakespearean texts are not replete with differences, it may follow that there is no considerable spelling fluctuation in the plays (available in more than one version) to be analysed.

Therefore, a bigger corpus, including both Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean works (not necessarily literary such as Kempe’s *Nine Daies Wonder*)¹⁴ seems to be ideal: this would allow for the retrieval of a greater number of orthographic dissimilarities, possibly leading to phonological ones.¹⁵ And (more) data extrapolated from various sources may also help to make or confirm a distinction between “significant spellings and mere misprints”, at times impossible to divide (Johnson 2019, 124). In all likelihood, such an extended corpus would still not contribute to the identification of the person utilising a certain spelling – Shakespeare? The scribe’s? The printer’s? – but, as Barrett claims, “it is not relevant whether the spelling derives from the author or a scribe. [...] A scribe may reveal through a spelling pronunciation the pronunciation of the day” (Barrett 2020, 9).

¹³ It is of little interest here to determine whether the published plays corresponded to the performed ones, an idea objected to by Lukas Erne’s *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (2003).

¹⁴ It might be especially compelling to consult a book such as William Kempe’s *Nine Daies Wonder* (1600) since this actor was in Shakespeare’s company. The idea of including Kempe’s publication in the corpus was inspired by the reading of a modernised passage of Kemp’s work in *Voices of Shakespeare’s England* (2010) edited by John A. Wagner.

¹⁵ At least Barrett and Lass seem to resort to both Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean spellings.

1.1.3.2.2 Rhymes

Included in internal evidence are rhymes, on which great value is generally placed by contemporary scholars. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED; elsewhere, however, he limits himself to acknowledging their usefulness for making it possible to infer “the value of a vowel” (2005a, 51). Meier also regards rhymes, together with puns, as having primary importance in the reconstruction process (“Relying on a variety of evidence (chiefly, first, Shakespeare’s rhymes and puns; second, the spelling – highly variable – of the time; and, third, the writings of the Tudor orthoepists”); 2016, 179). For Barrett too, rhymes seem to constitute a supreme form of evidence: they are referenced repeatedly in his dissertation and, together with puns and metre, classified as internal evidence (2013, 232), which is prioritised over external data (see 2.1.3.2.1). But, more importantly, the usefulness of rhymes is not confined to the reconstruction of OP, at least on a presentational level, since, according to Barrett, these devices may unveil characteristics of Shakespeare’s pronunciation (“word-play, rhymes and rhythm, which may shed some light on his vowel sounds and syllable patterns”; 2013, 226). While still highly valuing rhymes, Lass is more cautious about the employment of these devices than the other scholars. If rhymes can signal whether “two sounds that are now the same were once different, or the opposite”, the poet should be “competent and a precise rhymers”, and evidence from only one writer is oftentimes not sufficient but bound to be set against proof deriving from other poets (2001, 262).

To balance out such predominant words of praise and inaugurate a more critical consideration of rhymes in the reconstruction process, I would like to draw attention to one minor limitation of the scholars’ discussion, that is, the lack of a definition for rhymes; my discussion will pave the way for observations on the relation between rhymes and theatre. Probably relying on a widespread idea of rhymes that equates them with phonetically similar end-line words,¹⁶ all the above-mentioned scholars take the definition of rhymes for granted and do not provide any further explanation. According to the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, rhyme “is the linkage in poetry of two syllables at line end [...] that have identical stressed vowels and subsequent phonemes but differ in initial consonant(s) if any are present— syllables that, in short, begin differently and end alike” (Brogan et al. 2012). Despite being a current definition, this reflects “the paradigmatic case for

¹⁶ One minor exception is Crystal’s (2011a) in which by way of exemplification he makes a distinction between internal and end rhymes; however, no definition is supplied in this case either.

Eng. [English]” (Brogan et al. 2012) and indeed proves adequate even for rhymes in Shakespearean times, as George Puttenham’s *The Art of English Poesie* shows.¹⁷ According to this work,

This cadence is the fal of a verse in euery last word with a certaine tunable sound which being matched with another of like sound, do make a [concord]. And the whole cadence is contained sometime in one sillable, sometime in two, or in three at the most [...] (149).

But though we have sayd that (to make good concored) your seuerall verses should haue their cadences like, yet must there be some difference in their orthographie, though not in their sound, as if one cadence be [*constraine*] the next [*restraine*] or one [*aspire*] another [*respire*] this maketh no good concord, because they are all one, but if ye will exchange both these consonants of the accented sillable, or voyde but one of them away, then will your cadences be good and your concord to, as to say, *restraine*, *refraine*, *remain*: *aspire*, *desire*, *retire*: which rule neuerthelesse is not well obserued by many makers for lacke of good iudgement and a delicate eare (1589, 150-151).

Both these passages confirm that rhymes are usually to be found at the end of lines (“in euery last word”) and that, while making a “concord” and creating some phonetic likeness, they cannot be identical in every respect but must differ in what seems to be their consonant sound (*restraine*, *refraine*, *aspire*, *desire*; my emphasis). Given their examples (e.g. *Rosaline-mine* in Crystal 2005a, 51; *harm-warm* in Lass 2001, 262), Crystal and Lass, on a practical level, appear to conform in their discussion to what was meant by this definition and, one might boldly assume, by rhyme in Shakespeare’s day. On the other hand, though not doing without examples related to Princeton’s and Puttenham’s definitions, Barrett also envisages the possibility of ‘artificial’ rhymes: *woman-no man*, available in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, may be “a ‘tongue in cheek’ exaggerated rhyme” (2013, 251-252). However, supposing – as Barrett suggests – that either *o* in *woman* or in *no* changes to accommodate to the other sound, the above-mentioned criteria are still met.

As justifiable and as rare this “exaggerated rhyme” may be, its possible but uncertain use, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, and to the fact that “[w]e cannot assume that rhymes [...] must of necessity reveal complete identity of pronunciation of the

¹⁷ As one can imagine, this is not the only work from the time delving into rhymes (e.g. Sidney’s *The Defence of Poesie*). However, it has been chosen as a guide since it is relatively close to Shakespeare, and clear in its portrayal of rhymes.

rhyming vowels and their environment” (Penzl and Shannon 1998, 50),¹⁸ begs the question of whether and to what extent these devices – and particularly the Shakespearean ones – are reliable for reconstruction purposes. To attempt to shed light on the matter, it is necessary to consider, albeit briefly, the status and use of rhymes in Shakespeare’s day, both in poetry and in drama.

Poetry was apparently still dominated by rhymes (Guy-Bray 2022), although studies such as that by Jerzy Wełna question the attribution of perfect rhymes to poems such as *Venus and Adonis*. Apart from discussing the use of eye rhymes and affirming that in the period “puns and rhymes were often treated as poetic devices which were sometimes considered by poets more important than their phonetic accuracy” (2016, 134), Wełna prefers not to deduce any perfect rhyming whenever phonological evidence, especially that stemming from Middle English, would be strained or depend on secondary variants. For example, the rhyme between *fast* and *haste*, suggested by Crystal (2005a, 2008a, 2016), Kökeritz and Cercignani (qtd. in Wełna 2016, 139), is called into question since the main pronunciation for *fast* would include [æ:] (educated version) or [a:] (ordinary) and that for *haste* [ɛ:], so, in order to produce a perfect rhyme, minor “variants with a short vowel” detaching from “standard speech” are postulated by scholars (2016, 139). Although the latter idea may appear problematic if one accepts that no real ‘standard’ existed, it also invites to ascertain what variants were actually utilised in Shakespeare’s day. If, on a theoretical plane, distinct pronunciations could be embraced for one’s purposes, concretely – and based on actual data – how and to what extent would a ‘free’ recourse to a rich inventory of pronunciations occur? Thus, while still sticking to the dominance of rhymes in poetry, some greater tolerance towards “impure” rhymes, i.e., eye rhymes, may have to be kept in the equation for the poetic scene in Shakespeare’s day.

Drama was significantly marked by blank verse¹⁹ (“and although from the 1580s on there was a great deal of blank verse written in English, this mainly occurred in writing for the stage”; Guy-Bray 2022, 54.9). However, this does not exclude the adoption of rhymes in theatrical texts altogether. Although rhymes were not always

¹⁸ Within a broader context examining rhymes as a tool for the Great Vowel Shift, Patricia Wolfe claims that “we have no knowledge of how exact any particular rhyme is, or was ever, meant to be” (1972, 26).

¹⁹ In Ernesto De Benedictis’s words and what may be considered a paradigmatic view, “blank verse or non-rhymed iambic pentameter is the classical verse of English poetry and theatre” (2012, 19; my translation). About its functions, they range from entertaining to providing knowledge and “searching, albeit in vain, for the essence of life and death” (2012, 21; my translation).

recommended or positively depicted with regard to theatre and in plays,²⁰ as Frederic W. Ness reports, “there is nothing in the words of the controversialists or in the pages of the contemporary dramatists which would rule occasional rhyme off the stage” (1941, 20). Even more to the point, in spite of some non-flattering references to rhymes, “there is nothing in the words of Shakespeare’s characters which would show him an antagonist of rhyme on the grounds of artistic impropriety” (Ness 1941, 20).

Notwithstanding the presence of rhymes in theatre, it should not be automatically assumed that they fully adhere to the ‘good’ rules of poetry. With reference to Shakespeare, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Puttenham comes up with another category:

for some wordes of exceeding great length, which haue bene fetched from the Latine inkhorne or borrowed of strangers, the vse of them in ryme is nothing pleasant, sauing perchaunce to the common people, who reioyce much to be at playes and enterludes, and besides their naturall ignoraunce, haue at all such times their eares so attentiuie to the matter, and their eyes vpon the shewes of the stage, that they take little heede to the cunning of the rime, and therefore be as well satisfied with that which is grosse, as with any other finer and more delicate (1589, 154).

Accordingly, rhymes involving “inkhorne” or foreign words may be appreciated on the purely phonetic level by “the common people”, that is, spectators of theatrical productions (“playes and enterludes”), which may comprise “grosse” rhymes such as those based on “wordes of exceeding great length” – but not exclusively. Elsewhere Puttenham maintains that rhymes can be manipulated by poets (1589, 284-285). In an emblematic passage, he states:

By cleare exchange of one letter or sillable for another, as to say *euermare* for *euermore*, *wrang* for *wrong*: *gould* for *gold*: *fright* for *fraight* and a hundred moe, which be commonly misused and strained to make rime.

[...]

These [...] ways may our maker alter his wordes, and sometimes it is done for pleasure to giue a better sound, sometimes vpon necessitie and to make vp the rime. But our maker must take heed be not too bold specially in exchange of one

²⁰ Samuel Daniel discouraged the general use of rhymes in tragedies, admitting them only in “the *Chorus* or where a sentence shall require a couplet” (156) (qtd. in Guy-Bray 2022, 57.9).

letter for another vnlesse vsuall speech and custome it, it is a fault and no figure, and because these be figures of the smallest importaunce, I forbear to giue them any vulgar name (1589, 285; author's emphasis).

Some examples of alterations are shown and, even if the practice of modifying words was limited, it can still be argued that it did exist. Thus, presumably "grosse" – not being specified by Puttenham – may refer not only to "inkorne" terms but also to other types of distorted rhymes, pushing the sounds of words in one direction or another.

Focusing on the theatrical use of polysyllabic, foreign rhymes, it is corroborated by the rhyme improvised by the character called "The Player" in Greene's *Groatsworth*,²¹ which for some embodies Shakespeare (Cooper 2013, 132): "The people make no estimation / Of Morals, teaching Education" (Greene 1813, 28). In this case, the rhyme results from the Latinate words *estimation-education* – REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED – which may be seen as confirming the use of polysyllabic, "inkhorne" words for rhymes in theatre. Setting aside the actual quality of the rhyme or the utilisation of Latinate coinages, at first sight the words may also disprove the distortion of words for the creation of rhymes. In fact, it could be objected that, given that the figure of "The Player" possibly stands for Shakespeare, he is presented as a rhymers, forging what appears as an actual rhyme. Some technical data are necessary: REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED both of which, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, produce a perfect rhyme making the last two syllables identical, with the exception of the initial consonant sound of the entire "cadence" (/m/ and /k/). It must, however, be stressed that the association between Shakespeare and the player is hypothetical; yet, even if it were certain, it would not demonstrate the exclusive use of perfect rhymes for Shakespeare, on his stage or in his entire production. It may, for instance, only be referring to a typical feature of the playwright's works, significantly occurring in his early plays, and not account for minor cases.

As poetry may have featured "impure" rhymes, and theatre, or a part of it, might have defied the rules of 'good' poetry and rhymes to some extent, one might wonder whether or to what extent the distortion of rhymes like that described by Puttenham and suggested by Barrett was produced on the stage and by Shakespeare. Whilst no substantial or clear proof for the spread of manipulated or

²¹ The work may not have been written by Greene alone. As Robert Staggs claims, "[i]t was written by some combination of Henry Chettle and Robert Greene – although most scholars now think Chettle was the principal author" (2021, 882).

“exaggerated rhymes” is available at this stage – the critical texts I consulted being too limited in number –, it cannot be concluded that rhymes are completely reliable in terms of sounds. On the contrary, at least some evidence collected here may cast a shadow on thespian rhymes. Thus, the utilisation of ‘external’, poetic rhymes along with the Shakespearean ones, evident in Barrett (2013, 215), appears desirable to retrieve more evidence; however, given the possible distance between poetry and drama, future studies might profit from comparing Shakespearean rhymes with those of other playwrights of the time.

1.1.3.2.3 Metre

Also ascribable to internal evidence is metre, which, in several writings, is depicted in relation to the inference of word stress. In fact, both Lass and Crystal highlight this function of metre by clear statements: the former maintains that “[m]etrical evidence tells us something about particular cases of accentuation; but of course we have no evidence in the prose” (Lass 2001, 261); the latter, instead, claims that “[w]e can deduce the stress pattern of a word from the metre of a line” (2005a, 51).²² It can thus be observed that, in spite of verse being common ground and of the close resemblance between the two claims, Lass tends to be more selective than Crystal by pointing to “particular” instances, which, however, may show some affinity with the examples highlighted by Crystal in a later publication (2008a, 134)²³ but not the *Dictionary*.²⁴ Considering another use of metre in the OP reconstruction process, literature suggests that this tool also allows for the selection of one pronunciation over another on the basis of the number of syllables. As Barrett reveals in a footnote, “expanded endings on words such as ‘musician’ may be emphasised in the conservative form but spoken as today in the advanced form (unless dictated by the metre)” (2013, 389). To put it differently, the word *musician* can have two pronunciations, which differ in the number of syllables (4 vs 3), and their use in plays is heavily dependent on metrical considerations.

²² Later Crystal would write that “[i]f we see polysyllabic words in a speech which is metrically regular, we can deduce from where the stress falls within the words at least one way in which those words could be pronounced” (2008a, 134).

²³ Both texts include the word “character” as capable of bearing a double stress in Shakespeare (Crystal 2008a, 134; Lass 2001, 261): the present-day stress on the first syllable and a conservative one, on the second syllable.

[illegible]

This being said, metre does not come without disadvantages within the scope of the OP reconstruction/s, one of these being the partial reflection of omitted sounds or syllables in writing. As Lass, Crystal and Barrett make clear, syncopations or contractions can be signalled by orthographical elements such as apostrophes; however, if Crystal positively argues that “many of them [contractions] are shown in the original texts” (2008a, 138), Lass and Barrett state, respectively, that “[s]uch spellings [...] are usually in the minority” (Lass 2001, 258), and that they are not generally produced in writing “but would be used routinely by the actors in many words” (Barrett 2013 Appendix 1, 78-79). Even if Crystal’s more optimistic view should be correct, contractions (many, not all) would still be imperfectly rendered on the written page and may not be clearly inferable in the case of uncertain lines.

The uncertainty of lines brings up a further issue showing the problematic nature of metre, and the necessary caution one should proceed with whenever metre is used for OP – caution not foregrounded by the OP scholars. As is widely recognised, Shakespearean lines are not universally scanned (and not rarely are performers responsible for metrical interpretation in productions), which may render the assignation of stresses (with inevitable consequences on the quality of sounds) rather complex. For example, while discussing most of the lines in *The Winter’s Tale*, Robert Stagg explains that it is not easy to identify the five stresses “or to be clear where those five stresses fall” (2021, 899). Therefore, the uncertain and variable scanning of lines may cause difficulty in making accentual deductions and, as a consequence, for OP reconstructions. For that reason, one possible solution to implement caution may be that, whenever one attempts to infer stresses from metre, lines less subject to varying interpretations, or supported by statistically relevant evidence are taken as a point of reference.

1.1.3.2.4 Puns

Another type of internal evidence is given by puns, but these are quite elusive. Firstly, they are often equated with wordplay (Crystal 2005a, Barrett 2013), but remain substantially undefined in OP literature. In an attempt to make puns more transparent and reduce their degree of volatility, one can turn to McDonald, for whom the Shakespearean pun – a term that did not exist in the playwright’s day (Hope 2010, 81-82) – can be defined as follows: “A word, the signifier, has a single sound but refers to two distinct objects or ideas, two different signifieds. The signifiers are and are not alike” (2001, 142). Such a description also seems to capture puns in current OP studies, in which one signifier essentially evokes a distinct

signifier and two different signifieds (e.g. *lines* simultaneously referring to *lines* and *loins*, or *hour* corresponding to both *whore* and *hour*).²⁵

Secondly, at first sight puns are presented as offering significant phonological clues, but, on a closer look, their usefulness is, and must be, relativised. As a matter of fact, Meier regards them as providing the most significant type of evidence together with rhymes (2016, 179); and Crystal claims that “we can deduce whether a consonant was sounded from the way puns work” (2005a, 51), and defines the reconstruction process as “meticulous detective work, comparing all possible puns and rhymes” (54). Barrett even goes so far as to say that puns contribute to offering “[e]vidence of Shakespeare’s pronunciation” along with rhymes and rhythm (Barrett 2013, 226; Barrett 2020, 9), whilst recognising these devices as a form of internal evidence (2013, 232; see also 2020, 9) and offering examples of Shakespearean puns (220). Yet Crystal’s later treatment of puns and Lass’s between-the-lines distance downplays the value of these devices in the reconstruction process. In *‘Think on my words’: Exploring Shakespeare’s language* (2008a) Crystal does not present puns as a type of evidence but only mentions them as a recovery of OP; and eventually, influenced by Cercignani’s *modus operandi*, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Therefore, puns or “Köckeritz’s fatal Cleopatra” (Schäfer qtd. in Johnson 2019, 123) are partially rejected REDACTED REDACTED. In a similar but more explicit vein, Lass minimises the value of puns (and wordplay) for the reconstruction of Shakespeare’s sounds, in that this type of evidence “tell[s] us only about similarity, not identity” (2001, 262).

In actual fact, as for rhymes, one cannot blindly accept that puns needed a perfect identity to work and, as Herbert Penzl and Thomas F. Shannon maintain, “[p]uns may [have] stress[ed] phonetic difference, not phonetic identity” (1998, 150). The historical context also offers information possibly corroborating a lack of phonetic equivalence. In those days “society [...] was primarily oral and aural, not one which was literate” (Hope 2015, 6) and a greater number of “people would have heard them [the plays] than would, or could have read them” (7). As a consequence, puns may not have required a complete correspondence since some resemblance would have been sufficient enough for (most of) listeners to establish an (intended) connection between words.

Thirdly, having discussed the undefined character of puns in OP studies and their being of relative assistance in reconstructions, one last consideration can be made; this concerns the last point raised, their usefulness. As Keith Johnson

²⁵ The definition may differ from the Elizabethans’ conceptualisation of puns, whereby the signifiers were not distinct but constituted – or were perceived as – one entity (see Hope 2010).

emphasises, “[a] major problem with puns as evidence is that it is often difficult to be sure that a pun is intended” (2019, 124). Thus, the possibility that in reality puns may not be puns and are only interpreted as such limits their value for OP reconstructions.

1.1.4 Concluding remarks on evidence

As has been shown, not only puns but also the other types of evidence – both internal and external – are impaired by criticalities, which have been addressed, at times even prioritised, in an attempt to further reflect on OP and continue enhancing reconstruction/s. If not all of the critical issues are introduced nor referred to by OP reconstructors, some are tackled with. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Yet, in all likelihood, these and the other constraints identified in this section do not only plunge OP in the realm of plausibility, but they may also be held – at least partly – responsible for divergences between reconstructions. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, and while this may hold true, dealing with limitations but also employing and combining different types of data (spelling from writers other than Shakespeare, for example) can be expected to influence findings, and increase dissimilarities between OPs.

Of particular interest is the combination, or rather, collation of evidence. It cannot have escaped the reader’s attention that, while tools have been singled out, methodology has not. This is mostly a consequence of the scholars’ treatment of methodology: a general step-by-step procedure is not described, but rather implicit or indirect references are provided. By way of illustration, in Crystal the different types of evidence are said to work jointly (“any conclusions about Shakespearean phonology com[ing] from a synthesis of information from all sources”; Crystal 2008a, 130), and shown to establish some cooperation when he discusses evidence for rhymes, which is not autarchic but hinges at least on spelling, as the cases of *prove-love* (2008a, 132-133) REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. The absence of a definite methodology should not necessarily be seen as a weakness, but rather could be interpreted as suggesting that, even in the presence of common steps, procedures change for the reconstruction of single sounds, probably depending on selected, accessible or existent information. Searching for further hints at methodology, exclusive adherence to the Early Modern English period does not appear as a viable path: “the values of the Elizabethan period have to mesh with deductions about

Old, Middle, and Modern English” (Crystal, in the interview by Meier 2011a, 214). Both Barrett and Crystal select “two points of reference” (Barrett 2013, 231), Old and Present-Day English (Barrett 2013, 231-232; Crystal 2018, 223-224). Accordingly, methodology seems to imply a comparison between sounds of different periods, in order for scholars to make inferences and ultimately reconstruct those ascribed to the Shakespearean works.

Having highlighted the absence in the 21st-century scholarship of a description regarding methodology and, before that, constraints for OP reconstructions and their implications, I will now explore the Shakespearean segments as reconstructed by scholars.²⁶

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²⁶ I have recently learnt that Jeremy Smith’s *Essentials of Early English* (2023) tackles the Shakespearean pronunciation, and has an accompanying website, known as “Readings in Early English”, which is no longer available (on March 20, 2024). Even though I managed to consult the book in its 2005 version and the website, I resolved not to use either in this chapter, since, due to time restrictions, I was unable to perform a thorough analysis of Smith’s sound system. However, should I revise this chapter for publication, I will make sure to include Smith’s reconstruction (in its 2023 version, wherever possible), which, at first sight, includes some differences from Crystal’s OP.

²⁷ This thesis does not specifically deal with phonological or phonetic reconstructions for musical pieces. In this regard, of interest might be *The Pronunciation of European Languages in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance*, edited by Timothy McGee, which, as Rose Marie Chisholm reports (365), is accompanied by a CD offering support for reconstructions (“It is possible that a singer could use it to present an entire song in an approximation of Elizabethan English, or at least to preserve original rhymes, with program notes or text printed for the audience”; 2004, 365). See also Barrett’s thesis, which considers music productions (2013, 61).

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²⁹ Another valuable source of information may have been Andrej Bjelaković's "Original Pronunciation: The accent of Shakespeare's London" (2013), in which the Shakespearean vowels and consonants are delineated by drawing inspiration from, among the others, Crystal's OP. But as I have found this article only some weeks before the official submission of my thesis, it has proved impossible for me to consider it in my discussion.

³⁰ There are several articles that analyse the pronunciation of single words (e.g. Green 2005, Hunt 2009, Jolly 2016) for different reasons. For example, while questioning the identity of Shakespeare the playwright, Jolly proposes a dialectal vowel sound [æ] and a more advanced one [ɛ] for "Shak-" (as a part of the word *Shakespeare*), before considering the variant *shack* as rhyming with *back* and leaving the problem essentially unsolved. I have not dealt with such articles in my treatment of sounds, since, regardless of their disputable agenda, I have attempted to capture the system with its phonetic realisations rather than the pronunciation of single words.

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³¹ As mentioned before, in the Introduction to his transcription for “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” (n.d. (b)), Meier provides a list with preparatory material for his cast, made of American actors, (2) and this booklet is explicitly referred to.

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³² For indications on lexical set/s and their corresponding sounds in RP, see Appendix A (Table A.2; Volume 2).

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³⁶ In historical linguistics, * is employed to show that a linguistic form is reconstructed rather than attested. Here I will use * for forms which I have inferred based on the scholars' descriptions or other significant elements.

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⁴² In this case and whenever my font Palatino Linotype would have caused an alteration of diacritic symbols, I have used Arial Unicode MS.

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⁵¹ Apparently, “[t]his vowel is rarely any longer fully back or rounded, as per the traditional RP vowel, which was close to cardinal 8 [u] (Upton 2008; Harrington et al. 2008). As explained in Hughes et al.’s *English accents and dialects*: “In contemporary RP, however, the vowel has fronted to a quality which may be considerably more advanced than [u], and may be markedly diphthongal” (Hughes et al. 2013, 51).

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⁵³ The section on the scholars' tools (1.1.3) hints at the use of dissimilar evidence on the part of scholars.

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⁵⁴ In the period, short vowels were also affected by changes but to a minor degree (Barber 1997, 109).

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⁵⁶ The orthographical renditions I will provide are Shakespearean (as well as modern). I checked their existence in both Shakespeare and the Early Modern period on the *Shakespeare's Words* website (Crystal and Crystal 2024) and on the *Lexicons of Early Modern English* website (Lancashire 2021). In particular, I selected representative words: *Goth* (*th*), *nature* (*-ture*), *night* (*gh*), *passion* (*-sion*), *nation* (*-tion*), *pleasure* (*-sure*), *torture* (*-ture*), *knight* (*kn-*), *gnaw* (*gn-*), *wrong* (*wr-*).

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⁶⁷ For evaluations on the distance or similarity between OP and Present-Day English, see Keith Johnson's "Sounds: The 'tongue's sweet melody'" (2013). He mentions several authors such as Crystal and Lass ("people generally expect OP to be much more different from modern English than in fact it is, and it comes as a bit of a surprise to realise that it is in many respects identical"; Crystal

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have investigated reconstructions of Shakespearean pronunciation by looking into the object of enquiry of selected scholars, and by examining (and questioning) their tools and methodology. It has emerged that the scholars Crystal, Barrett, Meier and Lass – conceiving of their reconstructions differently – all seem to pursue the pronunciation for the Shakespearean works, and to resort to two types of evidence, external and internal to the playwright's texts. Based on the scholars' presentations, evidence does not appear to be always identical, and their use of it is at least at times divergent, as is suggested by Crystal and by my comparison of reconstructed sounds. This brings me to methodology: the exact way in which proof is employed is more inferable than stated, and, while consisting in a combination of data from different periods (past and present), does not configure itself as completely transparent.

In the current chapter, I have also attempted to systematise reconstructed vowels and special features concerning consonants by noticing divergences and similarities between the scholars' works and by pointing out the priority accorded to phonetic realisations. Consonants have not posed any significant challenge probably due to their limited discussion, whereas vowels have caused some difficulties. In fact, as phonemes and lexical sets are not explicitly provided by most scholars, I have often offered my interpretations through inferences and deductions. Ultimately, as can be seen, I have not engaged with a systematic comparison between OP sounds and any current variety of English (e.g. RP), but it is my hope that my systematisation will pave the way to such studies, which can shed light on the 'veracity' of labels attributed to the OP.

qtd. in Johnson 2013, 255), and concludes by saying that "[i]t is indeed a question of just what your expectations are, of course" (255). Eventually, Johnson himself suggests that "the differences between then and now are sufficiently minor" (274).

CHAPTER 2

Original pronunciation in the 21st century: Suprasegmental dimension and regional and foreign sounds

Introduction

Having dealt with the segmental characteristics of OP, it is now time to move on to its prosodic or suprasegmental¹ dimension which, as Wells affirms, includes “matters such as rhythm, stressing, intonation and voice quality” (1982, 86). Whilst this chapter will not address the issue of voice quality for OP due to significant lack of attention to this issue on the part of scholars,² it will examine the syllable – considered by Wells himself – along with stressing, rhythm, tone and intonation of voice mainly in the works of David Crystal, David Barrett, Roger Lass and Paul Meier. But, in this chapter, I will also outline ‘deviant’ sounds, ascribable to Shakespeare’s works, by drawing on both OP and non-OP publications: regional varieties, accented English and foreign sounds. Such a crossing of the boundaries of the OP field rests upon the fact that OP literature often pays little attention to non-English sounds in Shakespeare’s works, and that resorting to other studies such as dialect and multilingual ones (e.g. Paula Blank’s “Dialects in The Plays of Shakespeare”) may help to collect further data, observations and eventually sounds.

2.1 Suprasegmental dimension

As with the segmental dimension, the suprasegmental plane will mostly be discussed through the works by David Crystal, David Barrett, Roger Lass and Paul Meier, with occasional references to other studies. Yet my discussion will be more similar to my analysis of the tools for the OP reconstruction rather than to that of segments: it will not be confined to selected texts but will draw on various writings of the scholars.

¹ Crystal employs the adjective “nonsegmental” (referred to “nonsegmental phonology” in 2016b, 169), but here the adjectives prosodic or suprasegmental will be preferred.

² Crystal limits himself to stating that “the OP you hear from me is audibly slightly Welsh/Liverpudlian, reflecting my regional background, and your OP reflects features of your accent and voice quality” (Crystal, in the interview by Meier 2011a, 221).

As for the second layer of accentual twofoldness, Lass is especially vocal about the co-presence of Germanic and Romance stresses in Shakespeare's English:⁴

Because of its complex history (a Germanic language with an extensive input from Latin and its descendants, the Romance languages like French), English had for a long time — and still has to some extent — a dual stress system. There is a 'Germanic' one that preferentially accents the first syllable of the word (except for prefixes), and a 'Romance' one that tends to have the accent as close to the end of the word as possible (but no more than three syllables back). These have interacted and competed for nearly a millennium, and Shakespeare makes good use of this in his verse [...] (Lass 2001, 261).

As can be seen, not only does Lass point to the existence of the two stress patterns, but he also details them by providing information on affected syllables and regards Shakespeare as "mak[ing] good use" of this accentual bifurcation. Despite the lack of designations fully depicting a contrast between the two stresses, Barrett hints at competing accentual systems, ascribing "unfamiliar stress patterns in use" to the borrowing of French, Latin and foreign terms – forming a Romance stress system – and their temporary non-integration into the "English stress system" (Barrett 2013 Appendix 1, 76). However, while Barrett only accounts for words marked by a seemingly unusual stress today,⁵ Lass, through his discourse, holds accentual variability as affecting the very same terms in Shakespeare's day (2001, 261), a variability which is also present in Crystal (2008a, 135).⁶

So far, the two layers of the accentual twofoldness have been described as non-communicating or as two sides of the same coin, since literature on Shakespeare's phonology does not establish any solid bridge between them – or if it is there, it hides between the lines. Yet, Manfred Görlach's words suggest a connection in his *Introduction to Early Modern English*:

Whereas the frequent words (or all words, in the speech of the less educated) had initial stress (with corresponding weakening of the other syllables), rarer words occurring only in the sociolect of the educated classes often preserved the original stress. This frequently meant, especially in poetic and careful, educated pronunciation, secondary stress on syllables which are unstressed in PrE [Present-

⁴ It is beyond the scope of this study to delineate the exact accentual systems of the Early Modern period, but for more information on the Germanic and Romance accentual systems see Barber's *Early modern English* (1997, 131) and Görlach's *Introduction to early modern English* (1991, 64).

⁵ Both Crystal and Meier show cases in which Shakespeare's and today's stresses differ (Crystal 2008a, 134-135; REDACTED; Meier 2011a, 223), but they do not put such a difference down to the Romance and Germanic accentual systems.

⁶ Crystal states that "often the variation has since disappeared, as in *consign* (which we still have) and *consign* (which we have lost), or *character* and *character*" (2008a, 135; author's emphasis).

Day English]. Even more conspicuous is the retention in EModE of secondary stress in words of four or more syllables, a stress pattern still occurring in many words in AmE (1991, 64).

It follows that the two levels of the accentual system are correlated, in that Romance stress may have been triggering secondary stress. But if such a derivation is not pivotal in terms of Shakespearean findings and could be neglected, of great importance and, possibly, impact is the stress distinction on the basis of social groups, highlighted by Görlach. Provided that this differentiation is reliable enough, different stressing may be – at least at times – associated with Shakespearean characters based on their social class – a hypothesis which has not yet been proposed by OP scholars. Ultimately, Görlach's words maintain the closeness between Shakespeare's and American English's secondary stress, also hinted at elsewhere (Lass 2001, 261-262): this feature may then be counted as one of the reasons why Shakespeare's pronunciation is perceived as more similar to such a variety (see Chap. 3).

Setting stress aside, Shakespeare's syllables are subject to various phenomena redefining them and their contours. Crystal signals the omission or "elision", as Meier defines it (n.d., 9), of sounds in words such as *eu'ry* (every) or *recou'ry* (recovery) (Crystal 2008, 138; see also 2016, xxx); and such a phenomenon is also signalled by Lass (2001, 258-259). In "An Introduction to Shakespearean Pronunciation" Barrett, on the other hand, goes beyond the discussion of elision⁷ and also considers phenomena entailing the enlargement of syllables, thereby shaping two categories, "syncopation" and "resolution or expansion" (2013 Appendix 1, 150; Barrett 2021, 4).⁸ Included in either of them are "syncope" (syncopation) and "resolution" (resolution or expansion), which are worth mentioning due to their wide use in Shakespeare's time and, as can be inferred from Barrett's "The Rhythm of Macbeth", in the Shakespearean texts. "Syncope" concerns the fall of medial vowels (2013 Appendix 1, 83), whereas "resolution", originating from the Middle English system, is usually located at the end of lines and brings about the addition of a syllable or even of a rhyme (2013 Appendix 1, 79) by separating vowels (Barrett 2021, 4).⁹

⁷ Crystal (2005a, 77-78) and Lass (2001, 259) subtly admit the possibility of words acquiring syllables, but, apart from not foregrounding it, they do not attach any name to such a phenomenon.

⁸ On reading Barrett (2012, 2021), it may be assumed that "expansion" and "resolution" are corresponding concepts. Yet, as emerging from Barrett's "The Rhythm of Macbeth" (2013 Appendix 1) expansion is an umbrella term for a heterogeneous group of phenomena including resolution, usually to be found at the end of lines (2, 22). Therefore, "syncopation" or "reduction" and "expansion" appear as better terms for the two categories.

⁹ For other phenomena such as apocope and synaeresis examined in relation to the play *Macbeth*, see "The Rhythm of Macbeth" (Barrett 2013 Appendix 1, 76-113).

That said, it is elisions or, more precisely, contractions of a particular class – grammatical words – that are recurring and especially impactful in scholarship. By “keep[ing] ‘the little words’ as short as possible” in his transcription for “Romeo and Juliet” (2005a, 62), Crystal proposes the use of contracted grammatical words, which is confirmed by Meier (9) and Barrett (2013, 262). Crystal also draws great attention to a subgroup as particularly affected by contractions, that is, pronouns such as *I*, *my* and *thy* (2005a, 62-63), and eventually reports the testimony of director Tim Carroll, condemning “the modern actor’s insistence on stressing personal pronouns at every opportunity, when Shakespeare far more often wants to direct our attention to the verb or the noun” (qtd. in Crystal 2005a, 64). As a consequence of using contracted pronouns and, more in general, function words, a greater rapidity in the actors’ delivery, or a quicker pace,¹⁰ was recorded in performances (Crystal 2005a, 64; 2008a, 141-142; see also Meier 2016, 179; Barrett 2013, 392; Barrett 2020, 10). Yet, it should be noted that the contractions as highlighted by Crystal and other scholars seem to originate from textual evidence such as metre rather than from an investigation into thespian practices of Shakespeare’s day, which are not referred to. Presumably an analysis of the latter would not reject the current results altogether, but it may add more nuances to the employment of contractions and thus complicate the picture.

Considering both contractions and other phenomena such as expansion, it is worth noticing that they can alter the rhythm of Shakespeare’s plays as we might think of it today. This is especially inferable from Barrett’s “The Rhythm of Macbeth” (2013 Appendix 1), whose content suggests a ‘new’ – different from the present-day – rhythm for the Shakespearean play as a result of phenomena such as synaeresis and synalepha – to name only two. But what should be understood by rhythm for the Shakespearean plays? As Crystal implies, also in Shakespeare’s day rhythm in general terms was produced by “English [being] a stress-timed language” (2008a, 104-107). And, in the case of the playwright’s works, Crystal accords priority to verse, particularly to metre “used to describe and analyse the rhythmical organisation of lines in verse” (2008a, 108), REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. The Shakespearean rhythm for verse tends to correspond to the (iambic) pentameter; yet, its predominance does not imply its exclusivity since metres like tetrameters can be utilised “in special cases, easily

¹⁰ In accordance with Wells, pace is “the general rate of speech, measurable as the mean number of syllables uttered per second” (1982, 87). Cătălin Dehelean (2019) would not see this shorter rate as historically accurate; to her “[t]he pronunciation would have been slower and this would have meant that the plays would have taken longer to act out” (255). Dehelean, however, does not clarify her source of information.

explained with reference to type of character or situation” (Crystal 2008a, 124).¹¹ Though not paying the same attention to details as Crystal’s, Barrett’s reference to rhythm also displays some preference of verse over prose:

In order to understand fully the mechanics of Shakespeare’s writing it was necessary to study not only the pronunciation of individual vowels and consonants, but also the effects of the pronunciation on the rhythm. Some words were stressed differently in Shakespeare’s day and some were spoken with more or fewer syllables. Therefore, it should be possible, to some extent, to reconstruct the original rhyme patterns of Shakespeare’s day as well as his metrical patterns (2020, 8).

As can be observed, after drawing attention to rhythm, Barrett points to a difference in stresses and syncopation and resolution, and to “rhyme patterns” and “metrical patterns”. Given the attribution of the latter to verse, it can be hypothesised that central to Barrett’s vision of Shakespearean rhythm is metre.

What emerges is then a strong link – or correspondence – between Shakespeare’s rhythm/metre and poetic lines, either explicitly (Crystal) or in an implied manner (Barrett). By contrast, rhythm concerning prose does not attract any real attention probably due to the subordination of prose to verse in Shakespeare (Amelang 2023, 107),¹² or to the lack of proper designations, conceptualisations or retrievable patterns. Whilst it is not my intention to define or describe rhythm as occurring in prose, it could be speculated that beyond the generalisations proposed, Shakespeare’s rhythm differs from play to play in that every text is unique in its mixture of verse and prose, in its rhythmical contrasts and in the rendition on the part of actors or players.

Ultimately – and perhaps controversially – it seems useful to detach from Crystal’s and Barrett’s conception of rhythm and consider a different perspective, separating metre from rhythm. According to Ros King, “there is a distinction to be drawn between meter and rhythm, and [...] the most powerful effects are created when one is played off against the other” (2004, 180). King does not define them but highlights their non-correspondence in a Shakespearean play, *Macbeth*: “pronunciation of the words in Hecate’s lines in *Macbeth* as if they were normally accented prose frequently creates a three-stress rhythm out of the four-stress, octosyllabic, iambic meter” (2001, 180). It could be inferred that metre is an underlying written tool, in all likelihood a guide for

¹¹ Crystal also speaks about the use of rhymes and blank verse, which is thoroughly explored in Robert Stagg’s *Shakespeare’s Blank Verse: An Alternative history* (2023) and “Shakespeare’s Bombastic Blanks” (2021) and Ernesto De Benedictis’s *Blank-verse-and: La scrittura di Shakespeare ripercorrendo la storia del teatro elisabettiano* (2012).

¹² Quoting Russ McDonald (“verse is the dominant form and prose the subordinate, a relationship consistent with the practice of most early modern dramatists”), David Amelang (2022) establishes the “dominance” of verse by relying on Tootalian’s (2013, 48) and Crystal’s evidence (2008a, 210-211).

writers and playwrights, whereas rhythm constitutes the surface dimension, not (necessarily) corresponding to metre and audible in delivery.¹³

2.1.2 Tone and intonation

Though less uncertain than the Shakespearean rhythm in prose, the two remaining suprasegmental aspects of intonation and tone still belong to the realm of vagueness. Whilst Barrett touches on intonation as unknown bracketing information (“(although little is known of how the latter functioned in Shakespeare’s day)”; 2013, 86) or as signalling that such a feature “could not be recorded and [is] lost for ever” (2020, 8), Crystal refers to uncertain intonation and tone (2005a, 13) or portrays either of them as loosely inferable (tone, 2008a; intonation, 2014). Before drawing any ultimate conclusion on the current state of intonation and tone, it is necessary to clarify such concepts, especially due their oscillation in Crystal’s writings.

When juxtaposing intonation and tone of voice, Crystal maintains that “it is impossible to reconstruct most aspects of the ‘non-segmental’ side of pronunciation – such features as intonation and tone of voice” (2005a, 13). The two words and, it may be added, underlying concepts are in all likelihood kept distinct, but no definition nor exemplification is provided. However, intonation and tone can also appear on their own, and in such cases it is feasible to infer their meanings or, to be more precise, those associated with tone. In fact, for intonation there are no specific elements indicating how it should be interpreted. For instance, Crystal asserts that:

We'll never know anything about the intonation, as commentators at the time had nothing to say about it. On the other hand, it's clear from later studies (such as Joshua Steele's *Melody and Measure of Speech* in the 18th century) and from the first audio recordings in the late 19th century, that intonation hasn't changed much over a long time, so it's likely that our use of modern intonation, when reading Shakespeare, won't be too far from how it was in 1600 (Crystal, in the interview by Hudson 2014).

In the absence of any descriptive feature, intonation could be read as “the distinctive use of patterns of pitch, or melody” as Crystal’s *Dictionary of linguistics and phonetics* reads (Crystal 2008b, 252).

On the other hand, tone, when not accompanied by intonation, seems to have at least two rather clear identities. Firstly, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED
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¹³ Mort Paterson (2015) also shows to adhere to the view of metre as a compositional tool, not coinciding with rhythm in performance.

REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED: “A wide range of impressionistic tones of voice is mentioned, some of which allow several interpretations: Gratiano is ‘to[o] rude, and bold of voyce’ [...] Bottom says he can speak ‘in a monstrous little voyce” (2008a, 103). Secondly, as can be deduced from another passage, it is closely associated with intonation. Referring to John Hart’s *An Orthographie*, Crystal claims that “the tone of voice associated with questions (at least, those beginning with a question-word, such as *What*) begins ‘sharp, and so falleth lower, according to the length of the sentence” (2008a, 101). Tone could then be read as part and parcel of intonation; in particular, the former could be interpreted as “the distinctive pitch level of a syllable” (Crystal 2008b, 486), thereby contributing to intonation as “the distinctive use of patterns of pitch, or melody” (2008b, 252) or REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED.

However, a more radical reading entirely equating tone with intonation is possible by turning to Barber. Drawing on the same work by Hart quoted by Crystal (*An Orthographie*) and what appears to be the same idea as Crystal’s, Barber resorts to the word *tune*, that is intonation:¹⁴ “a falling tune is used [...] in questions beginning with words like *what, when, how*” (1997, 135). Thus, like Crystal, Barber refers to Hart to highlight the falling intonation marking questions starting by wh-words such as *what*. The correspondence between Crystal and Barber, concerning Hart’s testimony, is too strong to be deemed a mere coincidence. It is true that Crystal’s consulted source for Hart is not clear since it is not to be found in his bibliography (2008a, 247-248), and that Crystal and Barber may not have used the same copy of Hart’s book. Yet the absence of Hart in Crystal’s references and the very fact that he mentions Barber’s writings as one of his guides (Chap. 1, Sec. 1.1.1) do not exclude Crystal’s utilisation of Barber’s text or some affinity with it. So, in light of these reflections, it could be argued that for Crystal tone may even correspond to Barber’s tune or intonation.

While shedding some light on the concepts of tone and intonation – with that of tone being particularly fluctuating –, their state for Crystal has emerged. At least three different positions are taken by the scholar: tone and intonation are “impossible to reconstruct” (2005a); tone is twofold, closely linked to intonation in one case and deriving from some concrete evidence (2008a); and intonation is – once again – impossible to reconstitute but also inferred to be similar, or substantially non-different

¹⁴ Apart from Barber’s using intonation and tune and synonyms, in phonological studies intonation is also known as tune: “[...] **tune (or intonation)** has effects beyond the word level” (Iyabode Omolara 2011, 69; author’s emphasis). REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED.

from, contemporary intonation (2014).¹⁵ The last point then suggests Crystal's reliance on the present for a tentative reconstruction of intonation; yet this dependence is not an exception nor limited to this suprasegmental feature. Considering Crystal's other findings on tone (2008a), this feature is also connected with – or stems from – current practices. In fact, taking Shakespearean lines with reference to, among the others, tone (2008a, 102-103), Crystal concludes that “we can use our knowledge of how spoken language works today as a way in to understanding how it must have worked in the past. The English language has not changed much during the past 400 years (p. 11)” (2008a, 104). Accordingly, tone – in whatever sense – is supposed not to display any great difference from that in use today, and such a conclusion stresses the importance of inferences from present practices, thus giving a further insight into Crystal's methodology, considered in Chap. 1 (Sec. 1.1.4).

In an attempt to reconcile Crystal's different perspectives and sum up the discussion above, tone and intonation cannot be thoroughly reconstructed, but the few elements at our disposal point to a significant similarity between intonation in Shakespearean and contemporary times. In terms of intonation, Barber's (entire) testimony could also be used to reinforce the closeness of Shakespearean intonation with current practices, and expand the debate. As Barber reports, the sparse references Renaissance sources include in terms of intonation coincide with today's 'rules'. The scholar affirms that:

What little is written about it [intonation] in the period is consistent with a system much like that of PresE. Hart has a few sentences about it in his works on English orthography. In discussing marks of punctuation, he says that a falling tune is used in exclamations, and in questions beginning with words like *what*, *when*, *how*. Butler, in his *English Grammar*, refers to both a falling tune and a rising one. The falling tune is used at the end of a sentence, where we place a period. The rising tune is used at the end of a question, unless it is one that begins with an interrogative word like *what*, *how*, *where*, *when*. In this latter case the falling tune is used, but the exclamatory word in the utterance (*Oh*, *Alas*, etc.) or some other emphatic word, has high tone. Parenthetic phrases are uttered on a lower pitch, and usually end as a phrase does at a comma (1997, 135).

Barber maintains consistency between data on Early modern English (EmE) intonation and “a system much like that of PresE”, that is, Present-Day English or English in general terms. And, to prove such a point, Barber offers evidence from writers temporally close to Shakespeare (Hart and Butler). Hence, the similarity between

¹⁵ This is made possible by Crystal's use of “later studies (such as Joshua Steele's *Melody and Measure of Speech* in the 18th century) and from the first audio recordings in the late 19th century” (Crystal, in the interview by Hudson 2014).

general intonation in Shakespeare's time – a part of EmE – and today can also be assumed.

Yet the extract above can also provide some further input. Glossing over any possible explanation for Barber's generalisation ("a system much like that of PresE"), the depicted intonation is not ascribable to all types of existing English accents today: the "falling tune" certainly does not reflect the "high-rising terminal pattern" in Liverpool speech (2013, 117). Rather, the outlined intonation seems to show resemblance, if not identity, with accents such as RP, which should be better looked into. Given current intonational differences between accents, and still employing the present to make inferences on the past, a hypothesis can be put forward: similarly to today, in Shakespeare's time intonations other than the one(s) shown in the extract existed, varying depending on single accents. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, these intonations can be assumed to have 'inundated' the stage; however, the existence of a pseudo-standard for the stage (2.2.3.1) might have implied the use of 'fixed' intonations. For the time being, it cannot be determined whether and to what extent different intonations, as determined by accents, were to be used by Shakespearean actors.

2.1.3 Concluding remarks on the suprasegmental dimension

As has been shown, some features of the suprasegmental dimension (syllable, stress and rhythm)¹⁶ seem more definite than others (tone and intonation). Yet, generally speaking, the prosodic elements investigated by the scholars appear more fluctuating than the segmental ones mostly on the grounds that less material is available for reconstruction. In this regard, Crystal explains that:

The prosodic features of an earlier state of a language are notoriously difficult to study, the evidence being limited to what can be deduced from the metrical structure of verse, the observations of contemporary writers on poetry and rhetoric, and the occasional remarks of characters in the plays (such as Page's description of Nym as "a drawling-affecting rogue" in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* [Wiv. 2.1117]). The segmental features are easier to establish, thanks to a multiplicity of rhymes and puns

¹⁶ My research into the suprasegmental level makes it also possible to notice that not all the processes of connected speech are accorded attention (for a list of these phenomena see James D. Brown and Kim Kondo-Brown 2006 and J.D. Brown 2006). For instance, whilst elision has been largely considered, intrusion and linking are not discussed at all. It seems reasonable to believe that there is no evidence for them, but if EmE worked in a rather similar fashion to PDE, it is highly likely that these phenomena, though unrecorded, did occur in some form or another. Should we assume that they tended to reproduce contemporary practices? The lack of discussion may point to that horizon of interpretation.

in the plays and poems, and an increasingly systematic and phonetically aware exposition by writers throughout the Early modern English period of the way sounds were being reflected in spellings (2016b, 169).

Thus, with the aim of gathering more data and eventually retrieving more accurate information, it may be reasonable – but certainly demanding – to expand one’s corpus and investigate a greater number of texts from the period. Crystal mentions works including “observation on contemporary writers on poetry and rhetoric” or plays, but, apart from such writings, one wonders whether texts by other playwrights or ‘less literary’ testimonies such as diaries by ordinary people or theatregoers (if not actors) could prove as insightful. The inclusion of this less orthodox material may be a leap in the dark and eventually lead nowhere, but it seems a leap worth taking.

2.2 Sounds of regional varieties and accented Englishes

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REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. In this section, I am going to tackle the accent/s used in theatre in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period and question Crystal’s lack of a reference pronunciation (or proto-standard), but, prior to that, I intend to shed light on the regional language varieties and accented-Englishes as highlighted and reconstructed in OP and the wider literature.

2.2.1 Regional language varieties within England in Shakespeare’s works

Within the framework of Early Modern English literature “obsessed” with the relationship between English and linguistic regionalism and foreignness (Delabastita and Hoenselaars 2015, 1), it does not come as a surprise that Shakespeare’s texts feature regional varieties of English and foreign languages. As Crystal remarks, “[w]e find stereotypical representations of Welsh, Scots, Irish, and French speech alongside English in *Henry V*, Welsh and mock-French in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and rural English speech (used by disguised Edgar) in *King Lear*” (2016b, 170; see also Blank 2016).

Yet, as non-OP literature suggests, in Shakespeare's works regional or geographical variation pales in comparison with the social one, best embodied by class (Crystal 2003, 72; see also Delabastita 2002, 305; Montini 2021, 69 and Ranzato 2021, 150). For class variation, cases in point are Orlando speaking with Rosalind in the forest and remarking that her "accent is something finer than you could purchase in so removed a dwelling (*As You Like It*, 3.2.310-11)", and Edmund describing Edgar's accent as a "tongue some say of breeding breathes (*King Lear*, 5.3.142)" (Crystal 2003, 72). Also Prince Hal may be illustrative of the phenomenon; as Paula Blank affirms, Shakespeare points to "lower-class London dialect (such as 'Cockney', for example)" (220) through Prince Hal's line that he "'can drink with any tinker in his own language' (*1H4* 2.4.18-19)" (2016, 220).¹⁷ Lastly, even in the absence of textual evidence, Kent, disguised as Caius and "'go[ne] out of [his] dialect' (2.2.109)", may be employing "other accents" (Reynolds 2008, 6), perhaps even ascribable to a different class. While accentual difference is or may be implied by the comments of these characters, it must be noticed that no characteristics or orthographical elements, essential as will be seen later, are identified by experts as indicative of the phonetic characteristics of social accents. In the case of Cockney, a confirmation of its absence comes from Penzl and Shannon claiming that "Shakespeare does not indicate through spellings any Cockney pronunciation of low-class characters" (1998, 150).

I do not wish to determine the phonetic characteristics of class variation,¹⁸ not found in consulted literature, or establish whether the use of social accents actually exceeds that of regional ones in Shakespeare. Rather, I intend to focus on regional variation and delineate the characteristics of English varieties or dialects and accented Englishes. For the purpose of the present investigation, whenever dialects or dialectal words are analysed, only their pronunciation will be considered, whereas their vocabulary and grammar, irrelevant to this study, will not be contemplated. As stated by Paula Blank, there exist some "regional dialect words or pronunciations [...] from the playwright's native Warwickshire" (2016, 219). While Blank only identifies them on a lexical level in her text on dialects and does not make their sounds explicit, in her thesis on OP Josefina Venegas Meza concretely retrieves provincial pronunciations from Warwickshire ascribable to Shakespeare, that is, the interchangeability of /d/ and

¹⁷ By contrast, in a non-OP text by Crystal, the 'social' speech of Prince Hal also emerges but only in relation to grammatical and lexical variation (2003, 6).

¹⁸ Going back in time, in *Shakespeare's Pronunciation* (1953) Kökeritz considers social sounds. He reveals the presence in Mrs Quickly's lines of pronunciations which "are probably hypercorrect forms, or they illustrate another Cockney tendency" (41). Kökeritz also claims that, although "[a] few similar instances occur in the speeches of other vulgar characters", such 'deviations' were not profusely signalled by Shakespeare. Probably the playwright relied on "the imitative ability of the individual actor" (1953, 42).

[illegible]

As can be observed from the sources in the table, some of the traits are not contemplated at all by OP literature, although they are still portrayed by an OP scholar, David Crystal and his son Ben Crystal (e.g. /t/ instead of /tʃ/). Focusing instead on characters, a few features are shared by pairs of *dramatis personae*: /s/ in lieu of /ʃ/ marking both Fluellen's and Jamy's speech, /t/ in place of /d/ binding Fluellen and Macmorris, and /ʃ/ instead of /s/ and difference in expected vowel quality for both Jamy and Macmorris. As Crystal himself cites two of these commonalities with regard to "stock literary forms used to show that someone has a regional accent without implying anything about what kind of accent it is" (2012a, 32), it does not seem rash to read all of them through such lenses, and assume that these common features serve an impressionistic representation, rather than as a phonetically accurate one.

On a different note, several features in Table 2.1 and shown in Appendix C (Table C.1) entail the devoicing of voiced sounds (e.g. /d/ and /dʒ/). Based on the current data, this phenomenon does not characterise the speech of all the captains, but it marks Fluellen's accented variety and, as mostly reported in non-OP literature, Welsh-accented English in Shakespeare, including that used by Evans. In fact, if on discussing both Fluellen and Evans' English, David and Ben Crystal state that "[t]he most noticeable feature is that voiced consonants (those with vocal cord vibration, such as /b,d,g,v/) lose their voicing" (2004, 1800), Keir Elam lists, among recurring features, "the substitution of voiceless for voiced consonants" (qtd. in Venegas Meza 2022, 171). The predominance of devoicing as noted by the scholars is corroborated by Table 2.2:

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Once again, more traits derive from non-OP literature (Blank 2016), but regardless of their divergences, Crystal, Venegas Meza and Blank all agree on the use of voiceless sounds, corresponding to /f/ for /v/ and /p/ for /b/ for the Welsh-accented variety utilised by the two characters. However, for both pairs of phonemes Blank makes a clarification that is absent in the writings of the other authors: she points out that these sounds are supposed to be in word initial position. Looking at Appendix C (Tables C.1 and C.2), it will become apparent that actually /v/ can also be converted into /f/ in non-initial position (e.g. *aggrieved* and *prerogatives*), but this trait only applies to Fluellen's speech and thus, excluding Evans, is not representative of Welsh-accented English in Shakespeare. Thus, Blank's recovery and formulation of one of Shakespeare's phonological and phonetic principles seems to rather reflect the devoicing of /v/ and /p/ in the entire playwright's production.

Above, the scholars' different conceptualisation for the devoicing of the fricative /v/ and plosive /b/ has then allowed for a subtle difference between Fluellen and Evans to emerge. Still pursuing divergences between these characters, it can be observed that Venegas Meza suggests that /k/ is realised as /g/ only by Evans (2022, 171). At this point, it may be asked in what other ways Evans' and Fluellen's speech differ from each other, a query which Table 2.3 attempts to address.

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²⁵ Reynolds' findings (2008) have not been included in this table since they highlight general features of the period rather than the Shakespearean ones.

[illegible]

Table 2.3 – mainly built around the data available a non-OP text in Crystal and Crystal's *Shakespeare's Words* – confirms that Fluellen and Evans²⁶ have common features, corresponding to the devoicing of the sounds highlighted above (/b/ and /v/) and of /d/, and, in general, the greater use of devoicing in comparison with voicing. The latter consideration emerges as a result of the five phenomena of devoicing (/b, d, v, z/) opposing one of voicing (/d/) in the case of Fluellen, four types of devoicing (/b, d, v/) against three of voicing (/p, k, f/) for Evans, and the long list of words subject to this phenomenon (see Appendix C, Tables C.1 and C.2). The presence of common traits for the Welsh speakers in *Henry V* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* suggests what has been claimed for the three captains before, that is, the fictitious nature of the characters' speeches.²⁷

Yet, as Table 2.3 shows, Fluellen and Evans are also distinguished by various features: numerically speaking, Fluellen has four "idiosyncratic" traits (/s/ instead of /ʃ/, /tʃ/ instead of /j/, /d/ instead of /t/ and /t/ instead of /tʃ/) in contrast to the seven of Evans (/b/ instead of /p/, /g/ instead of /k/, /v/ instead of /f/, /s/ instead of /ʃ/, /v/ instead of /w/, sound omission in initial position and vowel quality). Interestingly, Evans indulges in voicing to a more significant extent than his compatriot: in addition to embracing it for different consonant sounds (/p/, /k/ and /f/ against Fluellen's /t/), he resorts to it in nine words rather than just one (see Appendix C, Table C.2). One may then inquire as to the reason for the discrepancy between Evans and Fluellen in terms of voicing. According to Reynolds (2008), characteristics of Welsh-accented English in Early modern drama are devoicing of /v/, and the conversion of /p/ and /k/ "in the middle of a word" into /b/ and /g/, respectively. As Evans uses words featuring voicing (of /p/ and /k/) in medial position (e.g. Hi**b**ocrates and cog**s**comb), it may then be argued that the character only limits himself to reproducing one of the phonetic typicalities of Welsh-flavoured speech.

However, some more elements need to be taken into account. Fluellen also utilises terms in which medial /k/ and /p/ are present (e.g. dire**c**tion and disci**p**lines) and that may lend themselves to voicing.²⁸ The fact that no voicing is signalled for him in literature does not necessarily mean that the phenomenon was not exploited in performance, but only that it has not been found on the written page in performance.

²⁶ The character of Glendower will be touched on later, but apparently, his speech is not accented, at least on the page. Paul Meier remarks that "Shakespeare does not indicate dialect for him as he does with Fluellen and Evans, perhaps because he was 'trained up in the English court.' Yet he is usually played with an accent" (2010, 118).

²⁷ For the non-phonological features that Fluellen and Evans share, see Angela Zirker's article (2016, 300).

²⁸ I have consulted The First Folio's *Henry V* available on the website of Internet Shakespeare Editions' (2019j).

Further, if one lingers on Evans' modified words (*Hibocrates, taber, trib; cogscomb, hig/hag/hog* and *knog* and *stog*, see Appendix C, Table C.2), it is apparent that voicing does not only occur in medial but also in final position. This begs the question of whether the 'rule' for voicing was more general in Shakespeare's day than it is pointed out by Reynolds, or whether Shakespeare bent it for some specific purpose in the case of Evans. Did the playwright maybe aim to convey an exaggerated sense of Welshness, not necessarily a caricature, or to produce wordplays increasing or departing from what Massai defines as the figure's "witty repartees" (2020,163)?²⁹ Lastly, some voicing for Evans may have been added by printers or performers, who possibly knew that, even in the absence of explicit voicing in writings, they were supposed to employ it in actorial delivery. As Ema Vyroubalová suggests, as a result of employing different texts embedding "other" varieties, actors may have crafted "techniques and habits for dealing with these kinds of linguistically specific material"³⁰ (2021, 58-59). All these elements are merely hypothetical, so the rationale behind the discrepancy between Evans and Fluellen remains unclear.

In conclusion, the two Welsh characters appear at once united and 'separated by a common language', and differences such as Evans's greater voicing may or may not be rooted in additional meanings or contributing to specific functions. That said, the sounds of Fluellen and Dr Caius give rise to one last consideration: as based on semi-phonetic spellings, the portrayal of Welsh-accented English in Shakespeare is richer – and more 'diversified' – than that of Irish- and Scottish- accented English, at least on the written page. Therefore, the very fact that this variety, along with French, is regarded as one of Shakespeare's favourites by Lacroix (qdt. in Venegas Meza 2022, 170) does not generate any surprise.

2.2.2.2 French-accented English

Speaking of French-accented English or Frenglish, let us still gravitate around the realm of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (MWW), where Dr Caius dwells, and *Henry V* (H5), featuring Princess Katherine. For MWW departure from the norm is recorded through

²⁹ Sonia Massai (2020) opposes the widespread interpretations of Evans "as a stage type or ethnic caricature" (167) by showing that he is a "competent speaker" (163) since he shapes wordplays through his Welsh sounds. What is more, drawing from several plays of the time such as *The Valiant Welshman*, Massai shows how nuanced the representation of "Anglo-Wesh" was, and that it "was used to add complexity, local dramatic specificity and wider cultural and historical resonance to characters whose speech is marked by phonetic variants conventionally associated with it" (2020, 169).

³⁰ Kökeritz seems to support such a view. While discussing Somerset dialectal pronunciation, he claims that "Shakespeare and his fellow playwrights must have relied on their actors to do the job for them: the *cham's* and the *chill's* and the *vrom's* and the *zed's* were there merely as signposts for the actor to follow" (1953, 37-38).

different labels in OP and non-OP literature: “The phonological features of his [Caius’s] French-inflected speech” (Massai 2020, 165), “phonetic variations” (Venegas Meza 2022, 168) and “broken” pronunciation (Blank 2016, 222). The traits of Caius’s speech are made explicit by Venegas Meza, who resorts to Elam (qtd. in Venegas Meza 2022, 167):

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Apart from the features highlighted above, other features emerge in non-OP literature. Crystal and Crystal do not restrict themselves to the changes in 2.4, but they propose some others; for the sake of ease, I will report them all:

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First of all, Crystal and Crystal (2002) distance themselves from Elam, in the that they signal a confusion between /tʃ/, /ʃ/ and /s/ rather than /ʃ/ standing for /tʃ/. It should then be noted that they add several features: /θ/ is replaced by /d/, /b/ by /p/, /j/ and /g/ by /ʒ/; vowel change occurs and the final syllable is subject to modification. In this last case, the example provided is an intrusive *a* (*green-a*), and it is not immediately clear how *a* translates into phonetic terms. Nonetheless, a clarification comes from other (multilingual) literature: Anne Crunelle-Vanrigh (2015) ties it in with *Henry V*, particularly Katherine, and makes it equivalent to the insertion of /eh/ as well as to an extra syllable (72-73).

Focusing on *H5*, French-accented English, as uttered by Katherine, seems to share, besides *a*, another trait with Caius' speech; once again it is non-OP literature to suggest this feature. Blank claims that "[i]n act 3, scene 4, Katherine tries but does not quite succeed at learning the language of her conqueror. A hardworking but not gifted student, her pronunciation is often comic (*de bilbow* for the elbow, *de sin* for the chin)" (2016, 222). Accordingly, the mispronunciation of *the* spelt as *de* – accompanying words which end up having hilarious meanings – parallels Caius's *de* and can be read as implying the conversion of /ð/ into /d/. Other traits of Katherine's pronunciation are not identified in the scholarly texts consulted, and the absence of an inventory recording both sound phenomena and words has made it impossible to notice peculiarities for both her and Dr Caius, as for the Welsh Fluellen and Evans. Yet, still in non-OP literature, Crystal and Crystal (2002) report general French-accented features in *H5*, duly signalled:

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To whom do these traits belong? As two words quoted by Crystal are not only spoken by Katherine but also by Alice (*count* and *nick*), one may wonder whether, as the princess and her servant are not the only French speakers in *Henry V*, the features above may also be shared by some of their fellowmen, who would then partake in the adoption of French-accented English. This is not suggested in the broader literature but cannot be excluded either.³¹ After all, given the great importance assigned to spellings (or "distinctive spellings") for accented Englishes, elements in writing may have 'influenced' Crystal's decision to make French characters "speak OP exactly as the English characters did, but with syllable timing - the 'rat-a-tat' rhythm that is natural to French" in the staged reading of "Henry V" (Crystal 2015b, 43).

³¹ According to Michael Saenger, the English spoken by French characters is unblemished due to "the convention of linguistic nativization" ("the English that the French speak is indeed better than that of the English camp, not only because of the convention of linguistic nativization"; 2013, 27).

2.2.2.3 Present or absent accents?

According to OP literature, further traces of regional and also social variation are traceable in Shakespeare. Josephina Venegas Meza (2022) examines some words spoken by Costard in *Love's Labour's Lost* ('I will not fight with a pole like a northern man; / I'll slash, I'll do it by the sword') and the use of *lass*, and, on proposing two interpretations, prioritises the one that equates Costard with a Northern man (2022, 47). The scholar also suggests that the pronunciation of *perfect* meaning *perfect* be interpreted as "evidenc[ing] Costard's rural background": it is indirectly linked to *parson* for *person*, uttered by another 'rural' character, Jaquenetta, and ridiculed by Holofernes (2022, 47). Accordingly, Costard's speech features both Northern and social elements; however, this may not be entirely the case, as demonstrated by *perfect*. At first sight, the social 'origins' of the word *perfect* are corroborated by the fact that *a* for *o* stands for a typical Northern trait,³² and that Northern portrayals are linked to "provincial" ones in Shakespeare's day (Blank 1996, 105). Yet, upon closer inspection, the spelling *-ar* for *-er*, and seemingly its pronunciation, was not 'peculiar' at the time and can also be found in Queen Elizabeth's writings (Barrett 2013, 218; Lass 2001, 267); in other words, *-ar* in *perfect* is not indicative of social status.

It could then be countered that there are other spellings, in the Appendix to Venegas Meza's thesis, which indicate the Northern and/or social origins of Costard. But these are limited in number and potentially dubious in nature (*vara* for *very*) to allow for any ultimate conclusions (2022, 227).³³ Even conceding that written signs of accent are infrequent in the Shakespearean writings (Hope qtd. in Venegas Meza 2022, 47), additional evidence is needed in order to produce a solid hypothesis on the embracement of Northern/social sounds in *LLL*. Venegas Meza indeed seems to provide further proof; she considers extratextual evidence such as information on the player impersonating Costard in Shakespeare's day. As Venegas Meza maintains, the actor may have been Thomas Pope; while his "background" is not recorded (2022, 79), his travels across Europe would have enabled him to master 'other' sounds (80). However, as much as Pope's sojourns may have equipped him with flexible phonetic skills, substantial elements explicitly corroborating the actual adoption and mastery of Northern sounds are missing. Consequently, in light of textual and extratextual

³² One "of the more typical features of literary northern include[s] the use of *a* for *o* in words like *ane* (one), *bath* (both), and *fra* (from)" (Blank 1996, 105; see also Reynolds 2008).

³³ Venegas Meza also includes a section concerning "words/spellings that change" (2022, 222), but as they are not depicted as potentially displaying social or regional variation, and in the absence of elements pointing to their Northern "colouring", they have not been looked into.

evidence being quite uncertain, Northern and social variation for Costard in *LLL* should be taken with a grain of salt.

But, if so far *LLL* has been seen in relation to an autochthonous accent, the play should also feature a non-British accent for the Muscovites, according to Venegas Meza.³⁴ Woudhuysen (qtd. in Venegas Meza 2022, 51) maintains that the lords interpreting the Muscovites may have taken a foreign accent in spite of this being “nowhere indicated in the text”.³⁵ By contrast, Venegas Meza manages to find a revealing element: Rosaline draws attention to the foreign, “Dutch” pronunciation of the word “well” on the part of her suitor (“‘Veal’, quoth the Dutchman. Is not ‘veal’ a calf? (5.2.247)”) (2022, 51). How is the pronunciation different, one may ask. /w/ corresponds to /v/ and /e/ to /i:/, and these sounds contribute to a pun associating Longaville with a veal (2022, 51). However, Venegas Meza does not problematise the reference to the “Dutch” pronunciation,³⁶ but she first maintains the realisation for *veal* to be a hint for the different pronunciation of the lords, and then points out that their accent may not have been accurate Russian³⁷ but that of “English characters imitating a Russian accent” or “stage Russian”.

Given the role the lords assume, a ‘foreign’ accent is conceivable, but, even accepting Venegas Meza’s interpretation, the play – in its form rather than its content – does not appear to be greatly vocal nor indicative. Probably, with the aim of finding more convincing evidence for both the Muscovites and also Costard, it may be necessary to investigate well-established thespian practices of the time, trying to

³⁴ Venegas Meza also tackles Spanish-flavoured words, but I will include them in my discussion later on, when engaging with Spanish sounds (Sec. 2.3.4).

³⁵ Also Gary Logan, discussing contemporaneity, maintains that, even though “Shakespeare doesn’t exactly write them that way”, Navarra and his entourage “almost” need to take a Russian accent for the masque of the Muscovites (2012, 34). Like Woudhuysen, Logan suggests that the Shakespearean text does not bear any concrete traces of phonetic alterity.

³⁶ The fact that Dutch, rather than Russian, is referred to lends itself to several interpretations. It could suggest that the pronunciation of some or all the lords is so inaccurate as to elicit Rosaline’s comment (and derision). Otherwise, the mention of Dutch may be read as evidence that the contours of this language and Russian were not clearly defined in the period, and that the two could be – and were – confused. One may then wonder why Dutch and Russian could be seen as close and be mistaken by English people. Possibly, there was a *perceived* sonic similarity – Dutch sounds ‘resembled’ Russian ones –, but also other non-linguistic factors may have influenced the association between Dutch and Russian (e.g. information on Russia coming from Dutchmen; see Draper 1954, 219). In general, however, while Russian “aroused considerable interest and even admiration in high places” (Vočadlo 1966, 40–41), a greater availability of Dutch seems to have marked the time. As can be inferred from Vivian Salmon’s “The study of foreign languages in 17th-century England” (1985), the former offered different opportunities for language acquisition and learning than the latter.

³⁷ Although Mélodie Garcia (2015) does not openly comment on the pronunciation of the Muscovites, she may support the use of a non-authentic pronunciation based on the following words: “they are Russians instead of Spaniards, but they are acting out stereotypes all the same”.

determine whether the absence of ‘evocative’ spelling in writing reflected or not the absence of regional or foreign accent in delivery.³⁸

2.2.3 Some clarifications

2.2.3.1 Standard or non-standard pronunciation?

As has just been shown, Venegas Meza detects traces of additional accents – unspotted, or rather, unheard by Crystal. Generally speaking, in her thesis *Stage Talk: Recovering the Diverse Soundscapes of Early Modern Comedies* Venegas purports to retrieve, or, more precisely, expand the range of phonetic variations of the Shakespeare’s texts and to demonstrate that “there is no one single ‘standardised’ version of OP, but that it is a sound system that is intrinsically varied” (2022, 12). To put it in other terms, the scholar aims to detach from the Crystals’ “groundbreaking work”, namely from “the notion of an early modern ‘standard’ of pronunciation” (2022, 20), which is also defined as “accent” some pages ahead (18). Yet, it seems essential to address what appears as a misapprehended idea of Crystal’s ‘standard’ pronunciation, and, whilst acknowledging the undeniable importance and presence of phonetic variation, associate it with the latest findings on stage pronunciation.

As has been seen in Chap. 1 (Sec. 1.1.2), Crystal does not discuss a variety ascribable to Shakespeare’s texts and interpretable as an accent. Rather, he focuses on phonology, meaning the Early modern sound system shared by accents in the playwright’s day and also applicable to the Shakespearean works (see also Crystal 2021a). REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED: REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Thus, unlike what has been noticed by Venegas Meza, Crystal does not suggest anything comparable to a standard pronunciation or accent,

³⁸ There may be other traces of foreign accents in Shakespeare’s language. As a part of a study exploring views on Shylock’s otherness and language, Zeno Ackermann quotes Schlegel’s attribution of residual Jewish sounds to Shylock: “Even in the written words, one almost fancies to hear a whiff of Jewish pronunciation, such as it sometimes can be found even among the higher classes, despite all social refinement” (Schlegel qtd. in Ackermann 2022, 52). Though Ackermann does not delve into the Shakespearean play to determine whether Shylock’s lines are actually Hebrew-flavoured (“[t]he goal [of his paper] is not to verify or falsify hypotheses concerning Shylock’s linguistic difference by assessing the properties of his speech in the Shakespearean text”; 49), the scholar casts a shadow on Schlegel’s claim by signalling no specification for “the exact nature of the philologist’s object of investigation” (54), and identifies Schlegel’s perceived source of otherness as “ethnic” rather than “linguistic” (55). That said, it cannot be excluded altogether, at least here, that residues of phonetic alterity are traceable in the play.

but certainly his sound system allows for at least one consideration on its supposed homogeneity.

As inferable from Arthur Hughes, Peter Trudgill and Dominic Watt (2012), present-day accents of English do not always share the same phonemes due to, for instance, the non-occurrence of phonemic splits such as /ʌ/ and /ʊ/ in Northern England's accentual varieties (60), or to the different use of /a/ and /ɑ/ (60-61). With reference to the latter, it may be useful to list word sets:

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Whilst the accent known as Received Pronunciation, south-eastern English accents and a considerable number of southern Irish accents assign /a/ to 1 and /ɑ:/ to the other sets, central and Northern accents in England deploy /a/ for 2 and 3, and /ɑ:/ for 4 and 5 (61). As a result, on a phonological plane, some differences emerge between accents – even within England itself – and, as Hughes, Trudgill and Watt make it clear, these are accompanied by *other* phonological divergences (61-70). If, as has been demonstrated, contemporary accents of English do not share exactly the same sound system, one may assume, or even only contemplate the hypothesis, that a similar situation – discrepancies in terms of systems – existed in Shakespeare's day. This may appear as being even more the case in Early Modern England, since the Great Vowel Shift did not affect all varieties and accents of English (Minkova 2013): "The regional dialects of England Scotland underwent their own long vowel shifts, some of them very different from the Great' vowel shift" (267). Therefore, while not suggesting a standard pronunciation, Crystal seems to put forward the idea of a 'standard' sound system, which may necessitate further investigation, if not some reconsideration.

Having clarified the notion of Crystal's sound system and the absence of a 'standard' variety for the scholar, I do not mean to discard the use of a 'standard' pronunciation for the plays altogether; on the contrary, as based on new evidence, a pseudo-standard pronunciation cannot be taken out of the picture. It is predominantly held that in Shakespeare's day no standard pronunciation would have been adopted by actors. Apart from Venegas Meza (2022) and Crystal – stating (and reiterating) that the players would have not conformed to a single pronunciation but would have retained their own accents (2005a, 2008a) – other scholarly voices support the accentual

heterogeneity of Shakespeare's stage by means of distinct assumptions. According to Ronan Paterson, "[i]n Shakespeare's own time there was nothing which could be considered a standard accent in England, neither was there an incentive to develop one for use on stage" (67). In Paterson's view, other considerations reinforce the hypothesis that no standard pronunciation was in use: the court was scarcely 'populated' (about 400 persons), which significantly limits the scope of its influence (2021, 67), and this setting did not necessarily feature 'aligned' speech, as Sir Walter Raleigh's and Sir Francis Drake's Devonian sonorities prove (Paterson 2021, 68; see also Crystal 2008a, 127). Nonetheless, if one concentrates on the phonetic alterity of these courtiers, the very fact that their speech was singled out in writings could be interpreted as an index to its 'defective' nature. Lastly, while not considering the impact or non-impact of the court's speech, Alec Paterson deems responsible for the lack of a model pronunciation both the small number of professional actors and the absence of "a unified system of education and crucially for the theatrical set" (2021, 85).

That said, without wanting to rely on Barber or Kökeritz,³⁹ proof within the OP field has quite recently emerged in favour of the theatrical use of the accent of the court, also known as "usual speech" (Massai 2020, 144; see also Gurr 2009, 123).⁴⁰ Massai maintains that the latter was "the accent most commonly spoken on the early modern stage" by examining the testimony of both supporters and detractors of theatre (2020, 145), the players' chameleonic abilities to change accents, and Shakespearean passages where higher language does not necessarily feature as a prerogative of noble characters (146-147). Particularly compelling are Massai's analysis of Gosson's attack on plays in *Playes Confuted in Five Actions*, in which the anti-theatricalist points to the actors' employment of accents that reflect a higher status (2020, 145-146), and Massai's reading of John Davies's poem entitled *Microcosmos*:

But that which grates my *Galle*, and mads my *Muse*,
Is (ah that ever such iust cause should Bee)
 To see a *Player* at the put-downe *stewes*
 Put vp his *Peacockes* Taile for al to see,
 And for his hellish voice, as prowde as *hee*;

³⁹ These previous studies suggest that there was a 'standard' pronunciation: Barber claims that "the accent of the court [...] was sufficiently influential for us to regard it as a standard one" (1997, 103), whereas Kökeritz goes so far as to imply that there existed a pronunciation utilised in theatre, which he reconstructs.

⁴⁰ For Andrew Gurr this was "a common language that would be recognisable to all and yet more and more must have come to reflect whatever was the received pronunciation of perhaps the Court and certainly of fairly well-educated men" (2009, 123). While Gurr mentions that "little evidence can be gained from distinctive spellings", he does not openly quote them (123).

What *Peacocke* art thou proud? Wherefore? Because
Thou *Parrat*-like canst speake what is taught thee:
A *Poet* must teach thee from clause to clause,
Or though wilt breake *Pronunciations* Lawes (Davies qtd. in Massai 2020, 148).

As the scholar argues, like a parrot, the performer appropriates accents that are not his own, such as those of higher classes, and that render his voice “hellish” (148).

As mentioned before, in order to build her argument, Massai also gives consideration to words of praise for the thespian practices, particularly Thomas Heywood’s exaltation of theatre as “refin[ing]” the English language (2021, 145):

Our *English* tongue, which hath ben the most harsh, vneuen, and broken language of the world is now by this secondary meanes of playing, continually refined, ... so that ... from the most rude and vnpolisht tongue, it is growne to a most perfect and composed language (qtd. in Massai 2020, 145).

Massai labels such a comment as conveying the idea of “theatre as a privileged site for the forging of English as a literary language” (2020, 145) and implies, rather than openly stating, that these words may refer to the accentual sphere. To further reinforce the accentual refinement pursued by plays, the use of non-standard dialects in pre-professional Tudor drama can be considered. As Lindsey Marie Simon-Jones argues through abundant dialectal exemplification, “although we cannot quantify the effects that these plays had on the unification of the language, we can be sure that Tudor educators used drama to ‘exercise an influence’ on the right manner of speaking” (2015, 55). The scholar clearly refers to the promotion of a more ‘standard’ variety over dialects in terms of lexicon and grammar, and mostly to drama anteceding Shakespeare’s; yet, said theatre’s influence may also have concerned the phonetic sphere. This may be suggested by the aural nature of plays and, above all, by the fact that dialects are distinctive not only in terms of grammar and vocabulary but also in the matter of pronunciation.

It can then be assumed that an accent corresponding to that of the court may have been utilised to some (significant?) extent in theatre, but its use was not exclusive, as Massai herself suggests (2020). While one may want to understand to what degree Crystal’s or even Barrett’s sound system⁴¹ reflects that of the court language, at this stage it seems more compelling to continue to gain insight into further variation linkable to Shakespeare’s plays and deriving from OP studies.

⁴¹ I have not mentioned Lass’s and Meier’s reconstructions because the former is more limited than Crystal’s and Barrett’s, and the latter hugely based on Crystal’s observations.

2.2.3.2 Variation: education, age and gender

In 2.2.2 and 2.2.2.3 regional variation in the Shakespearean texts has been discussed, but other types of variation, as presented in OP scholarship, need to be dealt with. While Venegas Meza laments that Crystal's *Dictionary* is devoid of any specification regarding "regional, social, or idiosyncratic variation" for the single entries (2022, 29), it should be noticed that Crystal devotes some attention to social variation in his earlier work *Pronouncing Shakespeare* (2005a) by contemplating education, age and gender as affecting the speech of characters.

Embracing what looks like historically rooted information, Crystal assumes the influence of education on certain speakers. Referring to Holofernes and to the fact that "[t]he orthoepists [...] were desperately anxious that people should pronounce all the letters in a word", Crystal contends that some educated people may have imitated such a linguistic behaviour, especially as a result of reading *the Boke named the Governour* by Thomas Elyot (2005a, 67). In terms of generational variation, the linguist maintains quick phonological changes affecting the speech of different age groups: "The end of the sixteenth century was a period, all the evidence suggests, in which pronunciation was changing very rapidly. Within a generation, significant changes in pronunciation could be heard" (2005a, 72). Crystal, however, does not limit himself to thinking in abstract terms but exemplifies concrete divergences: being [ʃ] the old sound and [s] the new one, he proposes that "[w]e could assign the 'see' sounds to older speakers, and the 'sh' sounds to younger ones" in theatrical performances (2005a, 76).⁴² As for gender variation, Crystal seems to look not as much into historical proof as into current sociolinguistic principles. When suggesting that noble women would have been more sensitive to the orthoepists' guidelines, he openly acknowledges the root of his deduction: "[...] we know from sociolinguistic studies that women are usually at the forefront of pronunciation change" (2005a, 69). Thus, a threefold variation has emerged here, but this is not simply introduced and then relegated to a theoretical level: on the contrary, Crystal puts forward the possibility of concretely integrating such variation in the delivery of actors in the modern OP performances of "Romeo and Juliet" (2005a, 69 and 76). (Whether this variation was actually implemented is not of any relevance here, since the debates on reconstruction, rather than those on theatrical performances, are my primary focus in this chapter. In Chap. 4, variation in terms of age will be reprised in compliance with available information).

⁴² Barrett (2013), too, exhibits genuine concern for divergences between generations by referring to conservative and advanced pronunciations throughout his thesis. A few of Barrett's references to such sounds are included in Chap. 1.

It cannot have escaped notice that some of Crystal's observations are based on contemporaneity, and that they all seem to illuminate the pronunciation of the Early modern period rather than that of the Shakespearean works. But do these considerations prove themselves adequate with reference to the stage and Shakespeare's plays? To attempt to answer this question, it may help to imitate much of Crystal's reasoning, that is, taking as a point of reference present-day practices to better understand the past. Today some rather high degree of phonetic realism is expected in productions, and "the quality of the performance's rendering of an *authentic* vernacular" may be essential (Planchenault 2017, 273; author's emphasis). Yet, it is unlikely that the theatrical talk will perfectly replicate a selected variety with its multifaceted variation including phonetic oppositions between generations or traits of female speech. Only a few characteristics of varieties may be chosen with the aim of recalling said variety and, eventually, conveying some meanings. If the present can be utilised to gain an insight into the past, the theatrical speech in Shakespeare's day may then have done without an accurate portrayal of varieties and the variation discussed by Crystal. But, even without the present serving as a source of comparison and information for Shakespeare's day, phonetic variation in the playwright's texts is not supported by other elements of the Elizabethan and Jacobean period itself. Realism was not key: as Sec. 2.2.1 shows, stage accents were used for regional varieties, acting was more stylised than it is today (Gurr 2009, 119-122), and, as will be seen (Sec. 2.3), foreign varieties may not have been 'authentically' rendered. This does not mean that no variation at all could be heard on the stage, but that, if it was there, it may not have been detailed and included that depicted by Crystal.

That being the case, while constituting an invaluable testimony of reconstructed period speech, Crystal's observations on variation tell us about Elizabethan and Jacobean society, if anything, and may not be reflective of theatrical and Shakespearean practices. At the risk of reiterating what I have already made clear, the traits that Crystal discusses do not stem from the playwright's works or recorded theatrical practices, so they are not *Shakespearean*, at least until evidence that is textual or theatrical in nature shows otherwise. In saying so, I do not intend to diminish the importance of looking into characteristics of the period because they may eventually be found in the Shakespearean texts; rather, I only mean to delineate clear boundaries between two spheres, the merely hypothetical and the more concrete.

2.2.4 Concluding remarks

In this section, I have delved into the sounds belonging to regional varieties and accented Englishes in Shakespeare's works, before attempting to shed light on a proto-

standard variety presumably used in theatrical performances and on different types of variation marking Shakespeare's day. While presenting scholarly perspectives, my observations and additional evidence, I have drawn conclusions and envisaged options for future studies; yet, some additional considerations can be put forward.

My discussion has made it evident that OP literature does not always discuss 'deviant' – regional and accented – sounds, so, with the purpose of offering information similar to that collected for segments in Chap. 1 and to enrich debates on OP, I have also consulted non-OP texts and reflected on data, often coming from publications of an OP expert, David Crystal. Further, I have not made any distinction between phonology and phonetics and retained the original phonological brackets as employed by scholars; however, it should be asserted that, as the scholars themselves imply, the highlighted phonemes also correspond to sounds. Finally, on a methodological level, this section has hinted at the great importance ascribed to spellings for reconstruction purposes, and has asserted the conventional nature of dialects and the presence of stock sounds in accented Englishes in Shakespeare. These elements seem to have major repercussions: it is not necessary to undertake an accurate reconstruction of the sound system of single varieties (such as actual West Country speech in Shakespeare's day); rather, what is called for is an interpretation of spellings and textual evidence, and of theatrical practices, in an attempt to produce these impressionistic phonetic portrayals as much as possible.

2.3 Foreign sounds

If social variation may be uncertain in its attribution to the Shakespearean texts, the use of foreign languages, real or fictive, is a well-established truth. But what are the sounds of such languages in Shakespeare? In terms of reconstructed sounds or systems, some foreign languages appear more transparent than others. In this section, I will discuss what OP literature says with regard to foreign sounds in Shakespeare's works, but, as general or specific information is often missing, I will also integrate data and considerations and data from different studies⁴³ reflecting on, for example, accessibility to these languages. In doing so, my objective is not to reconstruct the sounds themselves – a task too demanding for my thesis – but to offer viable, alternative paths of research, capable of impacting the future reconstruction of foreign sounds.

⁴³ Some of these studies were produced before the 21st century.

2.3.1 Latin

Starting from Latin – to be found in plays such as *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Love's Labour's Lost* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Crystal and Crystal 2002, 1793) –, information on how it was pronounced in Shakespeare's day in the OP publications is not too dissimilar. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED
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Even without depicting any general characteristics of Latin sounds in Shakespeare's day and REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, Barrett offers a few glimpses of the same distinct typologies of Latin pronunciation. He transversally points to both English-based and classically-reformed Latin when he deals with the vowel *e*:

⁴⁴ As my knowledge of Latin and of “reformed” and “unreformed” Latin is limited, I have taken Crystal’s words at face value and not investigated whether he applies his theoretical rudiments in his transcriptions.

In Shakespeare's day there was some variation in the pronunciation of Latin. The unreformed pronunciation used [e:] or [ɛ:] for 'e' but the reformed style used [i:]. PDE tends to show the unreformed version but in Shakespeare's day this would vary. The unreformed version tended to follow the spelling and was more natural for uneducated speakers. The orthoepists were in favour of the reformed Latin (2013, 247).

The passage confirms an opposition between "reformed" and "unreformed" versions, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Yet, Barrett's comment also introduces some social variation tying the English-flavoured pronunciation to "uneducated speakers" and the classical-based one to cultivated figures, namely the orthoepists. If this differentiation is taken jointly with the absence of a proper focus on Latin sounds in Barrett, this may be read as indexical of an implied oscillation towards Latin sounds, that is: a traditional or classical pronunciation cannot be established *a priori* but is to be determined on the basis of individual cases.

In an attempt to further reflect on Latin sounds, non-OP studies can also be taken into account. According to Alison Wray, the classical-based pronunciation of Latin, "launched by some scholars", was in the minority both before and after the Reformation (1995, 76). To prove her point, among the others, Wray considers *A Short Introduction of Grammar* (1540s) and the commentary *Brevissima Institutio, seu Reu Grammatices*, "the standard textbook for Latin", which do not account for Latin pronunciation if not in exceptional cases through notes that are only "half-hearted correctives – they state how various sounds are *not* to be pronounced" (1995, 82). Wray's conclusion is that "the effect of there being no instructions was that there was no revolution" (1995, 83), so, rather than the 'new' classical-based pronunciation of Latin, the traditional English one was the norm. To this it should be added that at least one Shakespearean character speaking lines in Latin is not English: Evans. As Crystal and Crystal suggest in *Shakespeare's Words* (1802) and Blank transversally confirms (2016, 221), the Welsh figure converts some voiceless sounds into voiced ones when speaking Latin: *Hibocrates* and *taber* stand for *Hippocrates* and *taper* (Crystal and Crystal 2002, 1802), and *hig/hag/hoc* replace *hic/haec/hoc* (Blank 2016, 221). Thus, the adoption of traditional English Latin may have been more probable than that of classical Latin in Shakespeare's day and for his plays, although one may accept occasional occurrences of classical-based sounds to characterise certain educated figures,⁴⁵ and accented Latin for foreign figures.

⁴⁵ In "Playing with Latin" (2006b) Crystal looks at Evans' Welsh accent in Latin and Mistress Quickly's misunderstandings in *MWW*.

2.3.2 French

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REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, but Anglo-Norman cannot be discarded yet. As Anne Crunelle-Vanrigh notices with regard to *H5* in a non-OP publication, Shakespearean French does not appear to be adhering to continental French completely; on the contrary, it may also entail the insular variety of Anglo-Norman, as some lexical and syntactical features suggest. For instance, words such as *rehersera* and *remember* – to be retraced in Q of the history play – can be associated with Anglo-French: *reherser* was an Old French term inherited in Middle English, and *rememberer* was included in the Anglo-Norman lexicon, while by 1500 it had been replaced by *se souvenir* in continental French (2015, 74). Further corroborating the Anglo-Norman influence on Shakespeare’s linguistic choices is the fact that Kate seems to use *oublier* like the insular *s’en oublier* rather than the continental transitive *oublier*: “O Seigneur Dieu, le men oublie d’Elbow” (2015, 75). As Crunelle-Vanrigh (2015) implies, wondering to what extent Shakespeare knew French is off the point; it is preferable to reflect on the reasons why the playwright may have had recourse to insular French. These may correspond to a facilitation for the actors, but also “accessibility”, proposed as a useful criterion in some OP literature (Vyroubalová 2021, 54; see also Crunelle-Vanrigh 2015, 74). In all likelihood not being native speakers of French and having some indirect familiarity with Anglo-Norman, the players may have found Anglo-Norman lines or words easier and more immediately memorisable than those in ‘authentic’ French. However, it is hard, or even impossible, to determine whether the Anglo-Norman pronunciation still survived in England and would be properly accessible to actors.

On the other hand, proximity to coeval French pronunciation is assumable. In fact, Shakespeare – and supposedly his actors – “would have known what French speakers of English sounded like since he lodged for over a decade with the household of French Huguenot immigrants in London and would have encountered others from the numerous French immigrant community in the streets, shops, and tavern of London” (Vyroubalová 2021, 56; see also Nicholl 2007, 175).⁴⁸ Apart from becoming accustomed to their French-accented English, the playwright and his actors may have gained exposure to their native tongue and French sounds,⁴⁹ in particular to “regional French

⁴⁸ Charles Nicholl reports that in the Montjoy house Shakespeare lived among foreigners and had contacts with French speakers (2008, 175-180).

⁴⁹ In the sixteenth century “French had become an object of second language acquisition” (Montini 2021, 80-81), and there were textbooks, particularly those by Claude de Sinsliens, which included notes on pronunciation (81). According to Saenger, “Shakespeare seems to have repeatedly drawn” to one of these books for instruction, John Eliot’s *Ortho-epia Gallica. Eliot’s fruits for the French: enterlaces with a double new invention, which teacheth to speake truly, speedly and volubly the French tongue* (1593) (2013, 20). Yet, it is not clear whether the Shakespearean texts bear traces of the sounds outlined in Eliot’s text or

dialects such as Picard and Walloon” spoken, according to some witnesses of the time, on a daily basis (see Saenger 2014, 4).

In conclusion, taking Crunelle-Vanrigh’s findings to extremes, it could be speculated that Shakespeare’s French pronunciation was based not solely on some contemporary variety of France, possibly accessible through French communities, but also modelled on Anglo-Norman, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Alternatively, though serviceable in writing through syntax and lexicon, Anglo-Norman may not have featured in Shakespeare’s works in the matter of sounds: access to coeval continental French may have diverted the playwright and his company to such a variety, probably affected by the interference of the performers’ L1, English.

2.3.3 Italian

If the sounds of Latin and French are, to different extents, discussed in OP literature, those of Italian are not pondered upon in the works consulted. Such an absence might be ascribed to the sparseness of Italian words and phrases in the Shakespearean plays, and to a significant conflation of the latter with the Spanish ones in the scholars’ – and Shakespeare’s? – perception as evidenced in *Shakespeare’s Words* (Crystal and Crystal 2002, 1797-1798; see also Montini 2015, 119).⁵⁰ But a lack of discussion does not equate with a lack of representation and, probably, consideration in Crystal’s *Dictionary*, as can be inferred from the analysis of some words.

Two words recognisable as Italian – either for the setting of the play or for their unavailability in Spanish – have been examined: “basta” and “molto”. “Basta”, also occurring in Spanish (Dizionario Hoepli 2023) but used in *The Taming of the Shrew* and thus associated to an Italian context (see Crystal and Crystal 2002, 1797), is transcribed as REDACTED REDACTED. This transcription corresponds to the current standard pronunciation (Dizionario Olivetti 2023), and may be assumed to be not too far from the Italian pronunciation or one of the Italian regional pronunciations in Shakespeare’s day on the basis of some preliminary research concerning the vowel /a/. Indeed, the word, whose etymology is uncertain, may derive from Latin **bastāre* (Garzanti Linguistica 2023, “bastare”): as the short and long *a* of Latin became /a/ in the neo-Latin vernaculars (Patota 2007, 50-52), it can be presumed that, vowelwise, Crystal’s

only of other elements such as spelling. That said, Shakespeare and his actors may have had access to coeval French and its pronunciation through language manuals.

⁵⁰ Although Donatella Montini quotes Holofernes’ proverb in *LLL* as Italian (“Chi non ti vede non ti pretia”) (2015, 120), she claims that “a few lines in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1590-93) offer the longest (and only) example of Shakespeare’s use of Italian” (2015, 122). The “use of Italian” can be read as an active, concrete utilisation of the Italian language, different from a passive embedment of proverbial snippets.

transcription replicates any Italian variety of Shakespeare's time. But if Crystal may have modelled the pronunciation of "basta" on a past variety of Italian, it cannot be completely excluded that the linguist resorted to the inventory of Early Modern English, of which /a/ is part in Crystal's reconstructions (See Chap. 1, Sec. 1.2.2.1).

On the other hand, the term "molto", taken as well from *Shrew* (see Crystal and Crystal 2002, 1797), is rendered as REDACTED and does not reflect an Italian pronunciation, neither current nor past. Even without considering the etymology of the word, and only looking at vowels inherited from Latin, /ɒ/ is absent and so is the length of vowels (Patota 2007, 48-52); for that reason, such pronunciation would not be linkable to Italian vernaculars. Furthermore, selecting Present-day Italian as a point of reference, the word is realised as /'molto/ (Dizionario Olivetti 2023, "mólto"), thus revealing divergences in the last syllable in terms of vowel length and in the first syllable featuring the vowel sound /ɒ/, unknown to the current Italian sound system (see VIVIT 2010-2013 and Patota 2007, 34) but available in the English one. One may then wonder whether Crystal's *modus operandi* for Italian oscillates between Italian pronunciations ("basta"), English ones ("basta" from another perspective and assumingly "molto" or "basta") and, given his association between Italian and Spanish, others emulating or influenced by Hispanic sonorities. In the future, it may be helpful to carry out an investigation into all transcriptions of Italian words in the *Dictionary* and into the Early Modern phonology of Italian to shed light on Crystal's strategy/ies.

Meanwhile, searching for a point of reference for Italian sounds in Shakespeare, one could glance at what non-OP literature suggests; yet, before proceeding, a clarification is needed. In Shakespeare's production some phrases such as "pue per doleera kee per forsa" seem to be mixing up Italian and Spanish (Crystal and Crystal 2002, 1798) and, among the other things, in *Othello* "Shakespeare gives Iago a Spanish name, but makes his nationality apparently Venetian" (Levith 1989, 35). However, as it is not certain who is responsible for confusing spellings (Shakespeare? The scribe? The printers?), and there are still words that can be recognised as Italian either for their spelling (e.g. *molto*) or for the setting of the play (e.g. *Shrew*), I will consider Italian and Spanish sonorities on their own, leaving aside speculation that the two languages may have been blended by Shakespeare and his contemporaries.⁵¹

While the question regarding Shakespeare's reading abilities in Italian may result in a negative answer such as Lievsay's (qtd. in Montini 2015, 199), a seemingly negative

⁵¹ If the conflation is real, one may wonder whether this is due to the close connection between Spain and Italy determined by, say, Spanish rulers reigning over Italian territories such as the Aragon in Sicily (for more historical information and references in Shakespeare see Levith 1989, 66).

hypothesis (Levith 1989, 51) and in a rather persuasive view of the playwright progressing into a proficient reader (Lawrence 2006, 118-176), Shakespeare's speaking skills are more elusive and harder to investigate. They may be reconstructed from his uncertain reading abilities; however, as various L2 and foreign language studies suggest, the four skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking – do not necessarily develop concurrently and equally. But even if it were possible to determine whether Shakespeare was a proficient speaker of Italian – to a minority of scholars he may have travelled to Italy (Levith 1989, 87) –, this could not be taken to reflect the actual competences of actors, and how Italian words were uttered on the stage.

Rather, focusing on theatre and venturing that actors received some training in foreign languages, it may make for a good start to consider the pronunciation referred to the grammars of the period. As based on Giada Mattarucco's "Grammatiche per stranieri" (2018), no models emerge. For the very first grammar by William Thomas addressed to English speakers (*Principal Rules of the Italian Grammar, with a Dictionarie for the better Understanding of Boccace, Petrarcha, and Dante*, 1550) Mattarucco states that the so-called "fiorentino aureo" was a point of reference, but, as the scholar does not explicitly mention pronunciation, the text may solely refer to the written language. Not even in the case of John Florio's texts – *A World of Wordes* (150) and *First Fruites, Second Fruites* and *Queen Anna's New World of Words* (162-163) – are phonological indications offered by Mattarucco. As Michelangelo Florio – John Florio's father – had Sienese origins and wrote *Regole de la lingua thoscana* (149), one may speculate that, if any phonological elements are embedded in John Florio's text, they may have been modelled on his father's.⁵² So, given the supposed but uncertain training of the actors and the vague didactic dimension of oral Italian – where presumably some Tuscan variety may have taken as a model –,⁵³ it seems more convenient to depart from them and examine, like for French, Shakespeare and his company's accessibility or access to Italian.

First of all, it must be said that, apart from the presence in England of Italian speakers such as John Florio (Montini 2015), "Italians visited the court regularly" and, they influenced literary output, if, as Murray J. Levith writes, "*Twelfth Night* may have been written in 1601 expressly for the visit of Don Virginio Orsino, Duke of Bracciano" (1989, 5). But Italian speakers may even have been possibly closer to Shakespeare and

⁵² I have consulted the chapter "Grafia e pronuncia" by Giulio Vaccaro (2018) but no relevant information has been retrieved.

⁵³ Apart from Mattarucco, other scholarly sources that investigate 16th-century language manuals do not delve into pronunciation (Palermo and Poggiogalli 2010; De Gasperin 2016). However, as such studies identify Tuscanisation as central to the target language of textbooks, it cannot be ruled out that Tuscan was also pivotal in terms of pronunciation.

his actors. As Roger Clegg and Lucie Skeaping state, “[t]here are records of *commedia* troupes in England from as early as the 1570s” (2014, 14), and, as Andrew Grewar relates in “Shakespeare and the actors of the *Commedia dell’Arte*”:

Besides the likelihood that Shakespeare actually saw the performances of such players in London or Paris, there is the virtual inevitability of contact between English and Italian actors, in England or abroad, over a period of several decades. It is also clear from contemporary records that the Elizabethan public was perfectly familiar with the Italian comedy (Grewar qtd. in Martina 2019, 768).

It can then be inferred that the playwright may have come into direct contact with Italian actors of *Commedia dell’Arte*,⁵⁴ and, going even further, that Shakespeare may have ‘borrowed’ their sounds. As a result, one may ask what these were like, and a potential answer is provided by Marvin Carlson:

Only the linguistic lovers, the innamorati, were to speak official “literary” Italian, and that not the actual spoken dialect of Tuscany, but the distinctly artificial speech found in “the best Tuscan books”. Except for the lovers, all *commedia* characters both were masks and spoke in dialect, and this linguistic potpourri was clearly part of the expectations and attractiveness of the genre (2006, 78).

This passage reveals that these performances were not linguistically homogeneous but rather constituted a cauldron of different sonorities. Would then Shakespeare and his players be impressionistic about Italian dialects and ‘steal’ from all of them without making any distinction? For instance, though in a context discarding Shakespeare’s authorship, Noemi Magri notices that the word *Veronesa*, supposedly referring to a ship in *Othello*, is Venetian, not Italian (2014, 194), so it may be assumed that even in matters of pronunciation different dialects or Italian varieties of the time were resorted to.

But in the absence of substantial evidence, additional questions arise. Would Shakespeare/the actors favour a pronunciation based on some features of the plays? For example, would the provenance of Italian characters or the setting of the texts (e.g. Padua in *The Taming of the Shrew*) guide, or influence, the selection of certain Italian features over others? Such a possibility appears remote since, in addition to hinging on great exposure to Italian linguistic varieties and significant contact with Italian companies or speakers, it would prioritise a considerable realism, which has not been ascribed to Shakespeare up to this point and continues to seem beyond the

⁵⁴ The influence of *commedia dell’arte* on Shakespeare is also evident in other regards. According to Beatrice Righetti (2022), in *RJ* the Nurse as “rambling and talkative confidant” is absent in Italian *novellas* but to be found in *commedia dell’Arte* (122).

playwright's reach. In fact, Italy and Italianness in Shakespeare are not portrayed on their own but 'contaminated' by England and Englishness. As Levith affirms, "when we scratch the surface of Duke Orsino's Illyria in *Twelfth Night*, or indeed the surface of any of the Italian plays, we find Shakespeare's England" (1989, 11).⁵⁵

Therefore, after heading down some (seemingly) blind alleys, my small-scope research on Italian does not appear conclusive. Yet, on a sheer theoretical basis, I conclude that, based on the criterion of accessibility, the realisation of Italian sounds may have been non-realistic and influenced by both regional Italian and English sounds.

2.3.4 Spanish

As has been mentioned above, Italian and Spanish words can be conceived of as mixed and indistinguishable from each other. Yet, according to Crystal and Crystal (2002), few terms are recognised as Spanish such as Don Armado's phrase *fortuna de la guerra* (Crystal and Crystal 2002, 1799). Unfortunately, the treatment of Spanish is similar to that of Italian in OP literature: REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. In contrast to my research for Italian, however, I will not engage in any preliminary examination of the Spanish entries and speculate on their pronunciations due to my limited knowledge of Spanish. Rather, I will only contemplate factors such as accessibility to the language, as with French and Italian, and discussions on the use of Spanish-flavoured words in order to provide information on potential pronunciation/s of Spanish terms.

Starting with access, Shakespeare had opportunities to hear Spanish speech, as stated by Mary M. O' Mara:

It would be strange, indeed, if the language of Spain, which was in such current usage in Elizabethan England, had not become familiar to Shakespeare as it had to some of his friends and literary confreres. The English soldiers who had fought in the Spanish ranks abroad had carried back home with them new and descriptive expressions in Spanish, while in this same period Spanish sailors were coming to London and mingling often in the streets and taverns with London dwellers. Shakespeare, who

⁵⁵ This does not mean that Italian elements or settings are not recreated or absolutely avoided. On the contrary, Italian features are inserted in plays like *MV* (1989, 19), where Shakespeare "refers to the expected 'gondilo' (II,viii,8) and surprises with his aforementioned accurate traghetto detail (III,iv,53)" (Levith 1989, 19), and like *Oth*, which features a 'gundolier' (I,i,25) and 'mountebanks' (I,iii,61) (1989, 31). Yet, these Italian elements co-exist with features of the English world such as alehouses (1989, 11 and 31), and with inaccurate historical facts such as the doge being at the head of the Venetian court (26).

chatted with the tavern crowds and whose speech was, among other things, derived from good listening, seems to have taken up the Spanish tongue and put it to use (1951, 23).

Setting aside the playwright's personal skills, the excerpt invites us to envision London as a site where there were Spanish speakers, that is, both "English soldiers" back from Spain and "Spanish sailors". Hence, theoretically, some imitation of Spanish sounds would have been possible for the playwright and his actors, when Spanish words were adopted.

Thus, disregarding regional differences for the time being, the few Spanish words in the plays may have received native or native-like pronunciation. Yet, a consideration of Spanish sonorities or, more precisely, Spanish-accented pronunciations in Shakespeare may complicate the picture. Among the Spanish-inflected words thoroughly investigated by Venegas Meza, the name *Armado* is pronounced in different ways in *LLL*, and one of them entails Spanish sonorities: some characters, including Armado, colour it with the Spanish consonant sound /ð/; others anglicise it into /d/ (Venegas Meza 2022, 49). This is not the appropriate place to define the possible functions of the pronunciations that Venegas excellently traces; suffice it to say that the use of Spanish or non-Spanish sonorities adds or emphasises attitudes of characters such as the "insularity" of the lords (2022, 49).

Another Spanish-flavoured term is Don Armado's *sirrah* as *chirra* (2022, 50), a "mistake" which does not seem to reflect the actual errors a Spanish speaker may incur – /tʃ/ and /s/ constitute different phonemes in Spanish (Venegas Meza 2022, 50). According to Venegas Meza, the segmental inaccuracy for *chirra* arises from the act of ridiculing.⁵⁶ But "Shakespeare's intention to mock the accent is not necessarily based on first-hand knowledge of Spanish"; "the depicted sound could reflect the way Elizabethan English people perceived and decoded accented English" (2022, 50). Aside from (possibly) responding to the peculiar meanings of *LLL*, such a (stereotypical) derision of Spanish pronunciation may be justified by historical facts (e.g. Anglo-Spanish War), and appear particularly compelling in the matter of plays. As Cruickshank (1993) suggests, as a part of a denigrating strategy,⁵⁷ Spanish characters

⁵⁶ For Mélodie Garcia (2015), such pronunciation is "the distortion of the word 'Sirrah' by an ignorant Spaniard".

⁵⁷ The widespread character of this strategy may be questioned. As a recent analysis of early modern English plays dating back to the Anglo-Spanish War (1585-1604) shows (Bhaduri 2018), these do not express "Hispanophobia" overwhelmingly but rather convey "a profound ambivalence", which includes admiration for Spain (155). Even more to the point, still according to Saugata Bhaduri's investigation, the Shakespearean texts "more often than not [...] have practically no element of Hispanophobia in them" (2018, 154). However, Bhaduri's examination of the plays in general and the Shakespearean ones in particular requires caution, since at times it appears too simplistic (e.g. "*Love's Labour's Lost* (1595-

were made to produce strange speech in Early Modern English drama (“Algunos de ellos hablan de manera extraña”; 20). Although no details regarding such speech are given by Cruickshank, the sphere of sounds seems to be hinted at through the characters mentioned (e.g. Don Armado). In accordance with Venegas Meza and Cruickshank, it could then be argued that the adoption of a ‘fake’ or anglicised Spanish sound appears adequate (/tʃ/) for *chirra*. Yet, the reflection process is actually not over: in an effort to take a more historically linguistic perspective (even if it may prove to be a long jump), one could wonder what Spanish in the 17th century sounded like and if Shakespeare or the players may have heard – the issue of accessibility somehow comes back – and replicated varieties of Spanish mixing /tʃ/ and /s/.

In view of the discussion above on Spanish-accented English, it is not possible to infer any ultimate answer on the pronunciation of Spanish or Spanish-like words. Rather, it can only be preemptively argued that, even if access to Spanish or its varieties was possible, an accurate representation of Spanish may not have been pursued, especially if this was in contrast with the meanings of the play to be conveyed. By contrast, an impressionistic idea of Spanish sounds may not rarely have been regarded as satisfactory.

2.3.5 Welsh

At least another language⁵⁸ – Welsh – needs to be discussed, although, due to its concrete absence in Shakespeare’s works, it can only be subject to the highest degree of speculation. In OP literature, Vyroubalová affirms (2021):

The Welsh spoken by Glendower and his daughter in *1 Henry IV* constitutes a peculiar case– while from the context of the scene it is clear that these utterances are meant to represent the Welsh language spoken by two native speakers (one of whom cannot even speak English), they are textually indicated only by a set of original stage directions: “*Glendower speakes to her in Welsh, and she answeres him in the same*”; “*The*

1596) is set in Navarre, but hardly shows any Hispanophobia, and though Don Armado’s name may recall the Armada, he is a rather lovable character”; 2018, 151).

⁵⁸ What Vyroubalová describes as “the made-up language in *All’s Well That Ends Well*” (2021, 33) has been excluded from the present discussion. The scholar admits that “despite some resemblance to the Romance language family, the made-up language used to hoodwink Parolles in *All’s Well That Ends Well* lacks the dimension of geo-linguistic realism”, before implying that English sounds may have been utilised (33). However, according to Vočadlo (1966), in the play the word *oscorbi* is “unmistakably Russian” and stems from *oskorbit*, which means “to insult”. Although such a claim may hold true, a potential problem with it is that it is based on the spelling *oscorbi dulchos* rather than *oscorbidulchos* (in the Folio (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019k) and the Oxford Edition consulted (Jowett et al. 2005, 1049)).

Lady speakes in Welsh”; “The Lady againe in Welsh”; “The Lady speakes againe in Welsh”; “Here the Lady sings in a Welsh song” (33).

The use of actual Welsh is repeatedly proposed in *1 Henry IV*, where it is employed antagonistically (Carlson 2006, 39), but, in terms of sounds, as Vyroubalová herself suggests (2021, 33), one cannot count on Shakespeare’s writings since no lines are given, apart from those spoken in Welsh-accented English by Fluellen and Evans. It would then make sense to have recourse to evidence beyond the playwright’s texts, and Vyroubalová permits us to give a glimpse at the accessibility to the language, and the company’s assets. Aside from contemplating more or less ‘authentic’ representations of Welsh in early modern drama, the scholar acknowledges Shakespeare’s likely familiarity with Welsh-accented English and, in doing so, implies access to Welsh but no actual knowledge of it (2021, 34). Further, Vyroubalová envisages the possibility, put forward by Willy Maley and Philip Schwyzer, that the role of Glendower’s daughter may have been written for and played by a young Welsh speaker (2021, 34) and thus spoken in proper Welsh. But the phonological and phonetic characteristics of such Welsh remain obscure. Though a good starting point, Vyroubalová’s information requires corroboration as well as expansion.

2.3.6 Concluding remarks on foreign sounds

Latin, French, Italian, Spanish and Welsh are all (somewhat) present in OP literature as associable to Shakespeare’s works; yet, it is not always clear what principles guided reconstruction for a scholar like Crystal, and what the phonological and phonetic characteristics of these foreign languages are according to OP experts. In light of the limited contribution of OP literature to foreign sounds – at least on a presentational and discussion level –, I have resorted to other debates, and mostly considered the non-linguistic factor of accessibility to said languages by Shakespeare and his performers. For the sake of precision, I have not attempted a concrete reconstruction of sounds but only tried to show that OP, particularly for its foreign sounds, can – and should – draw on non-linguistic factors. In other words, I have taken this ‘deficiency’ of (OP) scholarship in terms of presentation as an opportunity for enriching the debate on the reconstruction of foreign sounds with non-linguistic observations.

Lastly, as I have stated before, I have not investigated the mixing of languages, especially Spanish and Italian. Yet, it should be said that, apart from foreign languages, other traits of foreign cultures could be associated with each other and confused in Shakespeare’s day; for example, “the available evidence” for Sampson’s biting his thumb in *Romeo and Juliet* “labels it as a particularly Spanish gesture” (Thomas qtd. in Stelzer 2022, 31), rather than Italian. The porous boundaries between languages and

cultures then raises a legitimate question as to whether the former were in fact exchangeable terms of sounds and represented as such in performances. This is a query that will be worth researching into, also in view of Saenger's idea of "interlinguicity", referring to "a condition where multiple languages continuously cohabit systems of meaning" (2014, 6) and suggesting that "languages inevitably overlap" (7).⁵⁹

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have looked into the suprasegmental sphere, as emerging from current OP debates, before giving way to reconstructed regional and foreign sounds in Shakespeare's works in both specialised and non-specialised publications. As has been shown, evidence for suprasegmental features – for some more than others – is lacking or weak, the sounds of regional and accented varieties are discussed but not so much in OP literature,⁶⁰ and those of foreign languages are often devoid of an explicit presentation in specialised texts, which, in addition to rendering them not clearly identifiable, throws a shadow of uncertainty on their reconstruction process. Speaking of the latter, for the suprasegmental features the (usual) external and internal evidence seems pivotal, but for accented Englishes and, above all, foreign languages spellings, or rather, 'misspellings' appear to be preferred. Yet, for foreign languages, I have also highlighted the importance of not solely adhering to linguistic material by putting forward a non-linguistic feature like accessibility to said languages.

In conclusion, although the discussion has not been exhausted, I have attempted to systematise information on and debates in OP literature, to add significant data from other studies, and to underline the importance of considering non-linguistic factors for OP sounds. In Chap. 3, I am going to set aside the plane of segments and suprasegmentals – though linguistic and sociolinguistic reflections will emerge at some point – to explore OP in action, namely in the 21st-century productions.

⁵⁹ It has been recently brought to my attention that the quartos of the Shakespearean plays, being regarded as closer to the texts used in performances, may provide more details on the sounds of foreign languages in productions. If this is the case, a systematic study of quartos such as that for *H5* could be carried out to infer data on the realisation of the foreign sounds ascribable to the plays.

⁶⁰ REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED.

CHAPTER 3

OP in theatre in the 21st century: ramifications, effects and audience response

Introduction

As mentioned before, this chapter attempts to move away from a phonology- or language-oriented discussion to investigate OP, by locating it in the theatre. After an outline of productions and a ‘residual’ exploration of sociolinguistic issues, sound and actorial effects of OP will be examined, and the impact of said pronunciation on spectators will be explored through an investigation into audience response in terms of comprehensibility, intelligibility and appreciation. As in the previous chapters, I will pursue a systematisation of scholarly debates, but I will also strive to draw, or approach, a more exhaustive picture of theatrical OP. To this end, I will push the boundaries of specialised literature and, apart from OP and scholarly studies, I will refer to non-scientific sources such as online articles and reviews. In general terms, the latter have supplemented my research, but at times they have also primarily informed it, viz., in the case of my small-scope study concerning productions in OP spanning from 2004 to 2021, and of my investigation into critical responses to OP stagings.

3.1 OP and theatre

3.1.1 Genesis and Development of theatrical productions in OP

The journey of theatrical OP in the 21st century was inaugurated by “*Romeo and Juliet*” at Shakespeare’s Globe, directed by Tim Carrol (2004) and recounted at length in David Crystal’s book *Pronouncing Shakespeare* (2005a).¹ The OP performances were mounted over a weekend in June (for the rest of the season the tragedy was recited in RP), and such an “experiment” (Crystal 2005a, 2005b and 2014b, 25) paved the way for a series of productions in OP such as Giles Block’s “*Troilus and Cressida*” in 2005. If Meier (2016), Massai (2020) and Barrett (2013) all

¹ “This book tells the story of how it [*Romeo and Juliet* in OP] happened” (Crystal 2005a); in particular, it includes an exploration of the genesis of the production, the performers’ testimonies and response of audience members to the production.

record – and to some extent reflect on – some stagings featuring OP in the 21st century, it is David Crystal who draws a much more general and comprehensive outline of OP productions. Apart from acknowledging the “movement” making use of OP (2014b; REDACTED, 2016e)² and the interest of the US in OP,³ Crystal has produced and continues to update a detailed list of performances in the reconstructed pronunciation and related events in the 21st century (2019b). Crystal’s practice of keeping track of performances is not surprising in light of his own contribution to various productions in OP,⁴ and of his son Ben Crystal acting in or putting on several spectacles.⁵

While the list constitutes an essential tool for the identification of OP performances – from which I have benefitted myself –, I have attempted to collect additional data on OP and, whenever possible, confirm current ones by carrying out further investigation covering the time span of 2004-2021.⁶ Specifically, I have used various online tools and Down Jones Factiva⁷ by searching for key words (e.g. “Shakespeare Original Pronunciation”),⁸ have consulted relevant OP literature and contacted theatres and/or directors.⁹ Although my main objective was to shed light on OP stagings, I have also been able to recover some material on musical productions, talks, radio programmes and various other events, which, though not thoroughly analysed here, have been listed in Appendix D (Tables D.5, D.6, D.7 and D.8) for future reference. Before presenting the findings of my research, it is interesting to notice that at least two ‘ventures’ involving OP were possibly aborted in the process, or, from a more optimistic perspective, have not yet been

² Crystal does not always accord the label “movement” his full acceptance: “After only two decades, it might be premature to call the present-day use of OP a ‘movement’, but it certainly feels like one” (Crystal 2021b).

³ Oftentimes, Crystal stresses the fact that OP has not stayed confined to England or the United Kingdom but has travelled across continents, reaching the US (e.g. REDACTED, 2014b).

⁴ There exists a difference between productions and performances: “The performance is what spectators actually see on any given night. It is a particular version of the production, and is unrepeatable” (Balme 2008, 127). This chapter, however, will often use the two words as synonyms for productions.

⁵ Whenever only the surname Crystal is found, it refers to David Crystal, but in possibly confusing cases, the first name of the scholar is also given.

⁶ My investigation was carried out in March, April, June and October 2021 and some material found at the beginning of 2022. Whenever I contacted theatres, directors and scholars after said years, my questions referred to productions put on between 2004 and 2021.

⁷ This is a digital archive at the Library of the Chamber of deputies in Rome, which I consulted on 23 June 2021. It provides free access to a wider array of newspaper articles and information sources than is available online.

⁸ Some of the articles collected thanks to this research have also been used in other sections of this chapter to expand debates.

⁹ I did not limit myself to professional stagings but also considered amateur productions.

implemented: one by the Royal Shakespeare Company reportedly “exploring an original pronunciation project” (Staff 2005); and the other by Phoebus Cart – Mark Rylance and Claire van Kampen’s company – which was “considering doing ‘Othello’ and adding original pronunciation”(Rawson 2007). Although, given the available documentation, one cannot establish the reasons why said OP projects were abandoned, resistance to OP may have played some role. OP has not always met with approval and is still not favourably accepted by, say, several scholars and critics, as will be shown (Sec. 3.5.5 and Sec. 3.6.1.2).

3.1.2 2004-2021: Findings

Within my study concerning the 2004-2021¹⁰ period, four elements are of special interest, and will now be subject to scrutiny. They are as follows: the most performed plays, the success of OP in 2016 and 2017, the widespread use of Shakespeare’s reconstructed pronunciation in the US and the featuring of OP in short sections of productions.

A close look at Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 shows that of all the staged plays, i.e., *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (MND) and *Twelfth Night* (TN) rank first (5 performances each), followed by *Hamlet* (Ham; 4), and *Romeo and Juliet* (RJ; 3), on a par with *As You Like It* (AYLI) and *King Lear* (Lear). The two last-mentioned plays and *Ham*, however, reach the number of three and four performances, respectively, only if ‘special’ stagings are added to the count: for *AYLI* one must include a production made up of scenes, for *Lear* a show in which “passages from King Lear [were put] to music” (Adrienne Inglis, email to author, October 25, 2021), and for *Ham* two performances featuring a single scene. The predominance of *MND* would even be stronger and surpass that of *TN* if the radio production “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” (2012)¹¹ by Paul Meier were included in the count (see Appendix D, Table D.5). One then may wonder what originated the predilection for this early comedy. A possible ‘originator’ may reside in the presence of stylistic devices otherwise absent in Present-Day English, specifically rhymes, which, according to Crystal, are resurrected and properly audible in OP for *MND* (see Meier 2011a). Other hypothetical factors may correspond to the massive popularity of the play¹² and, pairing the work with *TN*, to its nature as a comic text. Obviously, the identified

¹⁰ As stated in my general Introduction, 2004 marks the beginning of the OP experimentation in the new millennium, and 2021 is the year when I performed such an investigation.

¹¹ As stated in the Conventions section, theatrical productions are placed in inverted commas.

¹² If not the most popular, *MND* was at least the most performed play in the US and abroad from 2006 to 2016, according to data provided by the website “Shakespeareances” (Kopf 2016).

aspects may not be deemed conclusive, and constitute none other than one detail of a more complex picture in need of further examination.

Play	<i>MND</i>	<i>TN</i>	<i>Ham</i>	<i>RJ</i>	<i>AYLI</i>	<i>Lear</i>
No.	5	5	4 ¹³	3	3 ¹⁴	3 ¹⁵

Table 3.1. Entire Productions and single scenes in OP. ¹⁶

Play	<i>Mac</i>	<i>JC</i>	<i>MV</i>	<i>H5</i>	<i>Tro</i>	<i>Cym</i>	<i>Per</i>
No.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 3.2. Entire Productions and single scenes in OP.

Play	<i>WT</i>	<i>Ant</i>	<i>Ado</i>	<i>R2</i>	<i>Oth</i>	<i>Shrew</i>
No.	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 3.3. Entire Productions and single scenes in OP.

If *MND* was the most staged play in OP in the period under examination, 2016 and 2017 can be regarded as the OP years *par excellence*, as Table 3.5 reveals. They counted a greater number of performances (8) than that of the previous and following years. In an attempt to search for a rationale, it should be noted that 2016 did not only mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, 'triggering' Shakespearean initiatives and celebrations all around the world (see Kennedy 2016). But, probably still linked to or in the same spirit as the commemoration, the year also saw the publication of David Crystal's *The Oxford Dictionary of Shakespearean Pronunciation*. As for 2017, given the even higher number of performances in OP according to Table 3.6, and of lectures and presentations (see Appendix D, Table D.7),¹⁷ it cannot be excluded – and cannot be stated with certainty either – that the celebratory atmosphere of 2016 extended far beyond the temporal bounds of this year and invested the following one. No less important is the fact that the *Dictionary*, devised "to save" Crystal "even more work helping people who wanted to put on plays in Original pronunciation" (BBC Sounds 2016), may have encouraged or facilitated the adoption of OP. Whatever the case may be, the explosion of OP stagings did not persist long, decreasing sharply in the following years.

¹³ Including two featuring only one scene.

¹⁴ Including one featuring only some scenes.

¹⁵ Including one where a part of *Lear*'s text was set to music.

¹⁶ I selected the stagings of plays as the focus of my study, so I excluded productions featuring sonnets and both sonnets and plays that I came across. However, data on such productions are available in Appendix D (Tables D.3 and D.4).

¹⁷ Data on lectures, presentations and events regarding OP were a byproduct of my research, rather than my focus, since I stumbled upon them while looking into performances in OP. Thus, this information should be taken with a pinch of salt.

	<i>RJ</i>	<i>H5</i>	"What You Will – A Sea Dog's Tale" (rewriting of <i>TN</i>)	<i>R2</i>	<i>WT</i>	<i>Ham</i>	<i>MDN</i>
No.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 3.4. Productions bearing traces of OP¹⁸

Year	No.
2004	1
2005	2
2006	-
2007	1
2008	-
2009	-
2010	2
2011	1
2012	3
2013	2
2014	5
2015	6
2016	8
2017	8
2018	4
2019	2
2020	-
2021	2

Table 3.5. Number of productions per year, including those with traces of OP.

¹⁸ For Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6 I have used "Productions and single scenes in OP (list for my count)" and/or "Performances with traces of OP (list for my count)" (Tables D.1 and D.2). For the production "As I Pronounced it To You: Shakespeare as it Originally Sounded", it was not possible to determine the plays employed by the director.

Year	No.
2004	1
2005	2
2006	-
2007	1
2008	-
2009	-
2010	2
2011	1
2012	2
2013	2
2014	4
2015	5
2016	5
2017	7
2018	4
2019	2
2020	-
2021	2

Table 3.6. Number of productions per year, excluding those with traces of OP.

Yet, even in the face of the general decline of OP performances after 2017, as Appendix D (Table D.1) shows, the US continued to resort to the reconstructed pronunciation, thus confirming an American interest in OP, highlighted in literature by Crystal (RED., 2014b) and mentioned before (3.1.1). Especially noteworthy is the theatrical activity of Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, which from 2015 onwards

staged at least one production in OP a year.¹⁹ The commitment to Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation of this institution becomes even more intriguing if it is paired up with the numerous efforts of other American theatres or companies throughout time (e.g. Chelsea Theatre Works staging "Romeo and Juliet" in 2018), and compared with the 'relative silence' of the UK after 2016 (see Appendix D.1). Following said year, the UK did not properly utilise OP for stagings of plays, only occasionally employing it in hybrid performances (Mittelmaier's "Bach and Sonnets" 2018, 2019; see Appendix D, Table D.4). Seen together, these elements raise the question as to why the US proved more attached and 'loyal' to OP than the UK – Shakespeare's own homeland – or, even more, why the US utilised OP in the first place. While Crystal seems to ascribe the adoption of OP to the closeness between Shakespeare's pronunciation and American English (2019a, 72), one pilot study (Russo 2022) has recently attempted to look into the causes responsible for the use of this pronunciation in the US, and hypothesised the desire to further appropriate Shakespeare and to establish a closer link between Shakespeare's and the Pilgrim Fathers' sounds.²⁰ Although for the investigated productions – Paul Meier's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" 2010 and his radio production in 2012 – elements other than the association with the phonology of the Pilgrim Fathers have emerged as primarily responsible for the employment of OP (e.g. the director's interest in Shakespeare), the appropriation of the playwright's language, inferable from references to the Pilgrim Fathers' pronunciation in press releases, may have appealed to audiences, so the relevance of this feature cannot be completely ruled out from the US picture (e.g. in the case of other institutions).²¹

Though the reasons for the utilisation of OP in the US remain unclear, the country appears as a rather established reality in the field of Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation. However, OP also made it to other states like

¹⁹ According to Thomas Brown, Baltimore Shakespeare Factory is "a company *focused* on Early Practices, that mounts entire productions every year in OP" (Brallion 2019). Being highly interested and willing to promote original practices and OP itself, he resolved to help renovate parts of the theatre (Brallion 2019).

²⁰ For clarity's sake, we cannot state that the pronunciation/s of the Pilgrim Fathers were exactly like the reconstructed sounds of Shakespeare's works. More on this in Russo's "Original Pronunciation and the United States: The case of A Midsummer Night's Dream by Paul Meier (2010, 2012)" (2022, 213-214 footnote 4).

²¹ As for the actual results of the study, personal motivations such as the director's interest in Shakespeare appear to have determined the adoption of OP in Meier's performances. Partially validating the influence of personal attachment on the use of OP is the case of director Hamilton Meadows. Based on Fromson's narrative, Meadows could relate to the playwright's text, but this strong link only comes second in order of importance, after Meadows "chance to achieve a sort of immortality" (2013, Pos. 127-133).

Australia, Poland and Austria (see Appendix D, Tables D.3 and D.4). Whilst scholarship, particularly Crystal's, records productions occurring in various countries (2019b), certain international stagings such as "The Taming of the Shrew" (2018), directed by Deshik Vansadia and performed in Mumbai, are not available in OP literature. But, even more interestingly, unlike any existent inventory of OP stagings, my study shows productions featuring snippets of OP (see Table 3.4). This is the result of source material explicitly stating that Shakespearean pronunciations were employed. For instance, an article reports that in "Romeo and Juliet" (2015) "[t]here's some judicious use of original pronunciation to restore some rhymes that wouldn't work in modern English ("remedy" and "die", for instance)" (Hurwitt 2015). In another text concerning a MND production (2016), the author points to the reconstructed rhyme *grove-love*: "In one particularly nice touch, Puck ends a rhyme with the original Elizabethan pronunciation – and corrects himself..." (Fugate 2017). Although I have not minutely investigated the use of fragments of Shakespearean pronunciation in otherwise non-OP productions, such an insertion may not be a new phenomenon springing from the OP movement, as the following passage suggests:

Il contient des caractéristiques propres à illustrer les linéaments de l'accentuation prosodique. Si l'on applique de façon formelle la grille décasyllabique autant que le schème iambique on est amené à prononcer le participe passé *remembered* en quatre syllabes, et en plus à accentuer la désinence. La plupart des acteurs le font encore aujourd'hui, mais souvent en accentuant la syllabe finale du bout des lèvres, de façon un peu fantomatique, comme pour faire savoir qu'ils connaissent la tradition mais veulent éviter un académisme ostentatoire (Suhamy 2014).²²

Accordingly, performers still attempt to reproduce the original metre through the pronunciation of *-ed* or, more precisely, hint at it "pour faire savoir qu'ils connaissent la tradition" ("to show that they know the tradition"). It could then be assumed that to this day traces of the Shakespearean pronunciation have been retained in some form or another thanks to the "tradition". That said, the question arises whether the OP "movement" may have had a significant impact, or not, on the actual embedment and eventual recognition of 'original' sounds into otherwise more contemporary productions.

²² "It contains features that illustrate the traits of prosodic stress. If we formally apply the decasyllabic grid as much as the iambic pattern, we are led to pronounce the past participle of *remembered* in four syllables, and also to stress the ending. Most actors still do this today, but often accentuate the final syllable with their lips, in a somewhat ghostly way, as if to show that they know the tradition but want to avoid ostentatious academicism."; my translation).

To sum up, according to my study, in the period under examination the most performed play in OP was a comedy, *MND*; 2016 and 2017 proved to be the most successful years for productions in OP, which, generally speaking, found more fertile ground in the US than elsewhere, and traces of said pronunciation appeared in several non-OP stagings.²³ Having provided a general overview of OP productions and ‘updated’ Crystal’s listing and findings, some aspects of performances delineated by scholarly and, to a minor extent, non-specialised debates will be explored.

3.2 Sociolinguistic implications and reflections

3.2.1 OP and varieties and accents of English: similarity and resonances

Both stylistic and theatrical implications of using OP will be highlighted as this chapter progresses; generally speaking, the latter focuses on Shakespeare’s reconstructed pronunciation dramaturgically and actorially, before turning to audience response. As I have linked OP to the US in Sec. 3.1.1 and outlined phonological, phonetic and, broadly speaking, linguistic issues in the previous chapters, here it seems more convenient to linger on the linguistic or, rather, sociolinguistic qualities of OP by inspecting characteristics assigned to Shakespeare’s reconstructed pronunciation. Though I will not be able to exhaust the 21st-century debates on the topic, I intend nonetheless to engage with them by illustrating the relationship between OP and varieties of English.

As Chaps. 1 and 2 make plain, the use of OP entails the adoption of the reconstructed sound system, on top of which actors superimpose their own accent. Notwithstanding the ‘interference’ of the performers’ accentual sonorities, OP often appears to be associated with specific varieties of English. As has been mentioned in the previous section, David Crystal points to the resemblance between sounds of

²³ Another element surfacing in my research, which could be investigated in further studies, is a possible trend uniting OP and non-historically informed or original costumes. For instance, for Paul Meier’s “*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*” the director and the artistic team “eschewed doublet and hose, preferring an eclectic and anachronistic look that had something of the circus about it” (Meier 2011b); and for Rob Gander’s “*Hamlet*” the cast made use of modern dress co-existing with Victorian themes (Wainwright 2011; see also Pomeroy 2019 and Minton 2019). As fascinating as the co-existence of temporally different elements may be, it is not necessarily praised by critics. As one reviewer claims, “[o]ne thing that makes no sense is the limit to authenticity. The actors will strut the boards of the Globe saying ‘blud’ for ‘blood’, but they will wear 19th-century costume” (McCrum 2005).

Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation and American English;²⁴ and such likeness is also maintained by Paul Meier, Ian McKellen and Trevon Nunn:

But University of Kansas professor Paul Meier—who's staging a version of *Midsummer Night's Dream* in the original Shakespearean pronunciation—says English in the Bard's day was much more informal and much closer to American English than these performances suggest:

"American audiences will hear an accent and style surprisingly like their own in its informality and strong r-colored vowels," Meier said. "The original pronunciation performance strongly contrasts with the notions of precise and polished delivery created by John Gielgud, Laurence Olivier and their colleagues from the 20th century British theater" (Barkhorn 2010; author's emphasis).

"Far too often American actors copy an English accent in order to do Shakespeare. That really is such a pity because Shakespeare's own accent was probably closer to a North American one than to a modern English accent" (McKellen qtd. in Ranzato 2021, 157).

Inspired by working with Kevin Spacey, Sir Trevor Nunn has claimed that American accents are "closer" than contemporary English to the accents of those used in the Bard's day (Nunn qtd. in Staff 2014).

OP is actually much more similar to American English than it is to the modern sound of British English, which was convenient for our actors (Bussert 2016, 45).

If here and elsewhere²⁵ voice coach Meier is seen to generalise and detect some strong resemblance between American English and OP, in an interview (Russo 2022) Meier concentrates on a specific accent, General American:

RUSSO: If you have as a point of reference OP and then we try to understand if it's more similar to American English or RP, what would you say?

MEIER: [...] It's *a difficult fact to quantify* but I would say that OP and General American are more similar than OP and RP are.

RUSSO: Does it have to do with r sounds?

²⁴ Ben Crystal, too, highlights the similarity between OP and American English if the following passage is considered: "The Crystals conclude that the original pronunciation sounded close to the Northern English or even some American accents. 'Received pronunciation,' the very proper, clipped speech we associate with British actors or BBC news anchors, didn't develop until the early 1800s, when the upper classes wanted to distinguish themselves audibly from the burgeoning middle class" (Dale 2016).

²⁵ In an article by Christine Ro (2018), Meier is reported to have claimed that OP is "'so much more American' than the prestigious Received Pronunciation accent in which Shakespeare's plays are generally performed now".

MEIER: I would say so. *I think that's a huge part of it, the fact that OP and GenAm are both rhotic accents. I would say that that is the dominant similarity* (Russo 2022, 224; author's emphasis).

Meier declares the realisation of *r* as constituting the “dominant” commonality between OP and the American accent quoted above – a trait which, as suggested in Barkhorn (2010) and Dobson (2015, 446), also renders OP similar to American English altogether.²⁶

Moving on, OP is also viewed as akin to other varieties of English, particularly Irish or Hiberno-English. If Crystal clarifies the misconception equating OP with Irish and maintains the existence of only “some features of OP which are like modern Irish” (2010), journalist Frank McNally vehemently points to the closeness between Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation and Hiberno-English:

And – lo! – not only did it sound Irish, it sounded positively Oirish in parts. True, when you listened carefully, there were also bits of west-country wurzel, and the occasional flat-capped vowel from Yorkshire. No doubt English speakers from other parts would have heard bits of themselves in it too. *But the dominant tone, to my ears, was Irish, and stage Irish at that* (McNally 2016; my emphasis).

But probably the main reason why original Shakespeare sounds Irish is something that happens at the end of the sentence: “In fair Verona, where we lay our scene”. As rendered in OP, the word “scene” sounds like the river in Paris. And as such, it's a first cousin of such quintessential Hiberno-Englishisms as “lave” (for “leave”), “dacent”, and “tay” (McNally 2016).

Responsible for what could be seen as a sort of Irish veil covering OP is the use of some vowel sounds which bring to memory those used in Irish words (not necessarily corresponding to the ones selected for OP).

Considering both Irish and American English, they are also combined together and with other varieties in a few newspaper articles:

This [OP] is, apparently, a mix of Scottish, Irish, West Country, American and Australian accents (Sanderson 2005).

Through analysis of spelling variants, rhymes, and current usage, these questions are finally being answered. To modern ears, Shakespearean speech sounds a

²⁶ Yet the similarity of American accents with OP is also denied in a review of Michael Almereyda's *Cymbeline* (2014): “The original Shakespeare, performed at the Globe in London, is a lot like Irish English. It is nothing like the squawky dialects of the colonies” (agitpapa-562-144113 2015).

strangely familiar cross between contemporary Irish and Scottish, with a hint of Yorkshire and Bristolian thrown in (Oxford Reference marketing team 2016).

Although we all imagine Shakespeare's plays performed in an upper-class British accent according to the experts the original pronunciation of his plays would have had echoes of Irish, New England and Cockney accents (Hayes 2010).

Beyond simply highlighting the wordplay of the original works, Crystal points out, OP also helps modern audiences to parse the plays as oral presentations. "It's just like any dialect," Crystal says, and it sounds like a hodgepodge of several different modern accents, among them the English spoken in Cornwall, Somerset, Ireland, Black Country, Lancashire, and Australia. There's also a dash of the English spoken in *Pirates of the Caribbean*. In some ways, it's closer to American English than to British (Garber 2016; author's emphasis).

It follows that in the ears of several listeners OP does not match any variety of English, and bears traces of various other types, Black or West Country and Australian English – to name but a few. The association between OP and multiple varieties can be explained by Crystal's words: "In all, there are resonances of about a dozen modern accents in EME, thanks to the way the sound structure of individual words has pulled vowels in different directions over time" (2005a, 91). More specifically, throughout the centuries, English has travelled to countries so that local varieties still retain features of Shakespeare's language (e.g. Crystal, in the interview by Meier 2011a, 215; see also Crystal 2010).

This is not the place to confirm any actual similarities between OP and varieties or accents of English,²⁷ or the presence of resonances in the pronunciation, which may be put down to the actors' phonetic realisation of sounds. However, two works that approach such an exploration of OP are worth mentioning: Katherine M. K. Bussert's BA thesis (2016), namely some of its appendices and an article by Artemis Preeshl and Foster Johns' "The American Elizabethan Accent: Sea Island Residents Talk" (2022). The former limits itself to showing similarities and differences between OP and American English without any discussion (115-118); the latter compares OP with the Hoi Toid accent spoken on Smith and Tangier Island, and reveals that "Shakespearean English had less of an influence than expected" (338). For future studies, one could attempt to draw inspiration from these studies and investigate the relationship between Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation and one or more varieties or accents of English, especially American and Irish. It might be possible to shed light on concrete similarities and divergences between this

²⁷ Any confirmation or rejection would imply a detailed study, i.e., a comparison between the sounds of OP and those of the selected variety/ies.

pronunciation and current accents or varieties but also on OP stereotyping and the possible underlying influence of myths.²⁸

3.2.2 Baggage of OP and the (incipient?) displacement of RP

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This, however, is debatable, if we assume an actual similarity between OP and any variety or accent of English, or, even more, a strongly perceived resemblance, as the previous section and McNally's words suggest (*"the dominant tone, to my ears, was Irish, and stage Irish at that"* 2016; my emphasis). Hence, perceived characteristics of modern accents may indeed be attributed to OP. Further, even discarding the perception of the likeness of OP to one certain accent, beliefs and "baggage" resulting from modern accents may be traceable in OP: regional resonances may cause sensed traits like OP's supposed earthiness and rusticity (e.g. Meier 2011, 212).
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²⁸ Several myths exist regarding Shakespeare's English as being living and breathing. By way of illustration, it is said that "the speech of southern mountaineers [in the US] is 'pure Elizabethan English' just as Shakespeare would have spoken it" (Luu 2018; see also Harrington et al. 2006, 38; Ro 2018; Montgomery 1998).

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While this suggestion appears reasonable in its attempt(s) to comply with the audience's expectations and to keep modern response under control, it may fail to consider theatre as a tool for reflection and a place allowing for a questioning of societal values. Consequently, I propose that a more radical approach should be taken: instead of embracing and bringing modern "associations" into OP productions, 'old habits' or those reconstructed so far should be respected at the cost, and in the hope, of destabilising spectators. Concretely speaking, the omission of /h/ could occur in both the speech of educated and uneducated characters so as to instil some sociolinguistic reflection in spectators, or a few of them, and to offer a glimpse into the poor or good reputation of linguistic and phonetic features as a result of their link to social groups (see Peterson 2020).

If this proposal may appear too ambitious for its underlying sociolinguistic and (ultimately sociopolitical) mission,²⁹ it must be said that OP seems to have already been construed as 'revolutionary', sociolinguistically speaking. In fact, the pronunciation has been read as potentially raising awareness and encouraging change in the matter of accents and, more precisely, as promoting a disentanglement

²⁹ The power of theatre for social change should not be underestimated. Theatre practitioner Tony Kushner holds that "[a]rt is not merely contemplation, it is also action, and all action changes the world, at least a little" (2001, 62). But, even more importantly, several studies discuss the ability of narrative plays to modify attitudes and beliefs (Cacioppo, Chuan Feng, Petty & Rodriguez 1986; Konijn 2013; Nabi 2009, 2010; Westen 2007 qtd. in Dill-Shackleford et al. 2015, 970), and Dill-Shackleford et al.'s research (2015) proves the increased knowledge of audience members on a specific topic through theatre. In fact, such a study shows that university spectators of a play on intimate partner violence were more knowledgeable – compared with the control group – about relationship abuse, and more prone to recognise and not embrace myths.

of Shakespeare from RP³⁰ by, say, scholar Alec Paterson and voice coach Cis Berry. Paterson affirms that “[t]he 2004 collaboration between Crystal and the Globe Theatre in London to perform *Romeo and Juliet* in OP represents a huge step in destroying the myth that has tied Shakespeare to RP in the minds of so many” (2021, 94). According to Christiansen, Berry “approves of Prof Crystal’s Globe project, simply on the grounds that it will contribute to the freeing of Shakespeare from the tyranny of Rada-trained gentility and received pronunciation that dominated the theatre for most of the last century” (2004). There is an even more concrete confirmation of the OP’s ability to weaken the link between Shakespeare and RP; it comes from written accounts and comparisons. Voice coach Charmian Hoare notices in relation with “*Romeo and Juliet*” that “[o]ut of the many points raised at the discussions one comment stands out and that is that many people enjoyed an ‘RP free’ production. [...] they had enjoyed hearing this new sound and I think it had made them listen to the text in a different way” (2007, 275). Also, director Daniel Spector relays that “there was something wonderful about hearing Hamlet, of all people, sound like a guy down the street” (Jackoway n.d.), and, according to one journalist, the monologue “Once more unto the breach” renders “King Henry [...] more like a bar-room brawler than the prim aristocrat that Olivier portrayed in the 1944 film” (Cooper 2012).

Whether Shakespeare’s disconnection from RP may be beneficial or desirable is a rather complex issue. Bearing in mind what has been said in Chaps. 1 and 2, current types of OP only appear as close approximations to the pronunciation utilised by the Shakespearean actors, and could be modified in keeping with the supposed existence of a proto-standard. The replacement of RP with the sounds of OP may then not be completely Shakespearean and adhere to the parameter of historical accuracy. Yet if, as has been suggested, the use of RP implies perceived poshness and distance from Shakespeare and OP renders the playwright more human, the promotion of (imprecise) OP may favourably raise cultural awareness

³⁰ That Shakespeare is perceived as linked to RP can be inferred from some scholarship (e.g. Alec Paterson 2021) but also from several newspaper articles concerning expectations about Shakespearean acting. By focusing on the latter, Jackoway claims that “[i]f you ask people how classical Shakespearean acting is supposed to sound, they’ll probably tell you something like ‘posh’ or ‘elevated,’ or even worse, ‘esoteric’ or ‘elitist’” (Jackoway n.d.). In another article, it is stated that “[u]sually one expects the Bard’s words to be spoken in plumy voices. Here one hears them in what sometimes sounds like a West Country voice but after close attention sounds like a mixture of various accents” (Staff CORE 2012). Although RP is not clearly mentioned in either text, it is implied, especially in the case of Jackoway’s article, which connects posh diction to “Laurence Olivier style of speaking Shakespeare, as fancy as the Queen” (n.d.).

and spread the well-established scientific idea whereby the playwright “never intended his plays to be highbrow or solely for the elite” (Alec Paterson 2021, 95) or, setting aside intentions, that his works were also consumed by the masses and not only by the higher rungs of society.

On a final note, I wish to reiterate the possibility that OP may carry some – variable – “baggage”, but above all I mean to give further prominence to the value of OP, as deriving from the amalgamation and abstraction of the information in this section. Said pronunciation holds up and may hold up a mirror to our sociolinguistic practices and foster reflection. And it may as well contribute to rendering Shakespeare more human in the eyes of those seeing him exclusively in the light of high culture.

3.3 Sound effects

As the sociolinguistic ramifications of OP are left behind, the realm of sound effects can be approached. Whilst acknowledging the difficulty of defining what an “effect” is and its variability as a concept in theatre, in his Introduction to *Effects for the Theatre* Joe Aveline exemplifies “sound effects” as “noise created off-stage” but also as “music underscoring the action coming from tape playback systems” (1995, 1), mirroring Leonard’s subsequent treatment (1995). In Leonard’s view, when referring to theatre, sound effects are not to be linked to the verbal sphere or to be seen as stylistic devices. Here, however, sound effects will take on a stylistic and dramaturgic³¹ meaning, reflecting Crystal’s treatment of devices such as rhymes and assonances (e.g. Crystal 2014a, 15-16),³² and will eventually illustrate textual recoveries brought about by OP. Said effects will be discussed in connection with stagings but also abstractly – as deriving from the plays considered through the lens of OP.

³¹ Dramaturgic is to be meant as referring to the writing of plays.

³² According to the book *Repertorio degli effetti sonori*, the word *effects* – at least in its Italian translation of “effetti” – can also entail human and psychological reactions (Augoyard and Torgue 2003). For instance, “fonotonia” is described as “il sentimento di euforia provocato da una percezione sonora” (“the feeling of euphoria caused by a sound perception”; my translation) (2003, 55). Such a meaning is excluded here.

3.3.1 Rhymes

In various texts (e.g. Barrett 2013; Malvern 2016; BBC Staff 2005), what clearly emerges is the presentation of rhymes³³ as one of the main gains of Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation. Whenever retrieved rhymes are quoted, occurrences from the sonnets are offered (e.g. Meier 2016, 180; REDACTED), but, seemingly to a lesser extent, examples from the plays are also given. Crystal signals the retrieval of rhymes in lines from *RJ* and *Mac*:

I'll to the Friar to know his remedy.
If all else fail, myself have power to die (2005a, 88).

Upon the heath
There to meet with Macbeth (Crystal 2016c).

To give a further example, in his study on *MND* (n.d.), Barrett claims that the following lines uttered by Helena would have rhymed:

My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody (3).

However, the recovery of rhymes is not an end in itself or, if for some scholars or non-experts it is, the restoration is shown to reinstate other elements or meanings of the Shakespearean texts.³⁴ By way of illustration, in Bussert's view, some rhymes have the merit of embellishing Shakespeare's language ("It [OP] beautified the

³³ In this section no rhymes based on similarity rather than identity will be debated. For a definition see Chap. 1: "*rhyme* is the linkage in poetry of two syllables at line end [...] that have identical stressed vowels and subsequent phonemes but differ in initial consonant(s) if any are present – syllables that, in short, begin differently and end alike" (Brogan et al. 2012).

³⁴ As I have stated elsewhere, the sonnets have not been an object of study in my research; yet, as can be inferred from readings that I have encountered along my research path, the sonnets may greatly benefit from OP. Given the retrieval of rhymes, one could go beyond the single texts and absorb Semler's idea – significantly influenced by MacDonald P. Jackson – that sonnets may be featuring "rhyme-links' connecting a longer series of sonnets in a structural chain" (Semler 2013, 452). In particular, Sonnets 131-146 are presented as tied to each other by means of rhymes (Jackson qtd. in Semler 2013, 452), thereby weaving a rhyming fabric depicted as follows: "at least one end-rhyme word from one end-rhyme pair in a sonnet finds itself repeated as an end-rhyme word in the next sonnet which introduces another end-rhyme pair from which at least one end-rhyme word finds itself recurring in the next sonnet and so on" (Semler 2013, 452). Thus, OP may contribute to recovering ties between sonnets and, adopting a broader perspective, to identifying sound patterns and links between plays.

fresh phonetic echoes and rhymes within and between lines” (2005a, 167), director Gavin Leigh maintains the usefulness of OP rhymes for his company in rehearsals. In an email exchange, Leigh asserts that he and his actors “have noted what would have been rhymes in OP, so we can understand what action or sound the rhyme could be played with” (Gavin Leigh, email to author, May 8, 2023), and that “[r]hyme is used in very different ways in these plays [e.g. *Richard II*] but identifying there is a rhyme matters” (email to author, May 13, 2023). To put it differently, for Leigh and his performers retrieving rhymes through OP provides food for thought, since they manage to see beyond temporal ‘encrustations’ and are ultimately inspired by elements potentially dealing with characterisation (e.g. “action”) – but not necessarily.³⁶

Therefore, the retrieval of rhymes can be equated with a phonetic or phonoaesthetic effect, but it can, and in all likelihood will, also affect the semantics of the Shakespearean lines.

3.3.2 Puns

The retrieval of puns or wordplay³⁷ is regarded as another of the great advantages of OP, commended in a similar vein to the recovery of rhymes in both specialised literature and newspaper and magazine articles (e.g. Crystal 2008a, Bussert 2016, Chatterjee 2016, Schwab 2016). As stated in Chap. 1, a pun can be defined as follows: “A word, the signifier, has a single sound but refers to two distinct objects or ideas, two different signifieds. The signifiers are and are not alike” (McDonald 2001, 142).

If outside the OP movement a few scholars lament the loss of some puns due to “the impossibility of knowing how words in Shakespeare actually sounded”³⁸ (Parker 2009, 111), OP literature (e.g. Barrett 2013, 158-159; Meier 2016, 180; Bussert 2016, 45; Lee 2018) does not only praise the actual recovery of rhymes thanks to the

³⁶ Actor and director Mark Rylance does not explicitly discuss the use of OP rhymes in rehearsals, but he admits “turn[ing] – as we rehearse the plays – to the original pronunciation of the folios” (qtd. in Hemley 2015).

³⁷ REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Generally speaking, if some scholars use them interchangeably, others differentiate between the two (see Fayadh and Wala'a 2019, 40; Adamczyk 2014, 13-14). Ultimately, it can be said that wordplay has a broader sense, including but not limited to pun, and a narrower sense, corresponding to pun. Here, I will avoid using wordplay, unless a distinction is necessary, and will employ the term “pun”.

³⁸ For the sake of precision, Patricia Parker’s article does not only engage with puns but with “polyglot soundings”, an expression reiterated throughout her contribution.

emerges that, among the several pronunciations transcribed, the terms *boys* and *bois* can be homophones – for the possibility that puns were not pronounced completely alike see Chap. 1 –, and that the pun could be revived, were OP to be used. (Whether this or puns in general would be or could be understood is another matter, which will be dealt with in Sec. 3.5.4.)

But, apart from puns already determined by scholars and eventually turning to the second group, OP might be responsible for new findings. As Vyroubalová suggests:

Any payoff from research into how exactly Shakespeare's foreign characters would have sounded in the original productions can be expected to be at least comparable to the benefits already being derived from reconstructing the OP of the non-foreign Shakespearean passages. In other words, we can assume, for instance, that it would lead to the uncovering of wordplay and other effects dependent on sound fallen into the gap of obscurity between the original and current pronunciation of the lines (2021, 36).

Accordingly – and as concerns the realm of sheer potentialities –, OP might shed light on puns which have not been identified in the plays so far.

Although I have exclusively focused on puns, both Vyroubalová and Parker – making reference to (polyglot) “wordplay” and through their broad-scope discussion – appear to go beyond these devices. In particular, Parker does not only repeatedly employ the label “polyglot soundings”, but she also records “resonances” which cannot be traced back to the category of puns (“Spanish-sounding terms include the *malhecho* of the Folio's “Miching Malicho” (140–1); “student” is spelled “studient” in both Q1 and Q2 (34–5), influenced by what we render into modern French as *étudiant*” 2009, 119). In the next section, perhaps appropriating Parker's wider gaze, I will deal with other sound effects of various nature recovered thanks to OP.

3.3.3 Alliteration, assonance and other phonoaesthetic effects

During a workshop at Shakespeare's Globe, David Crystal maintained that “there are new assonances, new alliterations, new rhymes” in OP (GB 3316 SGT/ED/LIB/REC/2015 Globe Ed/OP 2015). Setting aside rhymes, which have already been subject to scrutiny, a definition of the terms “assonance” and “alliteration” is necessary, before proceeding to consider their relationship with OP. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, REDACTED (REDACTED), REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED

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 REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED, ⁴⁴ it seems plausible that assonances,
 normally available in plays, ⁴⁵ are also recoverable from the dramatic works thanks
 to OP. Assuming some impact of these recovered devices on readings of plays, one
 may be tempted to believe that assonances or alliterations are nothing but phonetic
 and aesthetic effects, especially in light of OP literature. In fact, on discussing the
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 REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Yet, in all likelihood, the gains of restored
 assonances would not be restricted to the aesthetic sphere, as some non-OP
 scholarship suggests. In “Language” (2016b) by Crystal, the twofold function of
 alliterations or assonances is enunciated: ““Why, then, should anyone wish to
 alliterate? There are two answers. One is phonetic: the repeated sounds appeal to
 our phonoaesthetic sense. The other is phonological: the repeated sounds foster
 semantic links, the expected similarity of sound suggesting or reinforcing a relation
 of sense” (2016b, 164). Though still on a theoretical plane, it then appears reasonable
 that some, most or even all of the occurrences of retrieved alliteration or assonance

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 correspondence between vowels rather than consonants is also preferred: “Assonance is the
 repetition of a stressed vowel, but not of a following consonant or consonant cluster, in syllables near
 enough to each other for the echo to be discernible to the ears” (Adams 1973, 8).

⁴⁴ To date, no study has systematically investigated the implications of using certain vocalic or
 consonantal sounds in short or long passages in OP.

⁴⁵ For instance, in *H5*’s line “Fetch forth the lazar kite of Cressid’s kind” the words *kit*, *kind* and, to
 some extent, *Cressid* alliterate (Shakespeare 1995, 162).

offered by plays would be bearers of semantic ties, which may ultimately be revelatory of textual meanings.

Departing from assonances but not from the reiteration of sounds, a hypothesis has recently been put forward; it entails at least some OP and argues for the combination of sounds in reconstructible and relevant larger units of meaning. It is Gary Watt's "fractional inference", which reads as follows:

In essence, it is a method of scattering fragments of sound throughout a passage of a text and then combining the fragments to reproduce a recognizable word. The fragments provoke the subconscious to seek a resolution that at first eludes the ear (and eye, if the text is being read) until it finally finds completion in some word or phrase that combines an audible sense with the intended literal (dictionary) sense of the target word. I call this target word the "tenor" word. [...] In a case of "fractional inference," the tenor word combines the scattered sound fragments into a pleasing whole. The satisfaction of the resolution can be heightened by postponing the express presentation of the tenor word by using homonymic or homophonic forms of the word. Homophones tease the subconscious to within tantalizing proximity of the tenor word so that the final presentation of the true tenor becomes all the more pleasing. Occasionally the tenor word never appears, but is left to the imagination to create (2018, 228).

To rephrase the passage, "fragments of sound" forming a word, which is of the utmost importance in the work, are disseminated and tease the spectators' (or readers') subconscious. The latter attempts to look for a "resolution" until the word itself may be made concrete and audible.⁴⁶ On a more practical level, examples of "fractional inference" are retrievable in *JC*, where the word "stir" is constantly conjured up in the funeral scene (228-229).⁴⁷ This hypothesis has certainly a groundbreaking character, and the potential for further development and corroboration; yet, perhaps the boundaries between OP and Present-Day English should be more strongly demarcated.

Having gained an insight into some of the actual and potential sound effects of OP,⁴⁸ it is fitting to end on Crystal's claim that "we need to know about the vowels

⁴⁶ In such a case, it is not important to establish whether everyone's subconscious is apt or sensitive enough to detect the sound riddle postulated by Watt.

⁴⁷ "Fractional inference" is also to be seen in *Oth.* Single sounds ultimately traceable to the word "whore" are scattered throughout the play. Many thanks to Prof. Gary Watt for kindly providing me with his chapter "Sound Proof to Slander in Wilson's *Rhetorique* and Shakespeare's *Othello*" (forthcoming).

⁴⁸ As an additional reflection and a speculative hypothesis regarding *Ado*, OP might trigger special 'hearing' and, in so doing, magnify both a textual element and a practice of Shakespeare's day. On watching the staged reading of "Much Ado About Nothing" (HowlRound Theatre Commons 2017), I could not help but notice that the use of Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation may emphasise

and consonants [...] which were current in Shakespeare's time because without this knowledge our auditory experience of the plays and poems lacks an entire dimension" (2008a, 126). As Chap. 1 implies, the knowledge of the Shakespearean vowels and consonants may still be problematic and uncertain, but, one could add, it is worthwhile to try to approach it so as to make inferences and eventually come closer to (some) effects of the Shakespearean plays.⁴⁹

3.3.4 Concluding remarks

As Crystal states while acclaiming the reconstructed pronunciation, "[t]he fascinating thing about OP [...] is the way each new play produced in this genre throws up *fresh challenges* and reveals *new insights*" (2015a) and "[t]he second big thing about OP is the way it can make you hear *lines in fresh ways* and, ultimately, allow you to sense *meanings and effects* you had never thought of before" (2006a, 33; my emphasis). Up to this point, sound effects and some of their ramifications have been tackled, but, in line with what Crystal and literature implies, it can be hypothesised that, taken together within a single play, all these effects – rhymes, puns, assonances and other phonoaesthetic devices –⁵⁰ may contribute to somehow changing and eventually enhancing our understanding of the Shakespearean text. As Nathan Lee (2018) affirms, "[e]ven the most basic working knowledge of OP enriches any sort of contact, transmission, or analysis of Shakespeare's text". I will now concentrate on other implications stemming from the use of OP in theatre; specifically, I will take into account the perspectives and testimonies of performers, who embody OP through their voices – but not only.

and recreate for the audience the play's textual attention to hearing and eavesdropping (Hockey 1957, Myhill 1999, Izmir 2021). More precisely, assuming that OP entails some greater or lesser listening effort, OP may make audiences *hear* the characters in *Ado*, similarly to – but also differently from – the *dramatis personae* hearing and eavesdropping on each other. In addition, Shakespeare's restored pronunciation would enable audiences to experience, to some degree, what was the rule in the playwright's day, that is, the greater devotion to listening.

⁴⁹ In this regard, it is also worth mentioning Patsy Rodenburg's words: "Be attentive to the physical qualities of words: they contain clues to meaning and pace. A *t* at the end of a word can sound precise or even violent. Open vowels are more emotional than shorter ones. The difficulty in speaking certain consonants and vowels together can reveal tensions in content and situation" (2002, 86). Although Rodenburg does not refer to original sounds, her considerations can also, or probably mostly, apply to OP and further prove the amplification of meaning by means of vocalic and consonantal sounds.

⁵⁰ Interpretation suggested by restored metre has not been dealt with, but for more information see Mayo (2006).

3.4 Actorial effects

3.4.1 Preliminary considerations

As Crystal and some actors point out (2005a, 28; see also 2004, 26),⁵¹ for a modern accent other than one's own, one can turn to actual speech communities or recordings to imitate and eventually master 'alien' sounds; yet, in the case of OP, one cannot rely on real-life experiences.⁵² In spite of several myths claiming the survival of Elizabethan English in secluded communities, OP is no longer existent nor currently adopted; it constitutes a restored sound system belonging to another time, Shakespeare's. Thus, the question "How do we ground ourselves in an accent we've never heard before and that doesn't relate to anywhere?" – posed to Crystal by an actor performing in "Romeo and Juliet" – appears sensible and legitimate (2005b, 16).

Within this framework stressing the non-contemporary nature of OP, one may be tempted to rule out the possibility of mastering the pronunciation; however, Crystal suggests otherwise. With regard to "Troilus and Cressida", the scholar maintains that the staging was phonetically outstanding: it "produced some of the best OP I have ever heard. Most of the cast were faultless, and to my ear there were only a few dozen erratic sound in the whole play" (Crystal 2006a, 33-34). Further, in relation to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Hamlet", Crystal asserts that "[t]hanks to solid and sustained periods of rehearsal by all concerned, the original pronunciation was phonetically excellent" (2016c). Yet, in order to avoid any easy generalisation, it should be clarified that not every performer seems to speak OP perfectly. For instance, Crystal exclusively ascribes Kananu Kirimi, playing Juliet, a perfect rendition of the sound system during a rehearsal, and he admits, referring to the general cast in performances, that "there was still some inconsistency in which a few days more practice would have eliminated" (Crystal 2005c, 2). Especially from the last quotation, speaking OP very well can be assumed to depend on time and practice, but, as implied by Crystal (2005a), personal linguistic prowess may also play a role and, as suggested by Barrett (2013), so may the in/efficacy of teaching techniques. As the focus of this chapter is given by theatrical productions,

⁵¹ James Garnon playing Mercutio claims: "Learning it was trickier than any other accent I have encountered... it had no tune to grab hold of" (2005a, 28; see also 2004, 26).

⁵² Voice coach David Alan Stern's words evoke those of David Crystal's and "Romeo and Juliet's" cast. In a video, he holds that it "took [him] longer to get a hook on this [OP]" compared to any other accent, since it is not one "that he ha[d] heard before" (Utah Shakes 2021).

I will not examine either linguistic giftedness or teaching and learning techniques;⁵³ rather, I will attempt to identify and produce an insight into the effects of the use of OP on performers.

3.4.2 Characterisation, interpretation and approach to characters

According to existing literature, OP has some impact on actors, which I will discuss by drawing clear boundaries between identifiable concepts, and by adopting a precise terminology corresponding to “conceptualisation”, “behaviour”, “interpretation” and “approach”. “Conceptualisation” refers to the understanding and mental construal of characters; “behaviour” means actorial actions; “interpretation” includes actions and coincides with impersonation; and “approach” is akin to “conceptualisation” but used to refer to the comprehension and shaping of one or more roles. Although I have not discarded other sources, David Crystal’s written output has been treated as my main point of reference, in that it is replete with valuable comments and testimonies.

Discussing the “Romeo and Juliet” experience, Crystal relays the words of some performers to display the ‘sway’ of OP over the actors themselves:

All the actors found themselves rethinking their characters – or, at least, their on-stage behaviour. For Bette Bourne, the Nurse ‘became a totally different woman’, tougher and more direct. For James Garnon, ‘Mercutio felt more brilliant for the OP. The long, easy passages of wit directed at Romeo and Benvolio somehow felt more extraordinary coming out of this earthier accent.’ For Rhys Meredith, ‘the OP felt more “driven”. The speed of the compressed words encouraged me to go for my actions a lot more strongly.’ Everyone I spoke to had similar reactions (2004, 26).

⁵³ Barrett (2013), Crystal (2005a, 2017), Meier (2011a) and, to some minor extent, Bussert (2016) all discuss and illustrate teaching and learning activities, so a systematic comparison between their techniques and procedures may be of great significance for gauging the most effective ones and advancing the subfield of teaching and learning OP. Should a humbler objective such as a general overview of learning activities be pursued, this could be produced by extrapolating and looking into information from the aforementioned texts. Finally, for those interested in teaching and learning OP, worthy of attention is also a MA thesis by Francisco S. Alcaraz Guzmán (2021). Such a text pivots on teaching and learning OP but within the context of lyrical singing; as the author himself claims, his aim is “to determine the convenience for **voice students** (VS) to learn OP for singing the repertoire with a historically informed approach” (1; author’s emphasis).

Accordingly, OP influenced actorial conceptualisation or behaviour: to be more accurate, if Better Bourne and James Garnon came to conceive of their characters in a different way (“the Nurse... a totally different woman” and “Mercutio...more brilliant”), Rhys Meredith’s actions were affected (“The speed of the compressed words encouraged me to go for my actions a lot more strongly”). Yet, no external confirmation regarding a change in behaviour is given, even though Crystal may have done so – he saw both versions of the staging, in OP and RP.

Setting aside behaviour, conceptualisation is also dealt with in the testimony of an actor starring in one production by director Hamilton Meadows. Her words are recorded in Daniel Fromson’s *Finding Shakespeare*:

The same rustic flourishes that had enthralled David Crystal’s actors during the Globe experiment began to emerge. “It’s really changed my perception of Shakespeare,” one actress told me. “It’s made me realize that maybe Shakespeare’s characters are actually a lot more grounded than we give them credit for. They’re not these highfalutin people floating in the air. They’re a lot like you and me” (2013, Pos. 476-482).

In this case, it is not a single character that appears different, but conceptualisation concerns the Shakespearean figures altogether, described as “more grounded” (a term recurring with reference to OP (e.g. Howland 2007, Goodwin 2018) and that may be linked to some unidentified sounds of OP).

So far, OP seems to have (or rather, to have had) some influence on conceptualisation and possibly behaviour; yet, impersonation can be affected as well. In this respect, the statement of actor Penelope Beaumont, who participated in “Troilus and Cressida”, proves of great significance:

The thing that most surprised me was I thought that he would be a ‘man apart’: the schemer on the sidelines who interacts with people only when it is to his advantage. The OP made me play him much more as ‘one of the lads’. He becomes more engaged – less able to comment on the action – more part of it. He is placed well within the ranks of the army and is able to use his comradeship with the others to his advantage. I’m not sure, without OP, I would have discovered that in quite the same way (2006a, 33).

The performer reveals that her characterisation of Ulysses was shaped or ‘tinged’ by OP, which rendered the figure more gregarious and participative in the army’s life. Here, the words of the actor show some conceptualisation other than her ‘ordinary’ one (I thought that he would be a ‘man apart’... He becomes more engaged”), but they also offer a glimpse into OP as impacting Beaumont’s

interpretation of Ulysses (“made me play”). What is more, it is conceivable that, as a part of Beaumont’s impersonation, her stage behaviour was somehow influenced by OP. Be that as it may, audiences may not have necessarily perceived the character as sociable and responding to the performer’s ‘new’ conceptualisation.⁵⁴

Lastly, in specialised literature OP is depicted as responsible for a different approach to characters:

The third big thing about an OP performance is the way it makes the actors approach their characters. Philip Bird, who played two very different parts, Hector and Calchas, found the OP helped him make the difference, especially in the all-important first speech by a character, which he feels ‘lays down a marker’ for the audience as to what the character is like: ‘For Hector, the ‘Yorkshire o’ in *Though no man*, and the *r*’s in *lesser feares* gave me a strong, don’t-mess-with-me beginning; whereas the *ow* of ‘Now Princes’ and ‘prompts me aloud’, and the *i* of *time*, *mind* and *sight* led me towards tighter lips and a more wheedling kind of tone, sending Calchas a little in the direction of the Irish Sea’ (2006a, 33).

The pronunciation then eases doubling by helping to differentiate characters played by the very same actor. Nevertheless, the altered approach should also be regarded as a potentiality in light of the following comment by Crystal: “Several told me that it would affect the way they approached their next Shakespearian role, whether in OP or not!” (2006a, 33).

As based on current data, conceptualisation, approach and, to some extent, behaviour and impersonation are all influenced by OP. Interpretation, entailing behaviour, should be subject to greater scrutiny. While some more reflections on the topic are going to be offered at the end of the next section (3.4.3), in the future it would be ideal to verify or substantiate the performers’ testimonies on interpretation by comparing their performances (of the very same character) in OP and another English accent, and by interviewing audience members through, say, questionnaires. Yet, unless the video recording of “Romeo and Juliet” is used, it may be extremely difficult to carry out investigations of this type, since, to my knowledge, no double staging – in OP and another accent – is in the pipeline. That said, this section, though not aiming to provide definitive conclusions on the impact of OP, has determined systematic terminology beneficial to its understanding and, hopefully, paved the way for future studies.

⁵⁴ In this regard, the testimony of Bussert’s actors participating in “Twelfth Night” can be considered relevant: “In response to the question ‘what surprised you,’ the actors offered: “[I was surprised by] how much the OP impacted my characterization and physicality as an actor” (2016, 106).

3.4.3 Movement

Previously, I have offered evidence on stage behaviour as affected by OP, but, as specialised literature suggests, it is movement altogether that is influenced by the reconstructed pronunciation, and here I intend to provide available data, along with relevant considerations.

The bulk of the testimonies regarding the impact of OP on movement comes – not surprisingly – from David Crystal’s writings. The scholar relays (and embraces) practitioners’ comments such as Tom Cornford’s and Glynn McDonald’s:

Glynn McDonald, Master of Movement, noted how much more fluent the actors’ movements were. And the overall pace was increased, as James Garnon recalled: “The show went much quicker. Timings within scenes went awry because the OP moves quicker. All the *mi*’s and *bi*’s for *my* and *by* and all the shorter vowels and elisions shaved moments off speeches, so dances timed to last as long as other character’s exchanges were suddenly too long – in the case of the Capulets, party, for too long. The whole thing was more exciting somehow. Words felt like fireworks again. Little ones, it’s true, but fireworks none the less” (2004, 26).⁵⁵

I was fascinated by the effect on the actors’ bodies. Capulet’s second line is a good example, where Montague ‘flourishes his blade in spite of me’. In OP, *blade* sits lower and wider in the body than the RP version, and in sounding dangerous (the RP equivalent sounds very correct and polite) it makes the actor look and feel dangerous. ... What OP has revealed to me is the extent to which Shakespeare’s language ‘bodies forth’ his character (Tom Cornford qtd. in Crystal 2005a, 144).⁵⁶

While Cornford explains – or attempts to explain – which OP sounds elicit change in movement, McDonald records the greater fluency and faster rate of the pronunciation, which left actors dancing but lineless. (As nothing but a parenthetical remark, McDonald’s observation is in line with Crystal’s claim that

⁵⁵ Elsewhere, Crystal paraphrases McDonald’s words by stating that, in her view, “the rhythms helped them [the actors] move more fluidly about the stage” (2005b, 16).

⁵⁶ Ben Crystal, too, refers to OP as affecting movement: “It drops your center. It becomes much lower. I mean, with RP, it’s often up towards your throat. With OP, it comes down towards your stomach and your groin. It changes the way you move. I go from speaking in a very, in a much sort of higher quality of my voice, and I get down more into the gravelly part of my resonance. It has tremendous ramifications, from male to female, old to young, anybody that I’ve seen use OP, the effect’s the same” (in the interview by Sheir 2014).

“Romeo and Juliet”’s performances in OP lasted 10 minutes less than the ones in Present-Day English; 2008a, 142).⁵⁷

Although Cornfold’s and McDonald’s words carry some weight in that both witnesses were external observers, and McDonald specialised in movement,⁵⁸ their testimonies are surrounded by an aura of informality.⁵⁹ Working towards a greater scientific soundness is Sara M. Johnson’s MA dissertation (2019), which is meant to offer a “groundwork for the structured experimental and experiential work that can take embodied Original Pronunciation and Early Modern English out of the realm of the anecdotal and perhaps into a more codified framework” (8). Johnson’s thesis presents relevant theories, or parts of them, which corroborate the possibility that OP influences movement;⁶⁰ yet, her work raises some issues that may be considered problematic.⁶¹ In view of this and of the other informal evidence discussed, it appears evident that empirical experimentation – in compliance with scientific criteria – is still needed.

But, setting aside the highlighted research gap, it is viable to assume on a provisional basis and according to the available data that movement is impacted by Shakespeare’s reconstructed pronunciation. As OP literature suggests, specific sounds are assigned accountability. For David Crystal, it is “the centralized vowels [which] seem to be giving the actors a different centre of gravity. Those who try to describe the feeling talk about the sounds coming from the gut rather than the head”

⁵⁷ Neglecting the articles that in some form or the other report Crystal’s words (e.g. Meier 2011a), Isolde Van Dorst’s BA thesis is worth noticing. The work attempts to verify whether the reduced length of performances is rooted in vowel changes, as Crystal suggests. Unfortunately, I did not have access to the entire dissertation but only to its abstract, introduction and conclusion, the latter of which, whilst confirming “a difference in vowel length in OP and PDE” (2015, 27), also stresses the impossibility of total responsibility of vowel divergences for the shorter length of performances (“it is not enough to explain the difference in performance length between an OP and PDE performance, as the difference in calculated vowel length does not cover the total time difference completely”; 27).

⁵⁸ She was Master of Movement at Shakespeare’s Globe.

⁵⁹ REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED.

⁶⁰ Johnson’s framework is already sound, but it could be further expanded and enriched by adding the cognitive studies highlighted by Bruce McCoachie, which champion the inherent correlation between gesture and speech (“More recent experimental evidence [...] suggests that gesture and speech are a part of a single communicative system”; 2008, 87).

⁶¹ Among the problematic aspects of Johnson’s work – partially identified and inspired by the scholar’s words – are the association between OP sounds and semi-arbitrary gestures, which may have originated a perceived difference between OP and the participants’ accents in terms of bodily movement (see 2019, 20); the provision of general and non-specific information on participants, who, if not having any prior acting experience, may have confused lower sounds of OP with the use of diaphragmatic breathing (see 2019, 19); and the actual absence of observation of the participants’ movements on the part of the researcher during the workshop.

(2017, 343). For Tom Cornford, too, the vocalic dimension is responsible for altered movement; in particular, he points to lower sounds in the vowel diagram: [ɛ:] instead of [eɪ] in the word *blade*. Although Ben Crystal does not engage with specific sounds, his description brings to mind the lower height of vowels: “It drops your center. It becomes much lower. I mean, with RP, it’s often up towards your throat. With OP, it comes down towards your stomach and your groin. It changes the way you move” (in the interview by Sheir 2014).⁶²

Ultimately, if OP is confirmed as affecting movement,⁶³ this may validate some impact of the pronunciation on behaviour but even more on interpretation. Certain movements, for instance, may lead actors and spectators to assign characters some features and personalities rather than others. However, to determine the kind of influence that OP exerts on impersonation (e.g. whether the effect is minimal or significant, and noticeable or non-noticeable), more research would still be required; and in this regard, my previous suggestion consisting in a comparison of performances should come in useful.

3.4.4 Liberation and attachment

Still in an attempt to systematise the effects of OP on actors, I have identified a sense of liberation and a certain attachment to said pronunciation as surfacing from a number of texts. Performers seem to experience freedom thanks to OP:

Using historical and textual evidence to support his theories, Crystal’s approach surprised both actors and audiences. Actors felt themselves liberated by the change of rhythm, while school parties found the language’s earthiness easier to get their head round than when Shakespeare was done “posh” (Cooper 2005).

“OP is modern.” A paradox? No, said Sam [Sam Alexander]. “It’s far closer to a young, modern English than I could ever have imagined, and gave the words in my mouth a vital, youthful energy.” He went on: “I’d left my Shakespeare voice in the locker, and this way hugely liberating.” I think the whole company would agree. Several told me that it would affect the way they approached their next Shakespearean role, whether in OP or not! (Crystal 2006a, 33).

⁶² Holger Syme (2014) voices his scepticism towards “the effects of accent on modern performance”, but above all he emphasises that these derive from modern perceptions of OP and, as such, are not historically significant (“whatever they are they have quite evidently nothing at all to do with early modern England and its language”).

⁶³ In her MA thesis, Marcia Busler, a teacher of English and theatre literature, also supports the view whereby OP affects movement, but her observations are linked to informal performances in the classroom: “It [OP] changes the entire delivery of lines as well facial expressions and the way we hold our bodies” (2018, 9).

The terms “liberated” (in the first extract) and “liberating” (in the second passage) clearly point to a sense of freedom, which can be presumed to stem from the abandonment of usual, Shakespearean-like sonorities, perhaps the RP ones. On consulting another OP source, the words of “Romeo and Juliet”’s voice coach, Charmian Hoare, do not only confirm the sense of liberation experienced by actors speaking in RP, but they even suggest a greater sense of freedom – an authentic vocal triumph – for RP speakers than for everyone else (“the actors who enjoyed the accent most were those for whom RP was their native accent. For them this completely foreign dialect gave them a vocal freedom that they had never experienced before, I heard new resonances and more released sound from many of the actors”; 2007, 275).⁶⁴

In terms of attachment, OP, once adopted, may leave such a mark that for some performers going back to their acting life, bereft of it, appears complicated. Indeed, actor Better Bourne in “Romeo and Juliet” found himself unable to completely leave behind the reconstructed pronunciation: “‘I found it quite difficult going back to RP, when the three shows were done’, said Bette Bourne. ‘It seemed suddenly a bit prissy. We’d gone back to the modern sense of class’” (2004, 27). A sense of attachment can also be inferred from what Crystal reports in Sec. 3.4.2 (“Several told me that it would affect the way they approached their next Shakespearian role, whether in OP or not!”) and from McCrum’s words: “Like any novelty, OP is infectious, a dialect that some actors find hard to shake off. Juliet Rylance recalls how, playing Perdita in *A Winter’s Tale*, she caught herself sliding from RP to OP during a speech” (2005). Another case in point is that of actor Mary McNulty, still revelatory of a special bond between performers and OP. During an audition for the Lost Nation Theatre McNulty, who interpreted Peaseblossom and was the understudy for Titania for Paul Meier’s “*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*”, “casually mentioned that she’d be happy to read the part of Titania from memory and in original pronunciation, The directors were so impressed, they offered her the role” (Staff TARGNS 2011). The fact that the actor made a reference to OP and eventually

⁶⁴ Brent Griffin suggests that the actors in “Romeo and Juliet” felt some liberation at the use of their own accent but does not provide strong evidence; she only quotes Rhys Meredith’s words in *Crystal Pronouncing Shakespeare* (2011, 92). And, as inferable from Fiona Ramsay (2020), the actors of the production “Shakespeareaze” experienced, prior to liberation, an “awareness of freedom”: “The words embraced their [the actors’] identities and facilitated both an awareness of freedom and the ability to take risks and ‘dive into’ the experience.” (41). Given the simultaneous use of OP and other languages and accents within Ramsay’s production and the previous exploration process, liberation may not be connected solely to OP but also derive from the utilisation of various linguistic and accentual varieties.

employed it in an otherwise OP-free situation can be read as indexical of her 'closeness' to the pronunciation, and earned her an acting job, a benefit worth mentioning on passing.

Whilst the implications of the OP use presented here, liberation and attachment, cannot be denied, they should not be generalised, thereby subtracting from the assumed complexity of adopting OP. It seems safe to hypothesise that the foregrounded effects may be traced to the mastery of the pronunciation or, at least, to a positive learning experience with it. On the other hand, actors encountering difficulties and ultimately not managing to appropriate the sounds of OP, who seem to be allocated little space in literature,⁶⁵ may not experience any liberation or attachment; or, from another perspective, liberation may result from the termination of the OP adoption.

3.4.5 Concluding remarks

In the few sections above, I have explored the effects of OP on performers by essentially performing three tasks: proposing a definite terminology for stage acting in relation to OP, investigating accounts on movement and gathering testimonies that outline feelings of liberation and attachment. On contemplating the effects of OP on actors on the whole, I wish to make explicit what may have emerged from my discussion only by indirect means, that is, the general positivity running through texts. Though I have strived to keep a neutral tone, a positive attitude appears to be conveyed by testimonies and descriptions, so it would be desirable to thoroughly investigate 'alternative' voices and experiences, not for the mere sake of going against the grain and producing new findings, but so as to draw a broader picture on OP. Apart from better analysing occasional references to negative encounters with OP, it would be worthwhile, for example, to look into the accusation by some critics that OP impairs characterisation (see Sec. 3.6.1.2) to determine what actors themselves think, and whether and to what extent they generally struggle with the reconstructed pronunciation.

Having discussed potential limitations of current scholarship, I now wish to draw attention to one aspect of OP I have not covered before. In few scattered

⁶⁵ According to Crystal, "[a] couple of them [actors] did find the accent more of a problem, but that's normal – it happened with my Globe casts too" and it is suggested that later on they overcame their difficulties (in the interview by Meier 2011a, 218). In addition, Bussert claims that "[f]or the actors who didn't take easily to OP or didn't work hard at it, it was very hard" (2016, 51) and that during the first dress rehearsal "[s]ome were frustrated by the addition of Original Pronunciation, and found it hard to remember lines in the accent. Others simply hadn't taken the time" (82-83).

comments (e.g. in Ben Crystal's "I go from speaking in a very, in a much sort of higher quality of my voice, and I get down more into the gravelly part of my resonance"), the pronunciation is described as influencing voice pitch, particularly its gravity, so OP may have some impact on voice. Yet, references are too scarce and inconclusive and, as a result, the influence of OP on voice remains unclear.⁶⁶ Future empirical studies could then fill such a gap and eventually contribute to providing a more detailed and comprehensive portrayal of the impact of OP on performers.

3.5 Audience response

3.5.1 Defining terminology

Having dealt with sound and actorial effects, the time is now ripe for an examination of audience response to OP, that is, the perspectives of spectators.⁶⁷ Once again, in order to systematise debates and to advance OP studies on a scientific path, I have defined appropriate terminology deriving from either lexicon or concepts available in OP literature; the selected terms are understandability, comprehensibility, intelligibility and appreciation of OP. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED; and understandability corresponds to the ability of OP to be understood (REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED) on a theoretical level. The other designations, however, need more elaborate explanations; for these

⁶⁶ Syme is sceptical about the power of OP of modifying voice: "It may in fact be true that Ben Crystal could only make his body and voice behave this way by employing a reconstructed 400-year-old accent, but I doubt it. And even if that were true, it still [...] would not say anything about Shakespeare or his contemporaries. It only says something about the perceived difference between 21st-century RP and a different set of pronunciation rules" (2014). Thus, Syme's scepticism ultimately gives way to the possibility of a change in voice pitch, but, in the scholar's view, this would tell us more about our own perception than actual experiences in Shakespeare's day.

⁶⁷ This section does not shed light on the reception of stagings of Shakespeare's plays in the playwright's day, which however can be read about, though limitedly, in the following texts: N. F. Blake's "The language of Shakespeare" (1983), Paulina Kiernan's *Filthy Shakespeare: Shakespeare's Most Outrageous Sexual Puns* (2006), Marvin Carlson's *Speaking in Tongues* (2006) and Kinney's. If the chapter "Vocabulary" of N.F. Blake's work somewhat engages with the understanding of Shakespeare's vocabulary in performance (1983, 40-55), Paulina Kiernan's book refers to both the understanding of lexicon (2006, Pos. 445-450) and puns (Pos. 495 and 518-550). Carlson's work, which still deals with understanding but concentrates on foreign sounds, reflects on expected knowledge of spectators and their ability to understand (2006, 36-37 and 40-41). Last but not least, Arthur F. Kinney's *Shakespeare by Stages* offers testimonies in terms of audience responses to Shakespeare's plays on the stage (2003, 91 and 94).

I have resorted to the field of L2 studies. According to Murray J. Munro and Tracey M. Derwing, intelligibility – a term recurrent in OP publications – is given by “the extent to which a speaker’s message is actually understood by a listener” and is more objective in nature (1995, 76), whereas comprehensibility coincides with the perception of one’s understanding (289).⁶⁸ In spite of its ‘misleading’ lexicon, the material I have consulted tends to give an insight into comprehensibility, the perception of the audiences’ understanding, but, in some cases, observations on intelligibility are also offered.

3.5.2 Understandability

As Crystal points out, before “Romeo and Juliet” Shakespeare’s Globe had not taken any chance on a production in the reconstructed pronunciation “due to a suspicion that OP would not be intelligible; and for a theatre which was open six months of the year, and where the lack of a public subsidy demanded full houses to ensure survival. Management was reluctant to support any venture which might have put off an audience” (2011a, 4; see also Meier 2011a, 220). Said suspicious feeling did not fade away even when the staging of the tragedy in OP was agreed;⁶⁹ actually, it also seized the director and actors of the production:

Everyone worried about whether the speech would be intelligible. The Globe had worried about it, which is why it dipped only a weekend toe into the linguistic water. Tim Carroll had worried about it. And the actors were certainly worried at the outset. But when they heard me read the opening scene of the play, in their first rehearsal, I could see the relief on their faces. Original pronunciation is in fact no more different from modern English Received Pronunciation than, say, present-day Scots is (2005c, 2).

However, the concern felt by the cast and technical staff was eventually dispelled. As Crystal explains, the performers were relieved since in the end OP is comparable to a vernacular or language such as Scots being divided by an acceptable or practicable distance from RP in terms of sounds.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ I thank Prof. Juli Cebrian for letting me know about the differentiation between intelligibility and comprehensibility in the field of L2 studies.

⁶⁹ Crystal recounts that Tim Carroll succeeded in convincing the Globe “by using a clever stratagem. He said, ‘If you don’t do it first, Stratford will!’” (Meier 2011a, 215). But it should also be pointed out that, as Griffin (2011) reveals in Footnote 170, the use of reconstructed pronunciation had been suggested from the early days of Shakespeare’s Globe by Miller-Schütz (Griffin 2011, 88).

⁷⁰ The elaborateness of this comparison should be noticed. By referring to Scots, Crystal indirectly defines OP as a vernacular (see McColl 2018, 2) or, according to some, a language (1-2); therefore, in

Elsewhere, still to prove the understandability of the pronunciation, Crystal simplifies and slightly denaturalises OP by equating it with an accent: “The fact of the matter is that OP is no more different from the accents we hear on the BBC or NPR than most other regional accents in the UK, USA, or anywhere else” (Meier 2011a, 215). In a similar vein, Barrett (2020) maintains the “readability” (10) or understandability of OP as stemming from its affinity with accents (“OP may be viewed as simply another accent of English, albeit one that is no longer in everyday use”) and makes plain the auditory flexibility of audience members and, one may add, speakers: “Audiences are surprisingly tolerant of linguistic variation and are able to accept a variety of pronunciations” (2020, 10-11).

The perspectives highlighted above then champion the understandability of OP, which is also claimed in some more literature.⁷¹ In his dissertation (2013), Barrett resorts to Gimson’s theorisation regarding the value of vowels and consonants for communication:

He states that the efficiency of our language’s sound system as a means of communication does not depend on the perfect production and reception of every single element of speech. He also points out that two utterances by the same speaker of the word ‘cat’ may show marked differences when measured instrumentally. According to Gimson (1962, 3), in the phrase, “these men are working”, the quality of the vowel in ‘men’ is not vitally important as the grammatical context clarifies the fact that ‘men’ is intended, rather than ‘man’. The demonstrative adjective adds additional information in that it determines the plurality of the noun. Significantly, Gimson doubts the importance of vowel quality as an aid to intelligibility as he points out that the twenty English vowel sounds could be replaced by a neutral [ə] and a high degree of intelligibility would be maintained, provided that the rhythmic pattern is preserved. He says that many of the cues contained in an utterance are likewise ‘redundant’, although the large number of cues serves to counteract the quality divergences which exist between speakers of two dialects of the same language (2013, 65-66).

Thanks to Gimson’s words, Barrett contends that OP can be understood. Acknowledging his debt to Barrett’s research, Meier too maintains the understandability of OP (“the two systems [that of Present-Day English and OP] are mutually intelligible, thanks to their substantial agreements on consonants (and the

keeping with OP presented as a sound system in Chap. 1, the pronunciation is not depicted as an accent but as a higher phonological entity.

⁷¹ In non-specialised texts such as newspaper articles, it is generally conveyed that OP is understandable, but I have not examined their trends or rhetorical strategies.

short vowels, incidentally)”; 2016, 179) and that of accents of English, to which OP is then indirectly compared.⁷²

As compelling as Gimson’s hypothesis and the previous observations may be, some shadow could be cast over understandable reconstructed pronunciation, if one lingers on the comparison between OP and any accent of English. According to some research, accents have negative repercussions on listeners in terms of understanding. In particular, by reviewing studies such as Adank on errors caused by unfamiliar, regional accents, Kristin J. Van Engen and Jonathan E. Peelle come to the conclusion that “[t]he behavioural consequences of listening to accented speech [...] include reductions in intelligibility, comprehensibility, and processing period” (2014, 2). Therefore, if OP works as a regional accent and the perceived similarity between OP and certain varieties or accents (Sec. 3.2.1 and 3.2.2) seems to prove this, it cannot be excluded that the pronunciation may pose challenges to understanding – challenges which may be exacerbated by cultural biases.⁷³

At this juncture, abandoning a merely theoretical plane, I will engage with a more concrete level resulting from testimonies and studies concerning performances.

3.5.3 Comprehensibility

Excluding Crystal, whose words will be considered at a later point (Sec. 3.5.4), the comments of a few directors point to the favourable reactions of audiences in terms of understanding. Meier, who worked on “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”, argues that “[s]o many expressed delight with how the dialect enriched their listening experience and surprise at its clarity” (2011a, 218). Other directors even go so far as to suggest that OP is clearer than Present-Day English (in whatever accent):

The most popular responses of the evening were: how the sound changes allowed the language to move faster and how incredibly enjoyable that was; *how the OP actually clarifies rhetoric and word play*; how many particularly enjoyed the comedies. (We had a very successful scene from *Taming of the Shrew*, when Petruchio and Katherine meet for the first time...the scene had absolutely no physical life [they were sitting at music stands], and it was as enjoyable as ever.)

⁷² “Consider that we easily comprehend the word mouse, whether spoken by an English aristocrat [maʊs], a Belfast docker [mɹɹʊs], a Cockney cabbie [mæ:əs], or a realtor in Cleveland [mæʊs]. All four speakers agree on mouse’s two consonants but disagree spectacularly about its vowel. The same is true when we compare today’s English pronunciation with the Early Modern English of Shakespeare’s time [...]” (Meier 2016, 211).

⁷³ Drawing on sociolinguistic studies such as Rosina Lippi-Green’s (1997) and Elizabeth Peterson’s (2020), biases towards accents appear as an impediment to understanding.

At the end of the evening, I kept being asked what the next step is. It's encouraging to know that others know that this exploration does not stop here (Alex Torra qtd. in Meier 2011a, my emphasis).

Spector says that after performances of *Hamlet* in original pronunciation, "People said they heard more than ever before." Audiences respond to the less-posh sound of original pronunciation (Jackoway n.d.).

Foregrounding the relevant ideas of these two passages, OP is viewed as illuminating "rhetoric and word play" and as enticing spectators into paying greater attention to listening.⁷⁴ One may then assume that these testimonies reveal the intelligibility or actual understanding of OP, also on the grounds that the directors themselves appear to imply it by reporting these audience experiences.

However, these declarations cannot be considered indicative of intelligible pronunciation but only of its being comprehensible. As explained in the opening of this section (3.5.1), while intelligibility refers to actual understanding, which may need some form of objective measurement, the more-subjective-in-nature comprehensibility has to do with the perception of one's understanding. As the spectators asserted that they understood the language of the play, they only gave voice to their perception. It is true that the latter may somehow reflect their actual understanding, but to verify this correspondence, some form of test or, at least, a discussion of specific passages and words with audiences may have been necessary.

So far, the reliability of the directorial testimonies has been taken for granted, but the possible informality of their methods may be equated with scientific deficiency and thus impede the full acceptance of the comments. It is not clear what questions were asked (the formulation may have influenced the audiences' answers), and which and how many spectators were interviewed (a minority? A significant representation?). But even if neutral and reliable questions were posed to audience members, honest answers may not have been provided nonetheless; if authority figures such as directors ask questions, interviewees may feel intimidated or morally 'forced' to please their interlocutor. As a consequence, while riveting, these testimonies cannot be entirely acknowledged as proving the high comprehensibility of OP; rather, they constitute a minor reference point to be complemented by other data, and their value resides in their uniqueness and essence as informal testimonies to otherwise non-examined productions.

⁷⁴ The greater attention devoted to listening is also remarked by Crystal: "And that is one of the most noticeable things about an OP audience. The way they *listen*" (2006a, 33; author's emphasis).

Still gravitating towards comprehensibility⁷⁵ are Massai's findings and conclusions, which stem from a comparison concerning the reception of three productions in OP – two performed at the Globe ("Romeo and Juliet" and "Troilus and Cressida") and one at the University of Nevada ("Hamlet"). Using interviews and first- and second-hand reviews, Massai notices that the unflattering response texts on the Globe's performances were penned by "someone who is thoroughly familiar with the text and with the history of its critical and theatrical reception" (2020, 98-99), whereas the positive reactions to understanding OP derive from "[a]udiences in Nevada, members of a general public rarely exposed to Shakespearean verse in performance" (99). Eventually, Massai remarks that "the perceived lack of clarity in marked voices" is ascribable to "cultural expectations" (99), namely the 'due' use of a standard pronunciation, and comes to claim that:

Audiences who can be assumed to have brought a more limited familiarity with the text of the play and with the play in performance relished the novelty of the language *and* of the accent, while audience attuned to listening to Shakespeare in StP [Standard pronunciation] found the language hard to understand *because of* the accent in which it was delivered (2020, 99-100).

The main point here is that the perception of understanding varies depending on the audience members' greater or lesser experience of the Shakespearean plays and performances.

As the enthusiastic comments concerning "Hamlet" were not consulted by Massai herself but described by Eric Rasmussen, who was involved in the production, one could counter that they may have been voiced through a non-disinterested point of view. Yet the reviews-interviews were not conducted by the scholar himself but carried out "by local newspapers and on local TV stations" (2020, 98), so they can be considered quite detached from the OP project and thus reliable.⁷⁶ It should also be noted that Massai's correlation between

⁷⁵ OP literature offers some insight into the perspective of speakers of English as a second language. In an interview with David Ralf, Crystal affirms that "a [...] comment is also common (including those who speak English as a second language): the plays become easier to understand" (Ralf 2016). Such a greater comprehension is also claimed by Ramsay (2020): "It surprised me, after the Crystals performed Shakespeare's soliloquy in OP, that many of the delegates who were second language English speakers remarked that they too found these easier to follow and that OP not only sounded but felt familiar. A delegate from Romania commented that she sensed the sounds of OP emulated her own when speaking English, and another from Hungary remarked he felt as though he was listening to his grandfather speak – possibly influenced by David Crystal's moving reading of King Lear" (36).

⁷⁶ In addition to the positive reviews of "Hamlet", some others less flattering in nature may have been produced, but, at least in writing, I have not retrieved any.

comprehensibility and familiarity with the Shakespearean plays and productions is based on a very small sample, so, even without denying its value, an expansion would be needed to verify its general applicability.

Overall, merely hinging on (meagre) existent research, comprehensibility appears as possibly having been variable – bipartite –, according to the degree of knowledge of the Shakespearean texts and of stagings on the part of audience members. Ultimately, a hypothesis can be put forward and respond to the attempt to make the directors' data function as a minor reference point. Assuming that the highlighted testimonies of directors come from audience members unaccustomed to Shakespeare, these accounts would corroborate Massai's attribution of a greater comprehensibility to (substantially) unacquainted spectators. This, however, remains, only a hypothesis.⁷⁷

3.5.3.1 Acclimatisation

Even supposing that OP is perfectly comprehensible, it is not depicted as being immediately so. Scholarly sources point to an acclimatisation phase:

In a talkback session after the performance, people said they had got used to the new accent *by the middle of Act 1*. The applause at the end was longer than at any previous performance. Five minutes after it had died down, I realised I hadn't moved from my seat. The Original Pronunciation hadn't just worked; it had worked brilliantly (2005c, 2; my emphasis).

Past experience suggests that your ears will tune in (if passing helicopters don't get in the way) *by the end of the first scene* (2005d, 27; my emphasis).

The impact of the opening lines is usually minimal, as people take *a few minutes* to tune their ears to what is going on. It's a bit like turning the dial on a radio to find a channel; you go backwards and forwards hearing distorted speech until, bingo, the words come through loud and clear. It is a magic moment (2006a, 32; my emphasis).

As can be deduced from these excerpts, the length of acclimatisation is variable: it goes from the beginning to "the middle of Act 1", "the end of the first scene" or "a

⁷⁷ In her thesis, Busler recounts a class reading in OP by an actor, Claire Snode, to which Busler's students reacted with enthusiasm, but they also remarked that "they could only understand most of what Claire said in OP" (2018, 14). This lack of (perceived) understanding, however, did not subtract from the students' enjoyment, since "they could understand her tone and character completely" (14). And, as OP called for greater attention, the pronunciation was considered more "captivating" and "engaging" (qtd. in Busler 2018, 14).

few minutes". It could then be surmised that the divergence between Crystal's adjustment periods may be due to different factors, intuitable but not clearly identifiable, such as dissimilar occasions and methods of data collection. For instance, the end of the adjustment period "by middle of Act 1" and "by the end of the first scene" refer to "Romeo and Juliet", and Crystal's former temporal indication is a result of a talkback session. On the contrary, acclimatisation finishing after "a few moments" configures itself a generalisation not linked to any specific production and possibly originating from talks with audience members of other OP stagings. Massai, too, refers to an acclimatisation phase and leans towards Crystal's latter option; actually, she proposes a shorter adjustment period: "It just takes just as long to tune in to Shakespeare in RP. And so *after few minutes* you get used to the slightly different accent and you just start to relax and you enjoy the fact that this is a different Shakespeare" (Dabbs 2021; my transcription and my emphasis).

It could then be concluded that, based on scholarly voices, an acclimatisation phase seems to exist and that its end is to be located at some flexible point at the beginning of the OP performance. Notwithstanding the necessity to shed light on the comprehensibility of OP in the first place, these informal accounts, especially in the absence of any specific study, require more data empirical in nature.

3.5.4 Intelligibility

Following my outline of the concepts of understandability and comprehensibility as applied to OP, the question arises as to whether this pronunciation is actually understood or, more precisely, has been understood in productions so far, especially by reason of the widespread term "intelligible" in scholarship (e.g. Crystal 2005a, Meier 2011a, 220).⁷⁸ My discussion will hinge on Crystal's evidence, not alien to some informality,⁷⁹ and on critical information provided by other scholars such as Laura Lodewyck (2013).

Crystal maintains the intelligibility of OP – its actual and occurred understanding – by means of observation, particularly by noticing the reactions of spectators to humour and language in the case of "Romeo and Juliet":

In fact I didn't notice any *joke* being missed, because of the OP, nor could the actors recall any, when I asked them later. Perhaps, more importantly, the OP didn't

⁷⁸ Having systematised debates and offered a defined terminology, I will not delve into a meticulous treatment of the term "intelligible" in OP scholarship.

⁷⁹ The informality of available data has been suggested to me by Lodewyck's statement: "Crystal's scattered reports of audience reactions are informal, and surely biased by his investment in the project" (2013, 55).

seem to be interfering with the *specially dramatic moments*, such as Juliet's 'Gallop apace' speech (3.2), or the two monologues in the vault at the end of the play. This was where I had always located my worst fears that the 'rustic' resonances of the accents would perhaps pull the mind away from the moment" (2004, 26; my emphasis).

I was particularly pleased to see that *humour* hadn't been affected. I had a test case that I listened for at each performance. One of the best jokes in the play is when the Nurse, having been baited by Mercutio, says to Peter (2.4.151): "And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?" And Peter replies: "I saw no man use you at his pleasure." It gets a huge laugh in modern pronunciation. Would it, in OP, with pleasure pronounced so differently – as "plez-uhr"? It made not the slightest difference. At each performance, the audience roared (2005b, 17; my emphasis).

Here the absence of all the jokes under Crystal's scrutiny does not do any justice to the criterion of (scientific) meticulousness (passage 1); one precise pun cannot be regarded as sufficient evidence (passage 2) and audiences are implicitly and problematically portrayed as monolithic (passages 1 and 2). That said, while Crystal's observations do not carry the weight necessary to draw any ultimate conclusions on the intelligibility of OP for "Romeo and Juliet", they may give an initial insight into the actual understanding of topical moments and of specific wordplay for the staging.

Focusing on humour, which is an index of OP intelligibility for Crystal, some exemplification in the passages above points to jokes also traceable in Present-Day English, viz., RP. Thus, one may speculate that OP did not interfere with the reception of this kind of humour in "Romeo and Juliet" and even in other OP productions. Yet, further inspecting these excerpts, it is not clear whether retrieved humour, not available in current varieties of English (see Sec. 3.3.2), was intelligible to audience members. In the case of another production, "Troilus and Cressida", Crystal asserts that the joke *Ajax-a jakes*, absent in RP, was delivered "much to the delight of the audience" (Crystal 2008a, 144), so it could be surmised that recovered jokes or puns in OP may have been understood in this and other stagings. However, reasonable doubts arise, since, in Laura Lodewyck's view (2013), not all of the restored puns can be conceived of as detectable.

According to Lodewyck, apart from lacking Renaissance aural training and being steeped in "[a] culture that values literacy and attributes authority to the written word" (2013, 46), present-day audiences pronounce some words differently and may not possess any knowledge of 'original' meanings. Consequently, while being able to grasp "a relatively simple pun" such as *Ajax-a jakes* (2013, 51), in all

likelihood modern spectators would not access – aurally – more elaborate puns built on a homophony that no longer exists, and on an intricate and opaque lexical texture (2013, 48-51). Among the puns affected by phonetic, lexical and cultural changes, Lodewyck quotes *shooter-suitor* in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

[...] as both *shoot* and *suit* would have been pronounced alike. This directly aligns *shooter* with the double meaning of *suitor*, explaining the exchange that follows and the familiar pun on *deer/dear*. [...] The *suitor* meaning also connects directly to the chain of possibilities for sexual innuendos. Namely, *know* as having carnal knowledge (Partridge 131) or *beares* with the sense of bearing children or bearing the weight of a man. Most obviously, there is the play on *hornes* and how they may *miscarrie*, which the Arden bluntly interprets as “penises don’t get what they want” (181). Even further, there is the potential of *neck* as another term for a woman’s breasts (Partridge 153) or as a homonym with *nick* (implying “slit”), which carries the sexual connotations of *score* or *breach* (131). Perhaps more speciously, we could recognize *continent* as a form of *tenere*, “to hold together”, and thus alluding to repression of desires. Ad corroboration of this possibility, a related play on ungenitured (i.e., “lacking testicles”) exists in *Measure for Measure* (3.3.175-177): “This ungenitured agent will unpeople the province with continency” (209) (2013, 49).

As apparent from this passage, *shooter* is linked to *suitor* through a carefully selected lexicon, but, as Lodewyck goes on to say, today the two words would not be associated and regarded as punning due to their different pronunciation; and, as the scholar also suggests, the non-transparent textual and lexical hints activating the pun would not be picked up (2013, 50-51).⁸⁰

In light of Lodewyck’s perspective and returning to present-day performances,⁸¹ it does not seem too much of a stretch to say that audiences may not have understood some recovered and ‘difficult’ puns owing to a lack of adequate association, knowledge and training. Yet, it can also be surmised that, if suitable foundations were laid out, even the most byzantine puns recovered through OP may have been grasped in performances. Generally speaking, Lodewyck proposes the implementation of compensatory strategies, highlighting the importance of exploiting the audiences’ visual culture (2013, 53); and, among her techniques, she envisages the possibility that audiences could be “prep[ped]”

⁸⁰ Keith Johnson (2013) also suggests that all puns lend themselves to being apprehended in a quite resolute tone: “There are of course a few puns which can only be understood if you know something about Elizabethan pronunciation, and this is one reason for looking at the area” (2013, 274).

⁸¹ It is necessary to remark that Lodewyck’s research is theoretical, and not informed by the words or behaviours of real audiences, but her hypotheses are based on well-established facts such as the attention devoted to aurality in Shakespeare’s day and our contemporary visual culture.

and “warm[ed]-up [...] with an interactive overview of some quibbles, puns, and repartee” (54). In other words, through what looks like mini-workshops before the actual beginning of performances, audience members could be initiated to the unfamiliar and challenging knowledge belonging to the Renaissance period. For some OP performances, there have been such introductory sessions prior to OP performances (see Appendix D, Table D.1), so, given the accurate structuring of these initiatives, challenging and apparently inaccessible puns may have been within the audiences’ reach and ultimately understood, at least to some extent.⁸²

Finally, bringing the discussion back to a more general level, the intelligibility of OP is one of the aspects investigated in two empirical works: Sergio Piaia’s MA thesis (2018), which does not use plays but sonnets and attempts to measure intelligibility, among the other things; and Jeffrey Wilson Zayas’s short study (2014), which, though centring around OP as a teaching tool for the academic community, provides elements concerning intelligibility. As for Piaia’s research, while providing listeners with sonnet 116,⁸³ participants were allowed to read the poem and simultaneously answer several questions, two of which were about the “clarity” and understanding of Shakespeare’s pronunciation.⁸⁴ According to Piaia’s findings, OP was the least understood variety, compared to General American, Contemporary Received Pronunciation and Conservative Received Pronunciation, but some participants revealed to understand it better than others: “The subgroups who expressed least difficulty in understanding Original Pronunciation were British-English native speakers in general, and, in particular, those who have obtained, or were pursuing, a tertiary English degree” (2018, 71). While various limitations of the research can be neglected, what cannot go unnoticed are three major pitfalls, that is, the de-contextualisation of the sonnet, a possible concentration on reading at the expense of an immersion into the proper act of listening, and a possible measurement of comprehensibility rather than intelligibility. Nevertheless, the

⁸² Polyglot puns have not been discussed here, since scholarship remains silent on the subject. Yet it could be argued that, given the possible ignorance of foreign languages on the part of audience members, they may not be understood and that, if they were employed in OP stagings, they may have been missed.

⁸³ The sonnet’s initial lines read as follows: “Let me not to the marriage of true minds/ Admit impediments. Love is not love” (Piaia 2018, 87).

⁸⁴ 2. “How clear and understandable was SPEAKER A’s pronunciation?” Possible answers: “very unclear/not understandable; rather unclear/not understandable; somewhat unclear/not understandable”; “somewhat clear/understandable”; “rather clear/understandable”; very clear/understandable”. 3. “On a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 10 (*very well*), how well would you have understood SPEAKER A without reading the text?” Possible answers: 1 (*not at all*)-10 (*very well*) (2018, 88).

“substantial margin” identified by Piaia could still hold some truth, undefinable at this stage.

Regrettably, as far as Wilson Zayas’s work is concerned, this cannot be properly examined in terms of results, since no conclusive discussion of findings is provided, too many essential elements such as the native language of participants are not given, and, by the author’s admission, “[a] reapplication of the survey would be necessary to arrive at the first level of a truly complete understanding of how the research can be realized when applied to courses taught, ideally, concurrently” (2014, 26). Yet, Wilson Zayas’s study cannot be discarded either, in that it offers valuable material – rather than research outcomes – for future empirical research. More precisely, it shows how intelligibility could be tested: in his questionnaires (one for students who took a Shakespeare course and one for those who did not) open-ended questions asking participants about the interpretation of some passages⁸⁵ are included. But it also lends itself to gauging correspondences and mismatches between comprehensibility and intelligibility; to such an end, one could compare the answers to statements on the perception of one’s understanding⁸⁶ with the comments to the open-ended questions.⁸⁷

To conclude, the available material is too limited to make any sound generalisations on the intelligibility of OP, but I can try to capitalise on the little knowledge acquired through past experiments and studies to cast some light over this aspect of audience response. While, as suggested by accessible information on “Romeo and Juliet”, OP has generally been intelligible, it cannot be ruled out that for this and other stagings some recovered puns, if available and not properly signalled, were not understood by an undefined number of audience members, who may also have experienced some reduced intelligibility.

3.5.5 Appreciation

⁸⁵ For the students with “What was your interpretation of the scene? (2014, 12) and “Please provide an interpretation (your understanding) of what was presented?” (16). The only problem with Wilson Zayas’s work is that a transcription was provided (10).

⁸⁶ For the students who did not take a Shakespeare course: “I was able to follow the original pronunciation” (2014, 10) and “The difficulty in understanding was not related to the pronunciation” (2014, 10). However, in the case of the students who took a Shakespeare course the asked question reads as follows: “I understood the scene without having to refer to the notes provided” (15). This is quite problematic, in that if notes were provided, students may have used them immediately, without concentrating on the recording/video and its language, and on understanding OP.

⁸⁷ Wilson Zayas’s questionnaire also demonstrates close attention to rhymes and secondarily to puns, whose perceived understanding is investigated by statements such as “The rhyme scheme is identifiable” and a Likert scale (2014, 15).

After an engagement with data and observations concerning comprehensibility and intelligibility, I shall turn to appreciation, which will be examined in both a narrow and broad sense. As mentioned in 3.5.1, appreciation can refer to either the enjoyment of OP or that of the OP production altogether, and this conceptualisation is based on a systematisation of available information.

As suggested by Crystal, OP has been positively experienced or, to use another term, appreciated so far. On (informally) interviewing audience members, namely “some of the youngsters” (2005a, 137), and posing them the question “What did you think?” in relation to OP, Crystal obtained positive feedback such as “cool” and “wicked”, and even the statement that the performers spoke like the kids themselves (“Well, they’re talking like us”; 2005a, 137). However, as Crystal goes on to explain, there was no identity between the performers’ OP and the younger audience members’ speech but rather “[t]he actors were talking in a way that they [the kids] could identify with” (2005a, 137; see also 2004, 27). In other words, the teenagers experienced a feeling of ownership, which will be more thoroughly discussed in Sec. 3.7.

Besides Crystal, others, that is theatre practitioners and academics engaging with OP maintain its appreciation in relation to productions. With regard to his “Cymbeline”, director Coleman recounts that he “found that the OP seemed to make the language clearer. Audiences loved it” (Chris Coleman, email to author, July 5, 2021); and, discussing “Twelfth Night”, director and scholar Katherine M. K. Bussert relays that “[m]any people felt positively about the accent” (2016, 105). Recounting his own production “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”, Meier reports that “[...] audiences were genuinely intrigued too. So many expressed delight with how the dialect enriched their listening experience and surprise at its clarity” (2011a, 218), and Leslie Bennett, playing Titania, affirms that “[a]udiences were drawn in to that excitement of which the dialect was an essential part.” (Meier 2016, 183).⁸⁸ What

⁸⁸ Fiona Ramsay’s article on her experiment with OP (2020) also suggests that the sound system was well received: “Members of the audience remarked that the OP sounded richer, corroborating the performers’ sense that the sounds emanated from lower down in their bodies, that they felt the resonance in their chests and that this inspired greater physical engagement in character than RP” (Ramsay 2020, 40). In addition, it makes explicit reference to the audiences’ positive reactions to the sections of the performance “Shakespeareaze” in OP (“[t]he audience responded most positively to this section in OP), and points to the appreciation of retrieved alliteration for some passage from *King Lear* (“in their analysis post-performance mentioned particularly the language of Goneril and Regan – how their sounds contrasted strongly with the simplicity of Cordelia’s words”; 2020, 40). For more information on the specific consonantal and vocalic sounds involved see Ramsay 2020 (40). Though interesting, such reactions of audiences have not been inserted in the body of the text since

is more, Sonia Massai states that “[a]ccording to Rasmussen [...] members of the audience interviewed by local newspapers and on local TV stations thoroughly enjoyed listening to Shakespeare in OP. [...] most remarked on its novelty [OP’s] as a positive aspect of this production” (2020, 98).⁸⁹

With the exception of the comments relayed by Rasmussen (see Sec. 3.5.3), for the others informal observation or informal interviews or both may have been used, and another possible drawback must be brought to the fore. Upon taking into account “Crystal’s scattered reports of audience reactions”, Lodewyck highlights the fact that they are “surely biased by his investment in the project” (2013, 55). Similarly, given the adoption of OP on the part of Coleman, Meier and Bennett, and their potential (and benign) willingness to promote both the pronunciation and their events, their words may not be deemed completely reliable. Or rather, in order to gain credibility, they would require some form of corroboration coming from data either verifiable or collected by external researchers.⁹⁰

Beyond the appreciation of OP in performances, an enjoyment of the single OP productions is suggested in scholarly sources – partly through the direct or indirect voices of actors, partly by scholars. In one of Meier’s scientific texts, Bennett states that “[t]hat excitement and sense of novelty created an atmosphere of engagement unlike any other I have yet experienced in the theatre. My teenage daughter came twice, bringing several of her friends the second time around” (Meier 2016, 183). In Crystal’s *Pronouncing Shakespeare*, the actors of “Romeo and Juliet”, through the linguist’s mediation, suggest that the production was successful; in particular, Crystal contends that “there was something about the audience. Actors can always tell when an audience is paying real attention – as indeed can any teacher or lecturer” and concludes that “the consensus was that the OP audiences were totally engaged” (2005a, 136; see also 2004, 27).⁹¹ Still relating to “Romeo and Juliet”, another indicator of the appreciation of the staging, detached from performers this time, may correspond to the audience’s reaction to Crystal’s question whether they would go and see another OP staging, probably lasting an entire season: as the scholar reports, “[t]here was a resounding YES” (2004, 27). Ultimately, reiterating

“Shakespeareaze” did not only make significant use of OP but also other languages and accents in an attempt to celebrate them, which may have influenced audience response to OP.

⁸⁹ According to Massai, critic John Lahr seems to express more than a “fascination” with “Troilus and Cressida” through his description of sounds (2020, 99), yet, as will be shown in another section (3.6.1.2), his words appear more related to an appreciation of OP sounds.

⁹⁰ Professional investment can be regarded as another factor contributing to the informality of the directors’ testimonies in Sec. 3.5.3.

⁹¹ Crystal also holds that, as reported by performers, there was no distraction on the part of teenagers, who, in Crystal’s opinion, provide “[t]he litmus test for engagement” (2005a, 137).

part of what has been reported elsewhere, for “Hamlet” “members of the audience interviewed by local newspapers and on local TV stations thoroughly enjoyed listening to Shakespeare in OP”, according to Rasmussen’s testimony in Massai’s words (Massai 2020, 98).

Some or all of this evidence may be regarded as rather subjective and possibly disputable due to the ‘collection’ of data from figures involved in an OP production or from performers not able to devote their full attention to the spectators’ responses. Yet, there exists more factual information, which validates the issue of appreciation; it is the timed difference between applauses as recorded by Crystal:

Several of the cast noticed a distinct difference in the audience reaction during the OP weekend. This was not just imagination or wishful thinking. [...] On 10 June, the applause did not start until half-way through the final jig (p. 153), and went on for two and a quarter minutes. On 25 June, the OP day, the applause started immediately after Escalus’s closing line, and they stopped clapping three and a half minutes later (2005a, 139-140).

As the linguist recounts, the applauses of one of the OP performances, compared to those of an ordinary production (in RP), lasted longer. Also confirmative of appreciation is the box-office success of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”, which, according to Meier, was “triple what was projected” (2011a, 217). However, these testimonies cannot be accepted without reservations since in both cases – the timed applauses and the proceeds – there is missing information: for the former, the statement that the selection of the performance in both OP and RP was random and for the latter, an actual comparison between initial projections and final ticket sale figures. On a final note, though serving a different purpose in literature, Massai’s data regarding economic and critical success of “Hamlet” can be taken here to factually show the appreciation of an OP staging, at least to some degree (“[t]his production attracted large local audiences: twenty-one sold out shows took place over a period of three weeks to great popular and critical acclaim”) (2020, 98).

Having said that, it seems fair to take note of critical voices in relation to some aspects of OP productions and of OP itself. Massai considers Peter J. Smith’s and John Lahr’s negative reviews: Smith’s text is depicted as condemnatory of “Romeo and Juliet”’s acting (2020, 98), and Lahr’s denies any “appreciation of the poetical quality of the Shakespearean verse” for “Troilus and Cressida” (2020, 99). On the other hand, Jonathan Hope indulges in a general statement, subtly criticising OP: “Recent experiment using “original pronunciation” in productions are interesting, but they have provoked dubiously subjective romanticisations of the supposedly

‘robust’ and ‘earthy’ sounds of Early Modern English” (Hope 2009). Hope does not mention any specific production, but his scepticism concerns OP stagings altogether, more precisely the artificial nature of the sound system.

Another sceptical evaluation of the OP reconstruction emerges from an article, which is about the CD “Shakespeare’s Original Pronunciation”, not any theatrical production. In the author’s view, “[u]ntil the lost Radio 3 tapes of ‘Shakespeare Live at the Rose’ are found, we had best admit that we don’t know how his plays sounded” (J.C. 2012). This testimony reinforces Hope’s perspective and thus confirms some distrust of the reconstructed system.⁹² A further critical stance towards OP is adopted by Holger Syme (2014), who, while labelling OP performances as “fascinating exercises” and half-mocking their being “teaching tools”, repeatedly doubts the theatrical value of the pronunciation: “what precisely can we learn about early modern plays and early modern theatre by staging original pronunciation productions? [...] the answer appears to be: ‘virtually nothing’”.⁹³

It should then be concluded that some appreciation of OP and of OP productions is claimed and has been identified in specialised literature, although few reproving voices, not necessarily connected to stagings, are recorded. In general, various references are made to reactions of audience members but only some regard a positive or negative reception on the part of critics (see Meier and Massai), whose collected testimonies remain quite scarce and will be expanded and analysed through a small-scope study in Sec. 3.6.

⁹² As Piaia’s thesis (2018) does not deal specifically with the appreciation of OP or of OP productions and with plays, this work has not been discussed in the body of the text. However, some interesting data can be extrapolated from the text, which, among the others, explores the accessibility or social attractiveness of OP, its prestige and suitability for Shakespeare. Accessibility derives from the attributes “pleasant”, “not snobbish”, “likeable”, “modern”, “authentic” and “interesting”, whereas “urbane”, “solemn” and “sophisticated” determine prestige and suitability is quite straightforward. According to Piaia, OP was rated lowest on prestige by native speakers (non-native speakers also participated in the study), only ranked second in terms of *accessibility*, after Contemporary RP (2018, 53, author’s emphasis; see also 69-70), and was considered slightly more adequate for Shakespeare than General American (54). Having a look at Table 2 (Piaia 2018, 54), for the attribute “pleasant”, OP placed last in the ranking, after every other accent in the study (Conservative RP, Contemporary RP and General American). It could then be inferred that a significant appreciation of OP is not confirmed: its sounds do not appear as particularly inviting and the pronunciation is not prestigious, not extremely accessible and not particularly appropriate for Shakespeare. Yet, the reliability of these data is limited in that they concern recorded sonnets and not live plays, and the texts are listened to in various accents and not just OP, which results in an evaluation of OP influenced by the comparison with other accents.

⁹³ In his book *Shakespeare’s Verse* Peter Hall, as an actor who worked with OP in the 1950s, does not express a negative opinion on the reconstructed pronunciation, but he does not believe that “we should play Shakespeare like that” (2000, 27).

3.5.6 Concluding remarks

Even though I have tried to amalgamate data and draw conclusions in my treatment of understandability, comprehensibility, intelligibility and appreciation, it has often proved difficult, if not impossible, to make generalisations. A number of testimonies and scholarly texts suggest a predominance of positive values, but my discussion has shown some complex points and critical aspects. What certainly deserves to be highlighted is the fact that the consulted texts only allow for glimpses into intelligibility and, if data on understanding, comprehensibility and, even more, appreciation can be quite compelling, material is still too informal and incomplete, and calls for more research. A very first step towards a new collection of data and new findings is taken in 3.6. This section will discuss a small-scope project, whereby I have attempted to gain insight into critical responses to OP production in terms of comprehensibility and appreciation.

3.6 Audience response: New data

Drawing on my original project, whose purpose was to look into the audience response to OP, I have carried out a small-scope investigation into the comprehensibility and appreciation as emerging from reviews published from 2004 to 2021. For this study, the outcomes of my research will be presented into two different categories, “Comprehensibility” and “Appreciation”, aimed at facilitating the discussion, and they will eventually be summarised in the section devoted to my concluding remarks.⁹⁴

3.6.1 Investigation into reviews from 2004 to 2021: Material and procedure

With the purpose of shedding light on the critics’ reception of OP – still too little explored – from the beginning of the OP experimentation (2004) to these days (2021),⁹⁵ I have searched Discovery Sapienza, Google search and Factiva for reviews and also consulted some written journals such as *Shakespeare Survey*. Following the

⁹⁴ I have generally used words, not numerals, for numbers under 100, in compliance with the principles of Chicago referencing style. Yet, in Sec. 3.6, I will be employing digits; this choice depends both on the great presence of numbers and on my attempt to facilitate the reading experience.

⁹⁵ I performed my research in 2022, so I set 2021 as my target date.

exclusion of some texts that did not meet basic requirements,⁹⁶ I have retrieved 23 reviews ascribable to either websites or scholarly publications. They concern “Romeo and Juliet in OP” (2004) (2), “Troilus and Cressida in OP” (2004) (4), “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” (2010) (1), “Shakespeare’s Amazing Cymbeline” (2012) (4), “Macbeth” (2014) (1), “Julius Caesar” (2014) (2), “Twelfth Night” (2014) (1), “The Merchant of Venice” (2015) (1), “The Winter’s Tale” (2016) (2), “King Lear” (2016) (1), “Antony and Cleopatra” (2017) (1), “Romeo and Juliet” (2018) (1), “Hamlet” (2019) (1) and “King Lear” (2021) (1).⁹⁷ All the texts have been examined by means of a qualitative analysis, carried out as follows: 1. After a careful reading of reviews, I identified all the passages and hints relating to comprehensibility; 2. I detected and took note of the comments on appreciation of OP; 3. I scrutinised all the observations looking for commonalities, differences and trends.

3.6.2 Comprehensibility

Apart from the reviews that do not make explicit reference to the (perceived) understanding of OP, those that mention or discuss it seem to be predominantly positive.⁹⁸ In fact, the texts in favour of positive or rather positive comprehensibility exceed the negative and rather negative ones, numerically speaking: the former amount to 4 and 5, respectively;⁹⁹ and the latter to 3 and 1. If silence on perceived understanding is equated with positive or high comprehensibility in the remaining reviews (11), OP then appears as having been mainly perceived as comprehensible (e.g. Thomas C. Hardy 2010).¹⁰⁰

That said, the negative evaluations merit some attention by virtue of their great usefulness; they may help to determine whether OP as a sound system is entirely

⁹⁶ Three reviews were posted on personal blogs (Katie 2012, Minton 2018, Minton 2019) and one was published in a university magazine (Hawthorne 2016). As the former did not have any affiliation, and the latter may have been deemed impartial being too related to productions, I resolved not to take them into account. I also excluded another review (Rockwell 2004) due to its different conditions of audiencing: the reviewer admits to having watched a recording of the production, rather than having seen it in person. Lastly, I found another review for “Shakespeare’s Amazing Cymbeline” (Hallett 2012), but I was not able to access the full text.

⁹⁷ For more information on the productions see Appendix D (Table D.1). Those featuring sections in OP or bearing only traces have not been included in this analysis.

⁹⁸ Positive is to be intended as high and negative as low.

⁹⁹ Exemplificatory positive comment: “The language experiment doesn’t get in the way of the play at all” (Everett 2014). Rather positive: “so you won’t have any trouble hearing familiar words in unfamiliar ways” (Teachman 2016).

¹⁰⁰ From the positive tone of Thomas C. Hardy’s review (2010), praising OP as “resuscitated [...] with uncommon precision and consistency” can be inferred that OP was not perceived as troublesome in terms of comprehensibility.

responsible for the critics' negative or low comprehensibility. Undoubtedly, on the sole basis of written testimonies penned with the aim of reviewing a performance, one cannot fully establish the perceived (or actual) responsibility of OP for its perceived lack of clarity, but comments can give away significant hints and offer a glimpse into comprehensibility. The productions negatively reviewed in terms of comprehensibility are "*Troilus and Cressida*", commented upon in Lahr's (2005) and Carey's (2007) texts, and two different stagings of *RJ*, evaluated by Smith's (2004) and Wilkinson's (2018) reviews, respectively.

Setting aside the Shakespearean plays on which the productions are based and focusing on the comprehensibility of OP, 3 out of the 4 texts – John Lahr's, David Carey's and James Wilkinson's – depict an actual struggle to comprehend OP ascribable, to different degrees, to the sound system. As Lahr affirms:

By my estimate, only about thirty per cent of the production, which is unamplified, is comprehensible; the waves of words produce a mesmerizing static, sort of like listening to poetry underwater.

[...]

The scurrilous fool Thersites (Colin Hurley), who inveighs against corruption in both camps—"Lechery, lechery, still wars and lechery, nothing else holds fashion"—adds to the general incomprehensibility here by being almost entirely inaudible, only very occasionally throwing up a scrap of identifiable thought (Lahr 2005).

The critic, who considers only a small percentage of the production as comprehensible, suggests a link between the lack of amplification and scarce comprehensibility. Yet, from the relative non-defining clause ("which is unamplified") and the tone of the text itself, the absence of amplification (or volume) appears as a contributor to the difficulties posed by OP, rather than as their sole originator. OP sounds, then, seem to bear some responsibility in the non-comprehensibility of the pronunciation. Carey and Wilkinson, on the other hand, only allude to the sound system as problematic, since, if Carey regards reconstructed pronunciation as opaque and admits resorting to reading (2017, 403), Wilkinson holds that his "ears never fully adjusted to the accent, so very little of Shakespeare's verbal humor comes through and [he] frequently found [himself] struggling to understand sections of dialogue" (2018). Therefore, it is OP itself that primarily causes, in these critics' view, a perceived lack of understanding.

By contrast, Smith's 'alternative' perspective attributes the lack of (perceived) understanding to one of the actors ("barely comprehensible Escalus" 2004, 146),

and, in so doing, suggests that performers, rather than the sound system, make OP more or less comprehensible. In this regard, another review can be especially illuminating, Mary Howland's, which, generally speaking, embeds a partially positive comment on comprehensibility. Howland's text denounces a "loss of understanding" not triggered by intrinsic qualities of the reconstructed phonological system but rather by the specific use of OP on the part of performers – "how it is used" (404). Howland's perspective, then, appears to confirm that "barely comprehensible Escalus" hinges on the actor's ability (or non-ability) to speak in OP, and that performers can be perceived as responsible for the unclarity of OP.¹⁰¹ It can be argued that, though OP is experienced as the greater culprit for the perceived lack of understanding by Lahr, Wilkinson and Carey, some other critics, Smith and Howland, acknowledge the weight of the rendition skills of actors in the process.

Whether OP is actually responsible for the perceived lack of understanding is not to be determined here; however, there are some observations possibly mitigating the assumed 'guilt' of OP. As can be noticed, Lahr and Carey were not fully immersed in the performance and their sense of comprehensibility may have worsened by what they devised as a strategy for facing lack of understanding, that is, reading. Further, besides Lahr's review, others supporting a rather high comprehensibility of OP lament some non-understanding as deriving from overwhelming sound effects (Brall 2021) or costuming (Pomeroy 2019),¹⁰² so noises and lack of amplification may have played some role in the matter of direct responsibility in productions. Lastly, if, as Massai suggests, critics expecting Shakespeare to be performed in a standard pronunciation may have been negatively influenced in their perception of clear OP, cultural expectations may have deviated the course of comprehensibility. Thus, it could be surmised that OP is indeed not fully responsible for perceived diminished understanding.

Before delving into the appreciation of OP, other elements, which are related to comprehensibility to a greater or lesser extent, deserve consideration: acclimatisation and the spotting of rhymes and puns. As based on OP literature (Sec. 3.5.3.1), one can assume a quick or rather quick period for accustoming oneself to OP. However, of the 8 reviews referring to or hinting at acclimatisation, 4 seem to deny current ideas: Carey suggests an undefined amount of time (2007), Howland

¹⁰¹ This actorial responsibility is also maintained by Paul Meier in one episode of his podcast "In a Manner of Speaking" (2018).

¹⁰² According to Brall (2021), "when the storm breaks out, the sound effects drown out several of the actor's lines". For Pomeroy (2019), OP is "slightly garbed when spoken by the ghost who wears a full mask and is therefore difficult to hear anyhow".

a “good half hour” (2007), and Wilkinson no occurred adjustment at all (2018). On the other hand, the other 4 texts confirm data in scholarship: “What is most surprising about is how quickly one’s ear adjusts to the sound, nearly as quickly as one adjusts to the sound of Elizabethan verse in general” (Fisler 2015); “Original Pronunciation [...] takes some getting used to, but the adjustment period is short” (Pomeroy 2019); “What is wonderful in their 2014 run, however, is how quickly you find yourself immersed in the unfamiliar familiarity of OP” (Lentell 2014); and “The audience members looked puzzled, but then they ‘got it’ and began to laugh, or look down, or to each other, and then, as I watched them, they began to listen... intently!” (Bourus 2016). Particularly noteworthy are Ben Fisler’s layered opinion and Terri Bourus’s general observation: the former, seen previously, also mentions “the effort it takes to accustom oneself to it” and, in so doing, implies some form of endeavour and less immediacy than explicitly stated; the latter ties acclimatisation with intelligibility, in that Bourus observes the reactions of audience members, not his own, and infers a quick adjustment to OP, which is much generalised (“the audience members”).

In terms of OP rhymes and puns, they are considered in some reviews. If Price quotes examples of retrieved rhymes and puns (2014) (e.g. *own-scone* and *fair-fear*), others limit themselves to signalling and praising their restoration (2) or, in a case, their loss (1). Illustrating approval, Amanda N. Gunther asserts that “this use of ‘OP’ opens up a world of possibilities for the production including rhymes and puns that are lost in modern delivery” (2016), whereas Howland admits that “one friend said that he hadn’t realised how many jokes were in the text (2007). On the contrary, Wilkinson, adopting a negative stance, bemoans that “so very little of Shakespeare’s verbal humor comes through”. It should be noticed that verbal humour (or wordplay) is taken into account more than rhymes, which is confirmed by their mention in other reviews (3). In fact, it is pointed to as being clear by, say, Pomeroy (2019) who remarks that “[t]he graveyard sequence, which opens full of puns and closes with a sad burial, is humorous, tense and touching.”¹⁰³ Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine whether these texts refer to ‘new’, restored puns or those available in both Present-Day English and reconstructed pronunciation.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ The other reviews are Ben Fisler’s (“a game worth playing that unpacks lines stuffed with high thinking on the nature of loyalty and love, brutal observations on societal and individual corruption, and the ubiquitous mix of verbal puns and dirty jokes”; 2015) and Dan Lentell’s (“Shakespeare’s comedy, his puns especially, sing out from unfrozen thaw”; 2014).

¹⁰⁴ Another element, which does not concern comprehensibility, is worth looking into. A blog review, which has been excluded from the current investigation, signals that other pronunciations were abundantly used in the production “Shakespeare’s Amazing Cymbeline” (2012): “Especially impressive were those [performances of cast] who had to switch back and forth between “British”

Lingering on Gunther's and Howland's reviews, their comments would seem to be moving in the direction of an appreciation of OP since the reconstructed pronunciation is portrayed as creating new opportunities through rhymes and puns (Gunther 2016) and as revealing unheard jokes (Howland 2007). This paves the way for a discussion of appreciation, to which I will turn.

3.6.3 Appreciation

As far as appreciation is concerned, I have drawn inspiration from Sec. 3.5.5 and investigated the enjoyment of OP, whose sounds are evaluated aesthetically by reviewers. Still considering Sec. 3.5.5, I have decided against engaging with the appreciation of the productions altogether, in that this aspect may have depended on various factors (acting, costuming, etc.), not only OP. Rather, I have accorded space to the perceived impact of OP on the single performances, in response to the hints offered by the texts.

In the reviews (8) in which OP is commented upon, the pronunciation tends to be depicted by means of impressionistic terms capturing its allure and pleasantness. Emma Hardy (2014) and Gunther (2016) describe the OP sonorities as "beautiful" (2014) and "poetic and lyrical upon the ear", respectively; Lahr (2005) presents them as exerting "a certain fascination" and as weaving an "odd bouquet" whose "earthy" regional echoes have their "own verbal spice"; and Carey (2007) defines OP "as a *tantalizing* mix of the wonderfully strange and oddly normal" (my emphasis). Slightly less positive, but still gravitating within the orbit of positiveness, are the comments of 3 reviewers: 2 adhere to the standard of 'allure', though to some minor degree ("in some cases it makes the poetry sound prettier" Everett 2014; "despite the potential interest of hearing Truylus, the Grex, Tharrsitays and so on for a change" Dobson 2006); on the contrary, the remaining one subverts this criterion, but ascribes the OP sounds a certain practicality, a "business-like, rational" nature and a greater liveliness ("I couldn't honestly say that the sound of

(more like Irish) and Italian accents" (Katie 2012). In an email exchange, I asked director Coleman about the employment of 'other' pronunciations and he told me that they resorted to "dialects for the French, Italian and Welsh. Not the actual language" (Chris Coleman, email to the author, July 5, 2021). On consulting the prompt book, which I was kindly provided with by Coleman, I focused on Italian and did not find any word or phrases, apart from "signior" (Coleman 2012, 18 and 20); yet on pages 77 and 78 the added character of The Pianist announces "voices with the accent of Rome/Voices whispering of invasion" before the stage direction "[We hear the Captain and Lucius before we see them]". It could then be deduced that some Italian or Italian accent is adopted by characters at this point. However, as in the reviews examined no remark regarding the Italian and 'other' sonorities or even OP is available, the following question arises: did these sonorities go unnoticed or were they simply neglected?

OP is beautiful, but it is certainly livelier than most RP Shakespeare I have heard"; Howland 2007, 406). There also exists a minor negative view, whereby OP does not bring to mind an allure of any type but implies some chaos and fakeness: "the result was simply a random mix of stage Irish, stage West Country and stage West Indian" (Dobson 2005, 289). Dobson, the author of this negative perspective, also adopts a rather positive standpoint, presented above, so it could be argued that the sound of OP is not appealing in itself but the actors – probably with their accents? – colour it and, in so doing, influence the way it is perceived and ultimately appreciated.

Before delving into the actual reading of OP in relation to performances, it is worth stressing that not all the reviews make use of evaluative, aesthetic language and that the majority (e.g. Smith 2004 and Hardy 2010) refrain from expressing any judgments on OP. Yet it is also apparent that some of the connotative language mentioned above originates in scholarly publications (Carey 2007 and Howland 2007), which might be difficult to reconcile with the academic nature of these sources. Searching for a sensible explanation, the evaluative lexical choices of reviewers might stem from the fact that the texts, being reviews, do not aim to offer a neutral description but rather embed OP into the theatrical event, for which evaluative feedback is offered.

While the OP sounds appear mostly encircled by an aura of attraction, the perceived influence of OP on performances is less clear and so is the conceptualisation of the pronunciation as an added value or an obstacle. As mentioned before, I will not attempt to establish how the OP performances were overall received; rather, I will focus on the perceived impact of OP on the productions. Starting with the positive influence of OP, the reconstructed pronunciation is said to add new nuances ("Colours I have missed, patterns I didn't see before swirl out of the mists and take form"; Lentell 2014), to endow Shakespearean plays with special life (e.g. "As a result, there was a precision in the speaking that made the words real"; Bourus 2016¹⁰⁵) and originate aural difference ("Changing pronunciation requires a lot of dedicated effort by the cast and it reveals some very different rhythms in the text"; Teachman 2016).

Yet, on a negative plane, OP is considered a non-ideal choice for limiting understanding of humour ("For me, this [missing verbal humor and not understanding entire passages] robbed the play of a lot of its potential power as the

¹⁰⁵ Other passages embracing OP as bringing about special life are the following ones: "yet the plays are livelier, more robust, and engaging" (Howland 2007, 406); "Be not vexed by the premise of OP, it only heightens the experience" (Gunther 2016); "For only this approach truly unearths the most honest reading of this challenging play" (Fisler 2015).

story barrels towards its tragic end"; Wilkinson 2018). Above all, however, the pronunciation is criticised for debasing characterisation, as Emma Hardy's (2014) and Peter Smith's (2004) reviews show. Particularly interesting is Emma Hardy's perspective, in that the critic seems to generally convey positivity before delineating one tentative flaw, corresponding to characterisation ("perhaps the characterisation of many of the parts had been neglected as a result of the labour of performing in OP"). The latter as more or less deficient is generally decried in few other reviews (Lahr 2005 and Carey 2007); however, the relationship of causality between OP and acting is only implied (by the context) rather than being clearly spelled out. This poses the question as to whether the reconstructed pronunciation is actually responsible for some deficiency in acting, and an exploration of the point will be offered in Chap. 4. Still, to complicate the picture, OP is not only assigned some positive or negative impact on single productions, but is also felt as not having any real effect on them, at least according to Price ("I was tempted to say that not much actually changed since most of the pronunciation differences have little direct effect on the way a scene worked"; 2014), Everett ("but it [OP] doesn't really impact the play much one way or the other"; 2014), and possibly other reviewers not commenting on OP at all (e.g. Patail 2012, Wattenberg 2012).

In closing, the material at my disposal suggests that aural characteristics of OP, when given consideration, tend to receive appreciative comments, whereas no prevailing appreciation of OP as part of performances is given in the reviews under scrutiny. In fact, the majority of the texts do not muse about any influence of OP and, when the reviews do, positive influence is not overwhelming and is opposed by a perceived negative effect, weaker characterisation.

3.6.4 Concluding remarks

My small-scope study has investigated the comprehensibility and appreciation of the OP productions from the period 2004-2021 as emerging from reviews, thereby examining the critics' response to (specific aspects of) OP stagings. If, in the previous sections, I have attempted to give as accurate an analysis of the reviews and the authors' stances as possible, I will now summarise my findings.

The critics' comprehensibility of OP appears high rather than low, but 'dissonant' stances are expressed nonetheless, and often ascribed the pronunciation, rather than other factors, responsibility for loss of comprehension. Whether the OP system was actually responsible in the single performances is a rather complex issue, and acknowledged impediments such as lack of amplification raise the possibility that material conditions may have interfered with perceived

understanding. In general, the non-universal comprehensibility may go hand in hand with Massai's findings, but only in terms of not always favourable or divided reactions¹⁰⁶ (and with the need, expressed in this thesis, to take the relayed enthusiasm of audiences with a pinch of salt). Further, the available data on acclimatisation, though scant, provide a more nuanced picture than that delineated by scholars. Although the adjustment period is depicted as quite short for reviewers, on several occasions its length comes off as significant, unspecified or interminable. These positions do not refute the brevity of acclimatisation altogether, but they may be interpreted as a first step towards questioning its universal validity. Finally, appreciation of OP is mixed, yet possibly veering towards negativity: critical voices often indulge in words of praise for its sounds but do not largely consider positive the impact of the pronunciation. Far too frequently, they associate OP with a less robust characterisation than expected, contradicting the positive appreciation reported by a significant part of scholarship or various testimonies.

My study then does not always confirm the information reported in the scholarly and non-scholarly sources examined previously (e.g. Sec. 3.5.3),¹⁰⁷ and offers more specific elements than those identified in OP literature, that is, the evaluation of sounds and the impact of the pronunciation. Yet, the limited nature of my investigation cannot go unnoticed – e.g. the absence of reviews for some productions or the 'small' number of reviews – and, hopefully, will encourage further research.¹⁰⁸ In Chap. 4, I will engage with reviews once again, but I will

¹⁰⁶ Massai, however, does not appear to categorise critics. She only makes a distinction between those spectators with a deep knowledge of the Shakespearean texts and performances, mostly corresponding to critics, and those audience members more distant from Shakespeare, possibly excluding critics.

¹⁰⁷ I have recently come across Douglas J. King's "To Give Audiences the Most Authentic Experience Possible, Shakespeare's Plays Should Be Produced with Renaissance Costumes and Staging" (2020). King maintains that "Original pronunciation productions garner mixed reviews" (193), but he does not provide any evidence in this regard.

¹⁰⁸ These data are not dissimilar from the findings of a recent survey of mine. I carried out an empirical investigation into the comprehensibility and appreciation of "King Lear" (2021) at the Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, by administering a questionnaire to audience members (Appendix F). Unfortunately, I received an extremely limited number of responses (30, not all of them complete). According to my preliminary findings, OP was more comprehensible than non-comprehensible for audience members but not overwhelmingly so, and the pronunciation was often perceived as responsible for lacking understanding (Q2a, 2b, 2c, 2d). In terms of appreciation, OP was mostly ascribed positive traits (e.g. "very pleasant"; 2qg) and great value when respondents were asked directly (Q2g). However, OP was indicated as an impediment of some sort by additional survey takers, when these freely commented on the production (Q3d). These results are preliminary in that, to examine comprehensibility and appreciation, I only considered specific questions; if I combined more questions together, my results could be enriched and change, at least slightly (for example, I could 3d to 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d for comprehensibility).

provide a more specific perspective by (systematically) investigating critical responses to the OP in “Romeo and Juliet” and “Troilus and Cressida” at Shakespeare’s Globe.

3.7 A coda to audience response: Ownership

As reported in Sec. 3.5.5, some teenagers commented that the actors in “Romeo and Juliet” spoke like them. Whilst, as David Crystal claims, this was not the case, their comment hint at that sense of ownership towards OP surfacing from the Crystal’s words and discerned by Sonia Massai. She, in fact, maintains that “when asked why OP productions have a role on the Shakespearean stage, [David] Crystal mentions access and ownership” and, in support of her view, Massai quotes this passage:

What I find most fascinating about OP is the way audiences everywhere (I’ve seen about 15 plays done in OP around the world to date) report that OP gives them a sense of ownership that the tradition of presenting the plays in RP (... as heard from Olivier, et al) did not (2016b) (Crystal qtd. in Massai 2020, 97).

The feeling of ownership voiced by the Crystals and identified by Massai can also be inferred elsewhere; for example, David Crystal holds that “[t]he audiences heard these resonances [the regional ones] [...] and readily identified with them” (Crystal 2005a, 92), and Ben Crystal affirms that, as an actor, “[i]t’s [OP] a wonderful tool to gain ownership over something that is often being touted or sold to you as something that is for the few and the privileged” (in the interview by Sheir 2014).

If in the brief quotations above David Crystal may be seen as referring to ownership as experienced by audiences, Ben Crystal gives a glimpse into his own actorial perspective.¹⁰⁹ Yet the feeling of ownership does not only correspond to a testimony of a shared or personal sensation but, as Massai implies, it is also actively promoted (2020, 97-98). While Massai subtly ties the ‘ownership rhetoric’ to the association of OP with one’s own regional accent,¹¹⁰ I contend here that the Crystals,

¹⁰⁹ In her article (2020), Ramsay hints at the ownership as experienced by the actors: “They [the cast] also commented that they could feel or sense the relish of speaking the words, causing inhibitions to fade. The words embraced their identities and facilitated both an awareness of freedom and the ability to take risks and ‘dive into’ the experience” (41).

¹¹⁰ I have not investigated regional accents in relation to the Crystals’ ‘ownership rhetoric’, but I have noticed that some greater sense of ownership towards Shakespeare in one’s accent is promoted through OP. In this respect, it is important to consider Ben Crystal’s following short account: “And he [an actor] said, ‘Yeah, but I don’t know OP yet.’ And I said, ‘Well, you know, and this is the thing, you know. It’s about speaking in an accent that works, that lets the rhymes work. And I said to him, look, can you do a Southern American accent, do it in Southern American:

especially Ben, also shape it by making reference to the ‘domestic’ sphere, namely to the home and/or the heart. In this regard, David Crystal relays that “[e]veryone felt at home with it [OP]” (2005a, 93) and Ben holds that:

“If there's something about this accent, rather than it being difficult or more difficult for people to understand ... it has flecks of nearly every regional U.K. English accent, and indeed American and in fact Australian, too. It's a sound that makes people — it reminds people of the accent of their *home* — and so they tend to listen more with their *heart* than their head” (Ben Crystal qtd. in NPR Staff 2012; my emphasis).

“There's something about speaking Shakespeare in this accent that somehow fits Shakespeare, in the same way that the Globe does,” said Ben. “It feels like the sounds from your *home* and *heart*” (Ben Crystal qtd. in Furness 2013; my emphasis).

“It's Shakespeare as hopefully he would have heard it,” said Crystal. “It sounds raw and from the *heart*, which is very different from the way I think Shakespeare has been performed for the last half century or so” (Ben Crystal qtd. in Stone 2012; my emphasis).

David Crystal connects OP to the home, whereas Ben Crystal includes the heart too and employs it on its own in the last passage.¹¹¹ It can also be observed that both Crystals create an association between the home and/or the heart and audiences (or simply people) listening to OP, and when the link is not lexicalised, it is implied through the use of determiners (*your* home and heart; *the* heart), which makes the

Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple of his eye” (Ben Crystal, in the interview by Sheir 2014).

OP is not imposed but becomes a tool for ‘facilitating’ and appropriating the recitation of Shakespeare’s lines in one’s own accent. Elsewhere Ben Crystal is even more explicit on the role of OP as a way to claim or reclaim Shakespeare through one’s voice: “Do I think that people should always speak in Original Pronunciation? No, no, of course not. I hope Original Pronunciation might be the bridge back to a place where the right accent to speak Shakespeare is your accent. Because you want to speak Shakespeare. [...] Your accent is right.” (Division of Humanities 2017; my transcription; see also Shakespeare on Toast 2019 and TEDx Talks 2018). Ramsay also seems to have fostered a strong association between OP and the use of one’s own accent and language for Shakespearean works through her experimental activities with students and ultimately the production “Shakespeareaze” (2020), which “promotes the visibility of marginalised identities” (41).

¹¹¹ To some, the references to the heart and the home may be emblematic of an emotional approach to OP on the part of the Crystals and be read as an attempt to ‘lure’ people into the OP experience. Yet, my reading casts such references in a different – ‘layered’ – light.

content of the excerpts sound even more universal. Thus, if one limits oneself to contemplating the reference to ‘owned’ dimensions such as the heart and/or the home, this may be read as an attempt to associate OP with a personal sphere and to foster some ownership. But there is more to be noticed. What is only implied in the second and third extracts is apparent in the very first passage, that is, the sense of ownership as deriving from the established proximity between OP and one’s own accent. In particular, the line of reasoning adopted by Ben Crystal goes like this: the presence of “flecks of nearly every regional U.K. English accent” entails traces of one’s accent, which accounts for the fact that OP “reminds people of the accent of their *home*”. Consequently, the connection between the reconstructed pronunciation and the home and/or the heart may be read as a metaphorisation of the perceived closeness between OP and one’s accent, stemming from a generalisation.¹¹² Ultimately, it can be said that if, as Massai suggests, the Crystals’ ‘ownership rhetoric’ is given by their claim concerning the perceived resemblance of OP to one’s own accent, it is also forged by the references to a more private sphere, reflecting and responding to the generalised perception of resemblance between OP and one’s accent.

Returning to the perceived rather than shaped sense of ownership, scholar Laetitia Sansonetti and voice coach and director Daniel Blackwell appear to depart from the idea that said pronunciation allows for a sense of ownership. Adopting a purely theoretical perspective,¹¹³ Sansonetti denies that any reconstructed version of Shakespeare’s pronunciation renders it possible “s’appropriier intimement les œuvres du poète et dramaturge” (“to appropriate the works of the poet and playwright deeply”; my translation); and rather embraces Tony Harrison’s predilection for local accents as tools for claiming ownership (2014, 39).¹¹⁴ More moderate and fact-based is Blackwell’s perspective, conceiving of Crystal’s sense of ownership as less applicable to American spectators:

¹¹² The Crystals have extensively worked on and with OP and participated in the staging of OP productions, so their perspective is informed by their numerous experiences. However, not enough empirical data are provided in support of their views or, if they do exist, I have been unable to retrieve them.

¹¹³ Sansonetti points to the unachievable nature of an authentic Shakespearean pronunciation through the label of “chimère phonétique” (“phonetic chimera”).

¹¹⁴ Also, Sansonetti does not envision the possibility that non-native speakers would appropriate whatever form of OP, but, through their utilisation of artificial RP, she suggests their inability to properly and effectively own Shakespeare (“la seule prononciation «authentique» pour un locuteur non-natif semble être cette prononciation RP décriée pour son artificialité” 39-40). Yet, by also considering of the positive reactions of some non-native speakers to OP (Ramsay 2020), ‘appropriation’ of Shakespeare for L2 speakers appears a more complex issue, which is beyond the scope of this thesis.

One of the highlights that David Crystal mentions in his book – that audiences connect to OP because "it sounds like them" - is less of an experience for American audiences, I think, and even in the UK, that may ultimately hold less and less value the further we dismantle the notion that "prestige" accents (ex Received Pronunciation or "So-Called General American") are required for classical texts and allow actors to perform them in their own accents. Unfortunately that dismantling is still in progress, and only a month ago I heard from a voice teacher frustrated that the head of her program (in the UK) insisted that their upcoming Chekhov piece be performed in RP for no other reason than "that's how it's done" (Daniel Blackwell, email to author, January 24, 2022).

As can be deduced, ownership is not refused altogether but rather questioned. To be more precise, for undefined reasons and through unknown tools – though observation cannot be excluded –, American audiences are said not to completely share the sense of ownership portrayed by the Crystals, which, at least at first glance, may corroborate and feed on the perceived alienness of Shakespeare on the part of (some) Americans as highlighted in Sec. 3.1.2. In addition, ownership as experienced by British audiences is depicted as being in decline, and, in line with Sansonetti, regional accents are regarded as more prone than OP to let people 'own' Shakespeare.

In view of these non-favourable views, especially Blackwell's, and assuming that audiences are not monolithic but made up of different individuals, it seems more than reasonable to conclude that OP may not bring about ownership all the time and for everyone. To better explore this feeling and how widespread it is, it would be ideal to investigate (and confirm?) it by interviewing audience members of OP productions, ultimately with a special focus on the correlation between sense of ownership and perceived resemblance of OP to one's own accent, as suggested by the Crystals.

Conclusion

Productions in Shakespeare's OP and their ramifications have been the focal point of this chapter, which has attempted to show which theatrical aspects have been discussed in the 21st century in scholarship (e.g. sound and actorial effects), to expand and problematise the known data by involving, among others, non-scientific sources and small-scope studies (e.g. my analysis of reviews), and to identify elements in need of further investigation (e.g. acclimatisation). Looking at

the overall picture, two orders of considerations can eventually be made. Firstly, an integration of material other than the one offered by scholarship has allowed for a more detailed apprehension of OP in theatre, contributing to questioning its ‘universality’. Secondly, OP has forged a theatrical movement allowing for reflection on the Shakespearean plays’ (verbal) sounds – not corresponding to those of contemporary RP – and has had some influence on actors and audiences within the space of single performances. Whether such an impact makes experimentation with OP worth pursuing is a question too broad in scope, which my Conclusion will indirectly address through an examination of the theatrical value of OP.

If in this chapter I have concentrated on the stage, it should be acknowledged more explicitly that OP has opened the door to phonological and phonetic exploration not only in the theatre but also in other fields such as music (see Appendix D, Table D.6, and Appendix E), and that it has enjoyed digital success, still ongoing. Even neglecting David and Ben Crystal’s 2011 video on OP (OpenLearn 2011) which went viral in 2013 (Aciman 2013) and to this day has received 5.3 million views (27 July 2023), my search for online material concerning OP (2004-2021, See 3.1.2) has (also) revealed the availability of numerous interviews and clips of the duo in which both or either of the two discuss and give prominence to OP. It is then apparent that, beyond their theatrical and scholarly commitment, David and Ben Crystal are popularisers of OP,¹¹⁵ who are helping to shape a new awareness of the (reconstructed) pronunciation of Shakespeare’s works.¹¹⁶

In the next and last chapter of this thesis, I will proceed to adopt a more specific perspective and examine the OP dimension and reception of two productions at the Globe which counted on the linguistic supervision of David Crystal, “Romeo and Juliet” (2004) and “Troilus and Cressida” (2005).

¹¹⁵ In their work of popularisation of OP, the duo may be adopting precise engagement strategies such as references to the pronunciation of Elvis and pirates in the film *Pirates of the Caribbean*. This is only a rough impression deriving from watching videos and consulting newspaper articles.

¹¹⁶ According to my online search, OP is also tackled in non-OP articles, in which the pronunciation is given but a passing mention (“Obviously, this newer, more wordy Hulk isn’t going to be an erudite professor of literature, able to quote Shakespeare with the original pronunciation” Reyes 2017; see also Cook 2018, O’ Driscoll 2019). A new awareness of Shakespeare’s pronunciation seems to have emerged thanks to the OP movement, David and Ben Crystal’s work of popularisation and eventually that of Meier, since, as Barrett claims “Paul Meier has done a great deal to popularize OP in America, particularly through his production of *A Midsummer’s Night’s Dream* at the University of Kansas” (Barrett 2020, 10).

CHAPTER 4

OP at Shakespeare's Globe: "Romeo and Juliet", "Troilus and Cressida" and beyond

Introduction

In 2004 the play *Romeo and Juliet* was mounted at Shakespeare's Globe in both Received Pronunciation and Original Pronunciation; yet the OP experiment was not only confined to the lyrical tragedy. In fact, in 2005 original sonorities were also embraced for a staging of *Troilus and Cressida*, which dispensed with modern pronunciation and relied solely on OP. This chapter will mostly be concerned with an analysis of the OP sphere of the two shows. After reconstructing the reasons behind each staging and the adoption of the pronunciation, I will present an examination of recovered rhymes and ultimately an investigation into the audience response to OP for the single productions. On gathering and examining old and new information on the pronunciation of the two spectacles, I aim to broaden the debate on the use of OP in said productions and on the OP experimentation altogether at Shakespeare's Globe, which has not been thoroughly investigated up to this point. Yet, I also intend to move beyond the theatre's experimentation and draw conclusions on the pronunciation in general terms. In this regard, a coda will also prove useful. Divided into two parts, it will first scrutinise the rationale behind the return of OP in two staged readings, "Macbeth" (2014) and "Henry V" (2015), at Shakespeare's Globe; and REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. In this way, I will further reflect on the OP experimentation at the theatre and REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED.¹

4.1 Introducing "Romeo and Juliet in OP"

My discussion will be inaugurated by the production "Romeo and Juliet", which preceded "Troilus and Cressida". I will trace the former's genesis with regard to OP, before offering a portrayal of the show's phonological and phonetic dimension

¹ This chapter is long, but I have resolved against breaking it into more chapters. The reason lies in the fact that, while exploring OP, it tells a story – the story of OP at the Globe.

through various material. In particular, in the spirit of systematisating existing information and integrating it with new data, I will deal with testimonies of participants in the enterprise, scholarly comments and evaluations, and my own observations.

4.1.1 Genesis of the production

As Harold Bloom puts it, *RJ*'s "appeal is universal and world-wide, and its effect upon world literature is matched among the tragedies only by *Hamlet*" (2000, 1). Bloom's quote is deeply rooted in the literary field, but the play's immense "appeal" also invests the broader cultural sphere as evidenced by, say, films, TV shows and pop music based upon the Shakespearean lyrical tragedy.² It then does not appear too surprising that *RJ* was the first Shakespearean play in OP at the Globe: the general allure of and the audiences' familiarity with the tragedy may have been crucial factors in experimenting with phonological (and phonetic) reconstruction.³ Yet, official records do not acknowledge either element as responsible for the staging.

In fact, in his book *Pronouncing Shakespeare*, David Crystal foregrounds the willingness of director Tim Carroll to utilise OP and the Globe's acceptance of this plan. As reported, Carroll wished to adopt OP for his "Romeo", and in order to persuade the Globe's supervisory board – fearful of a resounding flop due to the unintelligibility of OP –, he proposed only three performances (2005a, 9). They were to be advertised as being in OP "so that audiences would know they would be getting something different" (9). However, the Globe was doubtful, since using two pronunciations, RP and OP, for the very same production could prove a challenge for both actors and "rehearsal regimes" (9). As a further – and winning – argument, Carroll then suggested that the Globe should be the first theatre to stage an OP production in the 21st century; if they "didn't do it, someone else would" (2005a,

² Musical pieces include Taylor Swift's "Love Story", which is among the twenty pop music songs whose lyrics were inspired from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*" (Tuan 2020, 34). Other fields influenced by *RJ* are provided by Weis: he notices that "[t]he range of adaptations in different genres that *Romeo and Juliet* has inspired across language and cultural barriers is without parallel", before quoting Stanley Wells' recognition of, among the others, ballets and operatic works informed by *RJ* (Weis 2012, 52-53). Robert Shaughnessy, too, mentions various fields influenced by the Shakespearean play – "from symphonic, operatic and ballet treatments (Berlioz, 1839; Gounod, 1867; Prokofiev, 1934) to musicals (*West Side Story*, 1957, filmed 1961) to narrative updates (*China Girl*, 1987)" (2011, 391).

³ There is a difference between Shakespeare's Globe and the Globe Theatre: the former refers to the entire complex comprising both the outdoor Globe Theatre and indoor Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, whereas the latter only entails the outdoor building. For more information, see the web page of the Globe theatre (Globe Theatre 2023a).

10).⁴ Eventually, the theatre approved the experimental project, which was made concretely possible by David Crystal, the linguistic advisor of the production.

It is apparent that such a narrative does not consider the selection of *RJ* as playing any major role in the success of the OP proposal, but the latter cannot be excluded altogether. Still in Crystal's *Pronouncing Shakespeare*, the scholar briefly discusses a failed attempt at an OP performance, involving *Twelfth Night*: "Tim Carroll [...] had thought of doing a production in OP before, when the company was planning *Twelfth Night* in 2002. He had even suggested that it might be used for the whole run" (2005a, 8). Carroll's proposed experimentation, however, met with the stark opposition of the Globe's board, uncertain of the intelligibility of OP (8-9). Probably "the whole run" (8) alarmed the institution, which did not have any prior experience and success with OP; yet, it can also be surmised that the choice of *TN* was partially responsible for the rejection of OP. After all, though famous, the play is in all likelihood not as well-known and popular as *RJ* or, more precisely, perceived as such. Thus, the star-crossed lovers' tragedy and its status may have held some sway over the acceptance of an OP production at the Globe.

As has been mentioned before, David Crystal participated in the staging of "Romeo and Juliet in OP" (henceforth "Romeo");⁵ he provided his linguistic expertise as the show's "Master of language".⁶ The involvement of a phonetician and phonologist may immediately convey the idea of a faithful recreation of Shakespearean sounds, but, as is inferable from some testimony, this was not the case. In a special insert to the "Romeo" programme, Carroll states:

I have always longed to hear the texts as they would have sounded [...] I hope to get as close as possible, given the incomplete state of our knowledge. It will of course not be perfect, but then no engagement with the past ever is. If we were trying, as some think we are, to reclaim the past out of some misguided nostalgia, this incompleteness would invalidate our efforts. But we are trying only to explore. Whether or not our expedition will bring back any treasure, who can say? If we knew what an expedition was going to discover, it wouldn't be an expedition (Carroll 2004, 1).⁷

⁴ In an interview with Meier, Crystal reveals that Carroll conjured up the ghost of the Royal Shakespeare Company: "If you don't do it first, Stratford will!" (Meier 2011a, 215). This is also quoted in footnote 72 in Chap. 3.

⁵ By using this abbreviation, I do not mean to privilege the male presence ("Romeo") over the female one ("Juliet") but only provide a shorter title. Should this thesis be published, I would replace "Romeo" with "Juliet" to support feminist debates.

⁶ Charmian Hoare was instead the vocal coach of the production.

⁷ In the programme I gained access to, Carroll also suggests non-faithfulness: "If we were setting ourselves up as thoroughly 'authentic' (people even talk of 'doing it properly'), then of course we

Accordingly, OP in “Romeo” was not a perfect reconstruction of past sounds. Such imperfection originated from “the incomplete state of our knowledge”, corroborated in Chap. 2,⁸ but this was not to be condemned, according to Carroll’s view. On the contrary, it responded well to the ultimate purpose of the pronunciation and, it can be inferred, of the other original practices in general (“engagement with the past”): exploration. In other words, the reconstructed pronunciation constituted a means to “explore”.

Defining what exploration pertaining to “Romeo” encompassed is beyond the scope of my investigation – assuming that any study of such a vast notion is genuinely pursuable. But I will outline major characteristics of the pronunciation in the show and, in so doing, I will be ‘exploring’ OP in the staging.

4.1.2 Looking into OP

4.1.2.1 Sounds and evaluation

The production was put on in OP for a weekend in June and in RP for the rest of the season and did not solely hinge on original practices. In actual fact, the staging was marked by some historical ‘betrayals’; as Barrett highlights, women rather than men were hired for Juliet and Lady Capulet, and the Nurse was interpreted by a male adult (2013, 145). Purists may not have applauded this lack of adherence to past practices within a historically informed staging, but Barrett argues that non-original gender did not “affect the effectiveness of the OP as the accent is the same regardless of gender” (2013, 145).

Delving into the sphere of sounds proper, some phonetic and phonological elements deserve attention. Barrett observes that in the production “[t]he older characters, such as Capulet, clearly used an archaic [e:] vowel in words such as ‘she’ (I, 2) while the younger characters used the more advanced [i:]” (2013, 147). Thus, the younger and older generations adopted advanced and archaic variants of /i:/, respectively. However, the attribution of forms varying with age does not appear to have always been at work. As Barrett reports, in his transcription Crystal utilised a systematic and “methodical” approach, entailing “a conservative style of pronunciation on certain sounds for characters of an older generation and a more advanced pronunciation for younger characters” (2013, 149). Yet, on the stage,

couldn’t do this. But here, as in any other production, the only thing that matters is whether the choices you make are interesting” (2004, 24).

⁸ Among other things, I speak about the uncertainty surrounding tone and intonation.

Carroll employed a “disorganised” style, if his words are taken at face value (Barrett 2013, 149). According to his own testimony, Carroll would discard age and select the more archaic variant, whenever it was possible to choose: “where there is a choice, let’s go for the more distinctive sound (qtd. in Crystal 2005a, 113). Continuing to adhere to Carroll’s statement, the older forms were preferred in an attempt to satisfy the public’s expectations: “Audiences will come to an OP performance expecting the accent to be different” (qtd. in Crystal 2005a, 113). But other reasons may as well have contributed to the preference for archaic variants.⁹ What should be drawn attention to is the fact that, though not erased, the transcription’s differences were presumably reduced in the performance.

Whether such a decrease would have been a loss in the production is debatable. On the one hand, the reconstructed phonetic differences seem to have originated from sociolinguistic elements and inferences rather than textual or theatrical evidence. Thus, their attenuation would have constituted no transgression of the pronunciation or betrayal of historical proof. On the other hand, the sonic discrepancies would have possibly accentuated the contrast between the older and younger generations, also recognisable on the content level,¹⁰ and resulted in a tidier, more consistent auditory experience for audience members. As a result of such different views, no sheer positive or negative evaluation can be assigned to the putative reduction of the different variants.

Still covering the production’s oral (and aural) sphere, “Romeo” featured a mixture of local sonorities, thereby confirming the accentual richness pointed out in Chap. 3. In this respect, Barrett affirms:

⁹ Bearing in mind Carroll’s attempt/s at exploration, one can surmise that the predilection for archaic sounds was also aimed at eliciting the audiences’ exploration of their phonological and phonetic past. A further reason for Carroll’s archaisms may correspond to Carroll’s idea of a self-explanatory divide between the two generations. In an interview, the director states the impossibility of “watch[ing] Romeo and Juliet without feeling the divide between age and youth” (Neill 2004b). As a result, Carroll may have felt no urge to make the opposition especially resonant on the sonic level and give them the more advanced sounds.

¹⁰ Representatives of the younger generation, Romeo and Juliet, marry disregarding their parents’ wishes and the feud between their families. By the end of the play the younger generation is decimated, whereas the older one mostly survives – Lady Montague being the only victim. Even without scrutinising all the passages of the play, a divide between the older and the younger generation exists. This argument is supported by literary studies such as those by Susan Bassnett (1993) and Emily Ross (2011). In particular, the latter puts the emphasis on “a lack of understanding between the older and younger generations” and contends that “[t]his gap becomes an abyss when the dramatist exaggerates the difference between the generations by making the adults more elderly and the young more childlike” (2011, 152).

the natural colouring afforded by the regional accents, such as northern Irish Peter, lent variety to the overall tapestry and represented what may be the true sound canvas of Shakespeare's stage. Each member of the cast seemed to emphasise different aspects of the pronunciation, with some giving weight to the northern-sounding vowels and some to the two major diphthongs in 'my' and 'house'. Sometimes the OP vowels were emphasized, especially in the expanded word endings, and sometimes syllables were skipped over lightly, such as the unstressed syllables, which the cast managed very well (Barrett 2013, 147).

The employment of regional sonorities¹¹ – those of the actors – was strongly promoted and asked for by Crystal, according to whom actors used their natural accents in Shakespeare's day (2005a; see also 2008, 127). Laying aside the actual historicity of the extreme diversity of sounds on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage, called into question in Chap. 2, it ought to be pointed out that phonetic mixture earns complimentary words from scholars. Barrett succinctly praises locally coloured sounds, highlighting the "variety" added to "the overall tapestry" and seeing the presence of various accents as reflecting the "true sound canvas of Shakespeare's stage" (2013, 147).¹² Though detaching from the Globe's and Carroll's terminology and rhetoric, Weis, too, positively portrays regional sonorities: "The fact that on Shakespeare's stage actors spoke a *mélange* of their own regional accents and of cockney – Shakespeare's own pronunciation would have blended Warwickshire English with London speech – served to enhance the authenticity of the performance" (Weis 2012, 93; author's emphasis).

Despite the appeal of OP, or rather, of its regional hues,¹³ the pronunciation was not flawless. Barrett maintains that "[a]t times, the OP faltered, particularly in fast-

¹¹ Callum Coates, playing Count Paris and Gregory, confirms the use of local sonorities: "We were all very much encouraged to layer the OP accent with our own native accents. John Paul Connolly (*Peter*) is from Northern Ireland and Davis Crystal identified quite a few sounds that would say were very much OP anyway. Kananu Kiriimi (*Juliet*) was from the Scottish Islands and found her rhotic R very useful and fitted naturally into OP. John McEnery is from Birmingham and was delighted by the idea that Shakespeare may well have had an accent with strong similarities to his own. Of course, one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Birmingham, Warwickshire and black Country accents is intonation, and John definitely brought some of that to his OP *Friar*. [...] There is still a tendency in Kent to pronounce "like" as loike [*sic*], and "me" as "m" (glottal stop) and the running together of words and dropping of some consonants (*Canterbury* is often pronounced as Canbry) and the dropping of Hs is very common in both Kent and London accents. It was interesting to bring those sounds to a high status character such as Paris, as they are normally associated with working class characters" (Callum Coates, email to author, November 26, 2023).

¹² The full quotation reads as follows: "Furthermore, the natural colouring afforded by the regional accents, such as a northern Irish Peter, lent variety to the overall tapestry and represented what may be the true sound canvas of Shakespeare's stage" (2013, 147).

¹³ As Crystal reports, some regional sounds hovered over the production well beyond its performances in OP (2005a, 164-166). In a written interview with Callum Coates, the actor shows to

paced sections, but in general the underlying OP ‘sound map’ was an omnipresent framework underpinning the whole performance” (2013, 147). Weis’s less vehement comment still signals imperfections: “The actors may not always have hit quite the right shading of vowel sound, but they were superbly relaxed, as was the audience” (2012, 92). Though his involvement in the OP experiment, Crystal himself recognises inaccuracies of the performers: “Although they did brilliantly, the recording of the event shows a fair number of slips and inconsistencies – probably not noticed by an audience caught up in the dynamic of the play, but certainly noticed by me!” (2006a, 33). I have noticed myself faults such as the interference of present-day sounds – [ʌ] in *sun* instead of [ʊ] – and more imperfections will emerge in my discussion of rhymes. However, as will be seen in 4.4.1, inaccuracies may not have been real errors but rather derive from factors such as a search for clarity. Leaving that aside, for the time being it is understandable – and certainly no reason for condemnation – that the actors may have incurred in imprecise sounds: they mainly used RP for the staging and learned OP not from the beginning but at some point, during rehearsals.

4.1.2.2 Italian/Italianate sonorities

While regional strokes are acknowledged as embedded in the production, no reference in consulted OP scholarship is made to foreign sounds, viz., Italian or Italianate sonorities in the show. The silence on these ‘alien’ sonorities may be due to their scarcity, subtlety or simply non-identification; yet, it cannot be excluded that Barrett’s “regional” category is broader than one would imagine, and ultimately entails them. Focusing on such Italian/Italianate¹⁴ sonorities, archive footage reveals their use on three occasions. When Mercutio ridiculed Tybalt (“By Iesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!”; Shakespeare 1996), he added a terminal schwa [ə] to the words *blade* and *man*, making all of a sudden his accent

agree with Crystal by recounting: “Did we keep any of the OP accent in subsequent RP performances? I don’t think I deliberately held on to anything from OP as Paris, but the handful of lines I had as Gregory, those I did continue to speak in OP. I’d been using a loosely Kent accent anyway, so just decided to keep the OP. Bette [playing the Nurse] and John [the Friar] held on to a lot more than the rest of us I think. I vaguely remember Jimmy Garnon (*Mercutio*) deliberately choosing to keep a couple of words in OP to windup the Nurse and I think Simon Muller (Tybalt) continued to occasionally refer to Mercutio as MercuTeeeo. But the energy and speed of the OP performances certainly stuck with us right until the end” (Coates, email to author, November 26, 2023). This may also be interpreted as a form of attachment of actors to the reconstructed pronunciation.

¹⁴ This label will be kept since, as will become clearer later on, I am unable to locate the precise derivation of the sounds.

stereotypically Italian. Still considering Mercutio's lines, the word *passado* was tinged with a caricatural Italian inflection since Mercutio stressed and lingered on the second syllable. Finally – and this point should be taken with a pinch of salt – the staging may have attempted to Italianise the pronunciation of names in the dialogue between Romeo and the Capulet's servant. In fact, the *t* in *Placentio* and *Lucentio* was realised as [t], probably in imitation of Italian rules whereby the letter *t* is produced [t].

One could then attempt to determine where all of the above pronunciations stemmed from and, to be sure, the transcription would be a good place to start. Apparently, in the semi-phonetic text prepared by Crystal the Italian/Italianate sounds are mostly not given: while *Placentio* reflects the very same pronunciation as the show's, *blade* and *man* do not feature the final sound [ə],¹⁵ *passado* has [a:] but no marked stress, and the word *Lucentio* is nowhere to be found – the Shakespearean line including the word is absent. Also, no Italianate or Italian accent is explicitly signalled in brackets in the transcription. The latter then tends to bear almost no traces of the Italian-like sonorities presented in the production, and it can be assumed that Crystal did not include the Italianisation of the terms at this stage. Alternatively, if he did, he did not write it down. One can also imagine another scenario, that is, the Italian/Italianate sonorities were put forward in a later phase, and an obvious question then arises as to whether Crystal found and re-evaluated hints or evidence during rehearsals. Unfortunately, official records do not provide any relevant testimony and some internal evidence – spellings – that I have taken into account does not come in useful either.¹⁶ So, rather than Crystal, could the director or the actors have resolved to introduce Italianate sounds at some point, viz., during rehearsals? An involvement of Tim Carroll is especially possible, in view of his decisions regarding the pronunciations of the younger and older generations; however, in the absence of any evidence, this possibility remains confined to the realm of sheer hypotheses. Thus, the issue of who produced the Italian/Italianate sounds and when they were proposed remains fundamentally unresolved.

¹⁵ One could assume that the final orthographical *e* could refer to its pronunciation, but this hypothesis is discredited by the retention of *e* in cases when it is mute (e.g. *lyve* II.iii.88, 33; *the:ue* II.iv.91, 36). Moreover, the semi-phonetic nature of the transcription – keeping superfluous letters – cannot be forgotten (see Crystal 2005a, 38). In this regard, Crystal's *Dictionary* is not useful.

¹⁶ Giving some consideration to the spelling of the Folio (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019c) and the Quartos (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019a, 2019b), no peculiarity can be spotted – for instance *t* is not marked in the case of *Lucentio* and no *e* is added to the word *man* (in the case of Quarto 2 the word *Lucentio* was not found; Internet Shakespeare Edition 2019b).

At this point, I will not venture to state whether these few Italian/Italianate phonetic choices for “Romeo” were adequate or not. My short investigation into Italian sounds (see Chap. 2) has not reconstructed the latter in Shakespeare’s day, but only provided information in terms of accessibility aimed at facilitating further studies and reconstructions. However, I can still make some observations as resulting from general reasoning. As mentioned before, most of the sonorities (*passado* and final [ə]) in the production sounded stereotypically Italian, so the sounds may have been ahistorical, belonging to and reflecting present-day society, rather than the playwright’s. But this possibility does not necessarily imply that the sounds *were* stereotypical. Though sounding as such, they may actually have been rooted in historical evidence and even reproduced stereotypical practices in Shakespeare’s time. Given my investigation into Crystal’s OP, the last two options seem unlikely – I have not encountered anything about Crystal’s knowledge of historical evidence or theatrical practices with reference to Italian –, but they cannot yet be discarded. What should be noted is, however, the fact that, if the stereotypical and present-day nature of such sounds were confirmed, this would mean that OP – at least in 2004 – bore more traces of contemporaneity than one would expect.

Regardless of the Italian/Italianate historical accuracy, a possible rationale for Mercutio’s peculiar sounds can be put forward. As stated before, Mercutio employed the foreign sonorities when deriding Tybalt (schwa [ə] added to the words *blade* and *man*), so they can be interpreted as a mocking strategy and, even more specifically, as an impression of Juliet’s kinsman. But Tybalt did not speak with any Italian/Italianate inflection in the show, at least according to the archive footage I watched. What is more, the play – in the ‘original’ versions (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019a, 2019b, 2019c)¹⁷ and the production’s – does not clearly indicate that Tybalt should speak with an Italian/Italianate accent.¹⁸ Why then were

¹⁷ I have examined passages from the First Folio and the two Quartos, without finding any sentence unambiguously referring to Tybalt’s Italian/Italianate accent.

¹⁸ Tybalt is labelled by Mercutio as one of the “new tuners of accent”. This tag could be read as the attribution to the character of a different accent or way of speaking. So, imagining autochthonous accents for the other characters (and Shakespeare’s company), some Italian accent could be assumed for Juliet’s kinsman. The play is set in Italy, after all, and, as Chap. 2 shows, contacts between Italian performers and English ones were possible. Yet, for the sake of precision, “new tuners of accent” does not unambiguously point to an Italian accent, and the label has been associated with “a spurious vocal tone [given] to a way of speaking, i.e. by *lisping* and *affecting* (cited under OED tuner b)” (Weis 2012, 210), in accordance with its co-text. Moreover, the accent could be read as a class one rather than a regional one. According to Peter J. Gillett, the words “The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes; these new tuners of accents! ‘By Jesu, a very good blade! A very tall man! A very good whore’ ... these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, these perdona-mis’s” suggests “a portrait from the life of a new class of London youth in the 1590’s” (1974, 301). Lina F. S. Sidgi (2021), too, refers to

Mercutio's Italianate sounds employed in the spectacle? One could hypothesise some general mockery of Italians, in line with anti-Catholic and anti-papal feelings widespread in Shakespeare's day,¹⁹ but no concrete element supports such a view and another interpretation seems to be much more convincing, as applied to the staging.

I contend that Mercutio's Italian/Italianate sonorities were used to contribute to his exaggerated, untruthful representation of Tybalt. With respect to the play, some literary scholarship proposes that Mercutio's description of Tybalt does not do any justice to the latter; Horwich, in particular, points to Mercutio's "habit of distortion and reduction that makes him a parodist", which deforms Tybalt (1988, 227). In a similar vein, in the staging Mercutio's verbal portrayal of Tybalt appeared over-the-top and unrealistic, in that the latter did not display the former's attributes. For instance, Tybalt did not match Mercutio's depiction as "the fanciest and most up-to-date swordsmanship imaginable": he did not strut around and show off his skills and caused Mercutio's death with a sudden "mortal thrust" (Horwich 1988, 227). In other words, the "empty posturing" (Horwich 1988, 226) ascribed to Tybalt by scholarship was not rooted in facts but rather in Mercutio's distorted reading of Juliet's kinsman. And, in addition to the untrue picture of Tybalt, another feature marked "Romeo": Mercutio appeared as an excessive, egocentric character, who, among other things, declaimed verses while poking fun at Romeo at the beginning of Act II. Within this framework, Mercutio's Italian/Italianate sonorities configured themselves as nothing but elements helping to deform Tybalt's image and,

a "distinction between the classes", while briefly considering the same words (until *whore*) (237). Thus, the phrase – not explicit – remains open to interpretation and does not exclude Italian/Italianate sonorities. Some possible paths of investigation imply an examination of Nashe's *Have With You* and fencing styles. In the case of Nashe's work, Weis attributes this text some influence over the line "The pox of such antic, lipping, affecting fantasticoes, these new tuners of accent!" (see the line "follow some of these new-fangled *Galiardos* [galliards] and *Senior Fantásticos*, to whose amorous *Villanellas* and *Quipassas* I prostitute my pen in hope of gaine" 2012, 40-41). Therefore, a retrieval of information on Nashe's work, especially theatrical in nature, would be ideal to shed light on Tybalt's pronunciation in Shakespeare's day. As for fencing styles, a consideration of these could also be of value; by way of illustration, a study suggests that Tybalt appears more influenced by Spanish trends than Italian ones ("Shakespeare's descriptions of the fencing indicate that Tybalt fought in the Spanish style"; Soens 1969, 122). Was the actor playing Tybalt then employing a Spanish accent in Shakespeare's time? More research could help to illuminate the matter.

¹⁹ According to Sansonetti, *passado* is "half-Italian, half-Spanish-looking" and she also makes it plain that the correct Italian term would be *passata* (2022, 195). But, more to the point, Sansonetti inserts the word into her theoretical framework highlighting the blend of continental sounds – Italian, Spanish and French – for fencing terminology and the general attack on "Continental Catholic Europe" (2022, 195).

eventually, emphasising Mercutio's inclination towards general distortion and exaggeration.

4.1.3 Concluding remarks

In this section, the genesis of "Romeo" and major characteristics of its OP sphere have come under scrutiny. In accordance with existing scholarship, I have emphasised that OP derived from Carroll's proposal, but I have also speculated that the fact that *RJ* is a well-known play may well have played a role in the acceptance of the OP experiment. Further, I have called attention to the importance of exploration, rather than authenticity; and I have reported the presence of diverse regional sounds and their not-always-perfect delivery as well as indicated the use of Italianate sounds in the production, not previously discussed in literature.

Before proceeding any further, I find it necessary to say a few more words on the director's role in OP in response to some echoes and the sub-text of my discussion. In line with Sec. 4.1.2.1, one choice regarding pronunciation does not appear to have originated from a sheer recreation of past sonorities but rather to have adjusted to the reasoning and, ultimately, vision of the director. I refer to the sonic generational differences, which were reportedly attenuated by Carroll, when compared with Crystal's transcription. But could another OP decision – the Italian/Italianate sonorities of Mercutio, not reproduced by Tybalt – have sprung from the director's view?²⁰ Given Carroll's ultimate say and decision concerning the sounds of the younger and the older generations, it seems likely; yet there is also another factor worth noticing. Unlike in Shakespeare's day, today a production is the director's or, more precisely, reflects the director's perspective, which, in most cases, actors and technical staff work towards.²¹ Therefore, even if the

²⁰ The decisional power of the director surfaces through several of Crystal's texts (e.g. "in a prose text where the word [having more pronunciations] appears, actors and directors [...] have to choose, and for this they will look to other criteria than the linguistic. The role of the historical linguist is to demonstrate the options, not to make dramaturgical, literary, or phonesthetic critical decisions"; 2021b).

²¹ In keeping with studies on theatre directing (e.g. Fazio 2006), Tiffany Stern contends that there was no director in the Shakespearean period ("But the major difference between performances now and then was that in Shakespeare's time plays had no director"), and also argues that the play "was not overlaid with a concept, it *was* its concept" (2004, 89; author's emphasis). The last point may raise the suggestion that, after all, the playwright was an *ante litteram* director. Yet, several theatrical practices disprove this notion; in fact, they indicate the figure's limited 'directorial' power over the performance. The playwright would usually have an initial reading of his play only attended by sharers, not every performer (Stern 2004, 76); he would instruct the most advanced actors, if any (79); and, apparently, he was not expected to supervise a likely – but by no means obligatory – rehearsal (87-88). If these 'customs' only bespeak the impossibility for the playwright to direct his work in the

Italian/Italianate sonorities concerning Mercutio may have been put forward by Crystal, they were presumably to be accepted by Carroll and to serve the production's and thus the director's conceptualisation of the playworld. This point is further corroborated by the fact that Mercutio's Italian/Italianate sonorities are not random or unjustified but appear to endorse and reinforce a precise reading of Mercutio's depiction of Tybalt, also proposed by some literary scholarship. It follows that for "Romeo" OP was not established entirely by Crystal but must have stemmed from director Carroll's decisions as well. However, it is not known to what extent these confirmed or diverged from Crystal's choices and his transcription.

4.2 Recovered rhymes in "Romeo": An investigation

As my thesis has shown in several of its chapters and sections, rhymes are pivotal to Crystal's OP, since they are utilised as a source for hints and evidence in his reconstruction/s (Chap. 2) and constitute one of the greatest recoveries to be appreciated in performances (Chap. 3). But these devices are not only of the utmost importance to OP; they were also central – in general terms – in Shakespeare's day. As Michael McKie claims, "[t]he Elizabethan period was the one time in English literary history when the issue of rhymes could be said to dwarf all other poetic concerns" (1996, 355). In this section, I will be focusing on perfect rhymes²² as retrieved from the production "Romeo", while secondarily indulging in reflections on near-rhymes.²³ In doing so, my objective is twofold: 1. to continue to shed light on the OP dimension of the staging and propose an investigation concerning its restored rhymes, unattempted so far; 2. to expand and enrich the debate on the recoveries – meanings and effects – deriving from restored rhymes in OP (see 3.3.1).

flesh, any textual control also seems to have been hampered: improvisation was possible for "particular actors and particular moments" (Stern 2009, 245) and, as assumed by several scholars, performers did not reproduce textual lines faithfully (Greg and Maguire qtd. in Stern 2009, 245). To conclude, the playwright in Shakespeare's day does not appear to have been anything like a (modern) director.

²² A definition of perfect rhyme has already been provided in Chap. 2, but I will also report it here: "*rhyme* is the linkage in poetry of two syllables at line end [...] that have identical stressed vowels and subsequent phonemes but differ in initial consonant(s) if any are present— syllables that, in short, begin differently and end alike" (Brogan et al. 2012). As has been stated before, Puttenham's depiction of rhymes shows affinity with this definition. In my discussion, I have attempted not to use phonological (and highly technical) lexicon such as onset, nucleus and coda but to give priority to the depiction of stress and sounds – vowel or consonant ones.

²³ In this section and the entire chapter, I will be using retrieved, recovered, restored and reinstated rhymes as synonyms.

In the case of *RJ*, rhymes are “heavily concentrated in the First Act” and progressively substituted with “a blank verse which is realistic or didactic with other speakers and unprecedentedly limpid and passionate with the lovers” (Levin 1960, 6). Even more importantly, such devices bear value in the microcosm of the tragedy; as stated by Weis, “[r]hyme plays a crucial role in the rhetorical texture of a play which attributes extraordinary power of control to language” (2012, 20). The play is then brimming with rhymes, especially at the beginning, and these are no marginal elements; by contrast, they embody the “control” exerted by language in the tragedy. Given the general abundance and importance of rhymes in the work, the restoration of some – a larger or smaller number – seems rather plausible, but I will not be pursuing numbers or performing a quantitative study of reinstated rhymes here. Rather, although I have systematically identified all of the restored rhymes with reference to the production, I will only present *some* recovered devices worthy of attention and discuss them in relation to their pronunciation and effects, before considering their flip side, that is, inaccuracies and missed rhymes. My choice to focus on a qualitative and rather limited analysis stems from my aims, highlighted above, and from the need to prioritise the value of restored rhymes over other factors such as their quantity. Before giving way to my study of reinstated rhymes, I will present the methodology for my systematic identification and analysis of recovered rhymes.

4.2.1 Methodology: identification and analysis of restored rhymes

Though, as will be seen, I have not analysed all the recovered rhymes in “*Romeo*”, I have indeed identified them all. The reason for such an identification resides in my need to understand what was worth exploring, and in my goal to pave the way for future studies focusing on rhymes and restored devices in the production or in OP. To carry out a systematic identification of the recovered rhymes, my research was concretely divided into three stages:

1. *Consultation and determination of the script*: I consulted the semi-phonetic transcription prepared by David Crystal and available at the Globe (GB 3316 SGT/THTR/SM/1/2004/RJ).²⁴ As the text did not reflect the actual script

²⁴ Unlike the transcription for “*Troilus and Cressida*”, the one for “*Romeo*” only included the transcribed text and no modern-spelling version to be read by the side (GB 3316 SGT/THTR/SM/1/2004/RJ).

utilised for the production,²⁵ I had to reconstruct the latter myself by having recourse to the prompt copy of the show, watching the video recording of the staging (GB 3316 SGT/ED/LIB/REC/2004/RJ/9) and taking note of cuts and additions potentially interfering with or contributing to recovered rhymes.

2. *Defining criteria for the identification of rhymes and incipient identification:*

After having rebuilt the script, I established my object of enquiry, that is, perfect end-rhymes one max. two lines apart from each other and in verse (and not in prose),²⁶ as signalled by *The Complete Works* (Jowett et al. 2005).²⁷ Specifically, I identified all the rhymes in the transcription, which would facilitate and speed up my research at the Globe, and would later enable me to become cognisant of any discrepancies between the reconstruction, in the form of the transcription, and the practical level, that is, the rendition of the performers. After that, I was able to retrieve the rhymes only audible in OP – and not in RP – by means of the transcription for single terms in the online version of *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press 2023), and for names I consulted Gary Logan's *The Eloquent Shakespeare* (2008). It should be mentioned that no distinction between primary and secondary stress or in terms of stress intensity was made: as long as the syllables were stressed and had the same vowels and consonants starting from the nucleus onwards, they were considered to rhyme.

3. *Identification of recovered rhymes in the performance:* As a last step, I watched the video recording of “Romeo” – on the Globe's premises – several times to verify whether and how restored rhymes on the page were rendered on the stage. While watching the recorded production, I uniquely relied on my aural skills and had to face the impossibility of isolating sounds, which resulted in occasional non-clarity.

Once I had gathered all the reinstated rhymes of the production, I proceeded with my analysis. I exploited my knowledge of OP, of the play's themes, characters and

²⁵ Apropos of cuts, director Tim Carroll explains that “[...] it doesn't feel like a play that should go on for three-and-a-half hours, so as well as aiming for a fluent production, I have cut the text. I must admit, though, I find it harder and harder to cut Shakespeare: one appreciates more and more clearly how interdependent the lines are. Inevitably in cutting you lose some of the play's poetry, because by and large you can tell the story without it. But there is a cost. Many lines I was unable to cut because they tell a story of a different kind” (Neill 2004a, 24).

²⁶ I left out from my study rhymes deriving from the repetition of the very same words (e.g. *me-me*), that is, identical rhymes (see Brogan and Rettberg 2012, 658).

²⁷ I employed this authoritative edition since it was the most immediately accessible at the time of my research.

general features and Sec. 3.3.1 in order to select patterns and elements worth examining. While going over restored rhymes, I went back to critical literature for a better understanding of these devices, whenever necessary.

Prior to discussing restored rhymes, the major limitations of my identification should be outlined. I operated manually, without the help of any software, so one must allow for a margin of error.²⁸ In addition, it is possible that additional rhymes would have been identified if the investigation had started with an aural study, rather than a written one; however, such a path was not viable to me due to my limited time at the Globe's Archive.²⁹ Finally, I only watched one performance of "Romeo" in OP, since during my stay at the Globe's library and archive only one video recording was available; as a result, the retrieved rhymes I identified may differ in terms of sounds or even actual presence from those in other performances.

4.2.2 Recovered rhymes, pronunciation and effects in the production

In Chap. 3, among the recoveries resulting from reinstated rhymes, I considered the restoration of elements or meanings and the impact on characterisation (see Sec. 3.3.1). Detaching from this 'theoretical framework' but in line with my knowledge of the play and its characteristics, I will examine some recovered rhymes concerning an event of the play, the feast, and others contributing to a theme, death. Afterwards, I will properly comply with Chap. 3, and examine the restored rhyming devices of one character, Friar Lawrence,³⁰ which seemingly contribute to his characterisation.³¹

Whoever knows the story of Romeo and Juliet cannot ignore the event where the first meeting between the lovers occurs, the feast; this, then, is generally conceptualised as an element of great significance for the tragedy. Yet, in the production several of the recovered rhymes – *feast-guest* and *feast-best* – worked to emphasise the importance of the party on a sonic level: not only did one term in each couple centre on the party, *feast*, but the identity of the vowel sound [e] and of the following consonant cluster [st] also highlighted its components and thus made

²⁸ I did not use any piece of software for my transcription (e.g. Persephone) due to two factors, viz., the impossibility of installing any software for automatic phonetic transcription on computers at the Globe, and the consultation of copyrighted material.

²⁹ For the sake of ease, Shakespeare's Globe's Archive will be referred to as the Globe's Archive.

³⁰ Pairing up "Romeo"'s recovered rhymes with the play's characters during my identification phase, I could not help but notice that the retrieved devices in the production were associated with different figures (see Appendix G, Table G.1).

³¹ For the current discussion, I could have investigated other rhymes, but I selected those that reflected or had the potential to expand the debate on the effects of OP.

the party more visible or, more precisely, audible (see Table 4.1). The cadence of the actors, who enunciated clearly and did not amalgamate the rhyming words into each other or in the following lines, generally contributed to said emphasis. One additional rhyme may have highlighted the party, *feast-guest* as spoken by Capulet and Tybalt, but at least in the recording I watched, the intervention of music did not make the rhyming device completely discernible.

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's semi-phonetic transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	Penguin ³² Edition	<i>The Complete Works</i> ³³
<i>feast</i> ³⁴ <i>guest</i> (I.ii. 20-21, p. 8) ³⁵	fest gest ³⁶	– ³⁷ –	REDACTED ³⁸	I.ii. 20-21, p. 16	I.ii.17-18, p. 373
<i>feast</i> <i>best</i> (I.ii.97-98, p. 11)	fest best	– –	REDACTED	I.iii.97-98, p. 18	I.ii.100-101, p. 374

Table 4.1. Restored rhymes for *feast*.

³² In the tables and for quotations, the Penguin Edition of *RJ* will be used. The reason for this choice lies in Crystal's own use of the text, as the scholar acknowledges: "The text of the play used for this production is the New Penguin Shakespeare (ed T J B Spencer)" (GB 3316 SGT/THTR/SM/1/2004/RJ 2004, 1).

³³ Apart from the Penguin text, in the tables I have also included lines from this edition since it was my reference point, as stated in 4.2.1.

³⁴ Modern spelling – taken from *The Complete Works* (Jowett et al. 2005) – is utilised.

³⁵ This refers to the Globe's Archive's transcription.

³⁶ Both for the semi-phonetic and the phonetic transcription I have used the font Arial Unicode MS.

³⁷ The dash signals adherence to Crystal's transcription.

³⁸ I have used the font "Arial Unicode MS" since it is one of those recommended by John Wells for IPA (2012).

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's semi-phonetic transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	Penguin Edition	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>feast</i> <i>guest</i> (I.v.74-75, p. 20)	fest gest	- (not so audible)	REDACTED	I.v.74-75, p. 31	I.v.73-74, p. 377

Table 4.2. Restored rhyme not completely audible.

If a couple of restored rhymes stressed the event of the feast, another small group tied in with the theme of death, woven – among the others – by imagery in the play.³⁹ In fact, several retrieved rhymes added to this thematisation in the production: *come-tomb*, *married-bed* and *bed-maiden-widowed*. As can be seen from Table 4.3, the final sounds in *come* and *tomb* – spoken when Friar Lawrence rushed to the grave to offer assistance to Juliet – were realised as [ɾ] and [m];⁴⁰ and *married-bed* and *bed-maiden-widowed* had both the *-ed* suffix pronounced and stressed. For the sake of precision, the latter two pairs could feature in an RP production as well, as long as this follows tradition and retains the *-ed* suffix (see Sec. 3.1.2). Also of great interest is the way the restored rhymes were delivered by the actors, which repropose the artistry already considered in the case of *feast*. In particular, the players' cadence conferred upon the retrieved devices the status as rhymes but above all a clear presentation as such: the rhyming words were clearly identifiable and punctuated – not thrown away or condensed into their co-text. Given the use of death-based words (*bed*, *maiden-widowed*, *tomb*) and the actorial presentation of the restored rhymes, the retrieved rhymes then played a part in shaping and enriching the theme of death, present in other instances.⁴¹

³⁹ Literature dealing with death in the imagery of *RJ* is extensive. Here I limit myself to citing Coppélia Kahn's discussion pertaining to both death and "sexual consummation" (1977-78, 19-20), M. M. Mahood's identification of the recurring portrayal of "Death as Juliet's bridegroom" (2003, 56-57) and Clayton G. MacKenzie's presentation of images pertaining to "marriage with Death" and "life in death" (2007).

⁴⁰ As in Present-Day English itself *b* is not pronounced and Crystal's semi-phonetic transcription often retains mute letters, my interpretation is that the consonant is meant to be mute for *tomb*.

⁴¹ For illustrative purposes only, the production retained Tybalt's following lines: "What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds/ Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death" (Shakespeare 1967, 1996, 2005, 9).

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's semi-phonetic transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	Penguin Edition	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>grave</i> <i>have</i> (II.iii.79.2-80, p. 33) Character: Friar Lawrence	gre:ve he:ve	-ε:v -av	REDACTED	II.iii.79.2-80, p. 46	II.ii.83.2-84, p. 381
<i>unluckily</i> - <i>dearly</i> <i>die</i> <i>company</i> (III.iv.1-3-4-6, p. 57) Character: Capulet	unlʌckilɐɪ di:ɹlɐɪ dɐɪ cʌmpənɐɪ	no diphthong ⁴⁵ (<i>unluckily</i>) no diphthong (<i>dearly</i>) no diphthong (<i>company</i>)	REDACTED	III.iv.1-3-4-6, p. 78	III.iv-1-3-4-6, p. 389
<i>remedy</i> <i>die</i> (III.v.242-243, p. 64)	remedɐɪ dɐɪ	no stress on <i>dy</i> and ɐɪ cannot be heard for <i>remedy</i> -	REDACTED	III.v.242-243, p. 89	III.v.241-242, p. 392
<i>die</i> <i>remedy</i> (IV.i.66-67, p. 67) Character: Juliet	dɐɪ remedɐɪ	- no stress on <i>dy</i> and ɐɪ cannot be heard for <i>remedy</i>	REDACTED	IV.i.66-67, p. 92	IV.i. 66-67, P. 393
<i>festival</i> - <i>funeral</i>	<u>festi</u> val <u>funer</u> al	-vəl (no stress) -ɹəl	REDACTED	IV.v.84-85, p. 103	IV.iv. 111-112, p. 395

⁴⁵ I have often deployed descriptive labels rather than phonetic ones to focus on the real issues at stake rather than other elements, and, to some extent, to make these matters more immediately understandable to those without a proper linguistic background.

(IV.v.84-85, p. 74)					
Character: Capulet					
<i>apothecary- die</i> (V.iii.119- 120, p. 81)	apotec.ɹɪ dɪɹ	apotec.ɪ (no diphthong) more similar to dɪɹ	REDACTED	V.iii. 119- 120, p. 114	V.iii.119- 120, p. 398
Character: Romeo					

Table 4.4. Non-retrieved rhymes on the theme of death.

Setting aside the restored (or non-restored) rhymes bolstering the party and the theme of death, it is high time to turn to the recovered devices spoken by the Friar, “the third-longest [role] in the play after the lovers” (Weis 2012, 31). In literary scholarship, the character’s rhyming couplets are portrayed in no less than two conceptualisations. On the one hand, the Friar’s rhymes devices are ascribed “sententious value” (“valenza sentenziosa” Bigliuzzi 2022, 63; my translation) or, more optimistically, “sententious wisdom” (“sentenziosa saggezza” Melchiori 1994, 223; my translation); on the other, the character’s rhymes “serve to highlight the limitations of the Friar’s role as the moral guardian order” (Weis 2012, 200; see also Gallo 2023, 146-147). Carmen Gallo corroborates the latter view, that is the dubious morality of the figure, by seeing the Friar’s knowledge of herbs as linked to the Early modern prejudices against ‘villainous’ Catholic emissaries (2023, 146-147). Regardless of the ultimate reading of Friar Lawrence’s rhymes, these are not all audible today in RP, but in “Romeo” several instances were reintegrated (see Table 4.5). By way of illustration, the pairs *excellent-different* and *come-tomb*, already quoted when discussing death, resulted in rhymes by means of the identical vowel quality of their last stressed syllables – [ent] (for *excellent-different*) and [ɪm] (*come-tomb*). And, once again, the rhymes were emphasised by the rhythmic rendition of the performer, stressing the rhyme-pairs and briefly pausing at the end of lines.

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's semi-phonetic transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	Penguin Edition	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>excellent</i> <i>different</i> (II.iii. 9-10, p. 31)	<u>excellent</u> <u>different</u>	- -	REDACTED	II.iii. 9-10, p. 44	II.ii.13-14, p. 380
<i>lies</i> <i>qualities</i> (II.iii. 11-12, p. 31)	lɔɪs kalitɔɪs	lɔɪs kalitɔɪs	REDACTED	II.iii. 11-12, p. 44	II.ii.15-16, p. 381
<i>assure</i> <i>distemperature</i> (II.iii.35-36, p. 31)	assyu:ɹe distempeɹtyu:ɹ e	afju:ɹ distempeɹtfju: ɹ	REDACTED	II.iii.35-36, p. 45	II.ii.39-40, p. 381
<i>alone</i> <i>one</i> (II.vi.36-37, p. 43)	alo:ne o:ne	alo:n o:n	REDACTED	II.vi.36-37, p. 58	II.v.36-37, p. 384
<i>come</i> <i>tomb</i> (V.ii.28-29, p. 78)	cɔm tɔmb	cɔm tɔm	REDACTED	V.ii.28-29, p. 109	V.ii.28-29, p. 397

Table 4.5. Restored rhymes for Friar Lawrence.

Yet, looking at Table 4.5, one may have two observations, or rather, objections concerning the actual restoration of two rhyming pairs: the former with regard to *excellent-different* and the latter pertaining to *assure-distemperature*. Firstly, one may see the restoration of *excellent-different* as non-exclusive to OP; the last syllables of these words can also be identical in RP through either REDACTED. However, in order to have a perfect rhyme in this accent, the last syllable should be stressed, or there ought to be an identity of sounds starting from the stressed vowel (*ex* and *di*) onwards, including the very last unstressed syllables (*ex-ce-lent* and *di-fe-rent*). In keeping with said table, neither is given, so no perfect rhyme is audible today.

As for the latter – twofold – observation, one might question the inaccurate pronunciation of *assure* and *distemperature* in “Romeo” and remark the RP identity

(and presumably rhyme) of their final vowel sound, REDACTED. Indeed, the performer realised the transcribed sounds [s] (in *assure*) and [t] (in *distemperature*) as [ʃ] and [tʃ], respectively; and this detachment from OP sounds was probably due to the interference of RP or some variety of Present-Day English. But as inaccurate as the sounds may have been, the pronunciation did not affect the status of the words *assure* and *distemperature* as a rhyming pair. To be sure, the pronunciation was not precise and may be accused of not having been ‘authentic’ enough, but 1. The production did not aim to be ‘authentic’, as Carroll’s words make it clear; 2. The stress on the very last syllable still allowed one to hear the rhyme. By contrast, such stress is not reported in the case of the words in RP, as evident from Table 4.5, and in this accent the vowel is different – REDACTED for *assure*, and REDACTED for *distemperature*.

At this point, I wish to make some brief considerations pertaining to the effect of the highlighted recovered devices. As has already been pointed out, the rhyming couplets lend themselves to different scholarly readings, and it seems to me that in the show the reinstated devices partook in the “sententious wisdom” effect. In general, Friar Lawrence’s rhymes – including the retrieved ones – sounded like (wise) maxims, with the actor’s rhythmical delivery ostensibly contributing to this perception. Yet, I speculate that the reintegrated rhymes were not only part and parcel of the overall “sententious wisdom” effect, but they also reinforced it. In particular, *excellent-different*, *lies-qualities* and *assure-distemperature* – restored rhymes – followed and gave continuity to the previous rhyming devices (e.g. *eye-dry*, *our-flowers*), and prevented the flow of rhymes from being interrupted. As a consequence, they strengthened the image of the Friar as a sententious and wise character, emerging from the first lines. But even more telling are the cases of *alone-one* and *come-tomb*: the actor produced *alone-one* all of a sudden, where no other rhyme was used in the close co-text – the last being provided by *so-slow* (“Therefore love moderately. Long love doth so. Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow”; Shakespeare 1967, 1996, 2005, 57). Therefore, the retrieved rhyming words reignited the previously built effect and the figure’s characterisation. *Come-tomb* also acted similarly: being the only rhyme in the short exchange between Friar Lawrence and Friar John, this reactivated the mentioned effect.

Nevertheless, I do not aim to generalise my view and provide any ultimate answer in terms of the effect of the Friar’s restored rhymes. Spectators may have linked the retrieved rhymes to the figure’s corruption, although I am inclined to doubt it. Firstly, as far as I noticed, no element in the production suggested that such a reading should be put in motion. Secondly, strong associations between herbs and

mischievousness are no longer in place today; hence, in the absence of any knowledge regarding Renaissance practices, and adequately justifying Friar Lawrence's abandonment of Juliet in the tomb, there would have been no real tools to question the Friar's morality. But even supposing – as seems to be the case – that the recovered rhymes would not have been associated with the corruption of the character, these devices may have been filtered through other lenses and eventually ascribed meanings not investigated up to this point. Here, then, it is imperative not to see one interpretation as shared by all audience members but to underline the very existence, or rather, the strong possibility of some impact on characterisation on the part of the Friar's recovered rhymes.

Having presented Friar Lawrence's reintegrated rhymes and argued for their influence on the shaping of the character, what remains to be addressed is failed rhyming. As I have stated at the beginning of my treatment of the Friar's restored rhymes, *several* of them were reintegrated, which implies that not all of them were. In fact, some were available in the transcription but did not end up being adequately represented in the show. Excluding the recovered rhymes perceived as unclear due to the poor quality of the video recording (e.g. *predominant-plant*), *sit-yet*, *grave-have*, *prove-love* and *joy-lady* were bound to be heard on the stage (see Table 4.6), as the transcription suggests. In practice, these rhyme-pairs lost – or never acquired – their rhyming value.

The reasons for their imperfect phonetics are unclear – e.g. difficulty of sounds? –, but a tentative explanation is possible for *prove-love*. In the production, the vowel pronunciation of the former corresponded to that in the transcription, [ʊ], whereas *love* featured a sound way too similar to [ʌ], thus opposing the transcribed [ʊ]. Why did such a change take place? The notes accompanying the transcription used for "Romeo" seem to come in helpful. Though highlighting the specific pronunciation of *prove* as [prʊve] (GB 3316 SGT/ED/LIB/REC/2004/RJ 2004, 4), the notes also refer to Crystal's choice to leave rhyming pairs like *love-move* as imperfect rhymes in response to their similarity.⁴⁶ The example provided by Crystal, *love-move*, is especially significant for a consideration of *prove-love*. *Prove* works just like *move* – REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED – and both are paired up with *love* in the play. It can then be inferred that, during

⁴⁶ This is what Crystal affirms: "Many of the rhymes only work if you allow that there were two (or more) pronunciations in use at the time. In Shakespeare, *love*, for example, is made to rhyme with *dove*, *move*, and *grove*. On the whole, I have left rhymes which are close (like *love* and *move*) with their modern pronunciations, rather than making them identical" (GB 3316 SGT/ED/LIB/REC/2004/RJ 2004, 4).

rehearsals or at some other point, Crystal, with the approval of director Carroll, may have ‘granted’ the rhyme-pair *prove-love* the same status as near rhyme accorded to *love-move*. Of course, this is but a hypothesis, but it appears rooted in the notes.

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal’s semi-phonetic transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	Penguin Edition	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>sit</i> <i>yet</i> (II.iii.71-72, p. 32)	sit yit	-it -et	REDACTED	II.iii.71-71, p. 46	II.ii. 75-76, p. 381
<i>grave</i> <i>have</i> (II.iii.79.2-80, p. 33)	gre:ve he:ve	-ε:v -av	REDACTED	II.iii.79.2-80, p. 46	II.ii.83.2-84, p. 381
<i>prove</i> <i>love</i> (II.iii.87-88, p. 33)	prɔ:ve lɔ:ve	- lɔv	REDACTED	II.iii.87-88, p. 47	II.ii.91-92, p. 381
<i>joy</i> <i>lady</i> (III.iii.153-154, p. 56)	jɔɪ le:dəɪ	- no final diphthong (lady) stress on /a (lady)	REDACTED	III.iii.153-155, p. 77	III.iv.152-154, p. 389
<i>lament</i> <i>merriment</i> (IV.v.82-83, p. 74)	lament <u>me:iment</u>	- no stress on <i>ment</i> (<i>merriment</i>)	REDACTED	IV.v.82-83, p. 103	IV.iv.109-110, p. 395

Table 4.6. Non-restored rhymes for Friar Lawrence.

Overall, according to my research, “Romeo” featured some restored rhymes and elements heightening and influencing specific elements of *RJ* (the play) such as the characterisation of Friar Lawrence; yet, the staging also entailed inaccuracies and missed rhymes. Once again, I wish to draw attention to the fact that my discussion does not aim to be exhaustive, and deal with all the elements as stemming from the presented rhyming devices; rather, it only covers aspects

considered of great interest to ponder on reintegrated rhymes in “Romeo” and in general terms, as will be seen in the concluding remarks (Sec. 4.2.5).

4.2.3 Inaccuracies and missed rhymes

While tackling groups of recovered rhymes and their effects in the previous section, I have paid heed to unrealised phonetical identities, which mark a gap between OP on the stage and those on the page. At this juncture, I intend to further expand on failed rhymes in the staging and eventually in the transcription.

It has already been suggested that, based on its phonetic transcription, “Romeo” could have featured more rhymes with reference to specific categories (e.g. death); yet, some more failed identities entailing [əɪ] deserve attention due to their potential missed effects. In the transcription, and as Crystal remarks in his notes (GB 3316 SGT/ED/LIB/REC/2004/RJ 2004, 2),⁴⁷ the diphthong sound [əɪ] is responsible for several rhymes, but in the production these were not concretely heard. Some have already been quoted above with respect to the theme of death – *apothecary-die*, *remedy-die* and *unluckily-dearly-die-company* –, but some others were not: *liberty-I*, *joy-lady*, *lie-enmity* (see Table 4.7). These were all pronounced inaccurately; for example, the former noun in the pairs *liberty-I* and *remedies-lies* did not feature at all the diphthongal sound but either [i] or [ɪ]. Isolating [əɪ] in OP, it coincides with the words *eye*, *ay* and *I*, and these all play some significant role in the tragedy. Considering the more obvious elements, the eyes are of the utmost importance in that through them Romeo and Juliet become enamoured with each other; and *ay*, *I* and *eye* originate wordplay (Gallo 2023, 10). Theoretically speaking, then, the staging was deprived of, say, the sonic reiteration of the eye, of possible wordplay on *eye-I-ay* and – in view of words such as *lady* and *remedies* – sounds echoing death (*die* in *lady* and *dies* in *remedies*).

⁴⁷ In this regard, Crystal affirms: “In most such cases, the diphthong is in an unstressed syllable, and should be sounded very weak and quick - just a hint of [əɪ] on the vowel. Although this was probably a bit old-fashioned in 1600, the quality has to be there, other the rhymes don’t work (e.g. *remedy* and *die* in 3.5.243, 4.1.66, etc.)” (GB 3316 SGT/ED/LIB/REC/2004/RJ 2004, 2).

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's semi-phonetic transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	Penguin Edition	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>liberty</i> <i>I</i> (II.ii.181-182.2, p. 30)	libeɹtəɹ ⁴⁸ əɹ	no diphthong (<i>liberty</i>) -	REDACTED	II.ii.181-182.2, p. 43	II.i.226-227, p. 380
<i>remedies</i> <i>lies</i> (II.iii.47-48, p. 32)	<u>remedəɹɪs</u> ləɹɪs	no diphthong (<i>remedies</i>) -	REDACTED	II.iii. 47-48, p. 46	II.ii. 51-52, p. 381
<i>joy</i> <i>lady</i> (III.iii.153-155, p. 56)	jəɹ le:dəɹ	no diphthong (<i>lady</i>) -	REDACTED	III.iii.153-155, p. 77	III. iv.152-154, p. 389
<i>unluckily-</i> <i>dearly</i> <i>die</i> <i>company</i> (III.iv.1-3-4-6, p. 57)	unlʌckiləɹ di:ɹləɹ dəɹ cʌmpənəɹ	no diphthong (<i>unluckily</i>) no diphthong (<i>dearly</i>) - no diphthong (<i>company</i>)	REDACTED	III.iv.1-3-4-6, p. 78	III.iv-1-3-4-6, p. 389
<i>remedy</i> <i>die</i> (III.v.242-243, p. 64)	remedəɹ dəɹ	no stress on <i>dy</i> and əɹ cannot be heard for <i>remedy</i> -	REDACTED	III.v.242-243, p. 89	III.v.241-242, p. 392

⁴⁸ In the case of the transcription, I noted that Crystal did not use underlining to signal stress consistently, so I also interpreted as rhymes those words without a clear written emphasis.

<i>die</i> <i>remedy</i> (IV.i.66-67, p. 67)	dəɪ remedəɪ	- no stress on <i>dy</i> and əɪ cannot be heard for <i>remedy</i>	REDACTED	IV.i.66-67, p. 92	IV.i. 66- 67, P. 393
<i>apothecary</i> <i>die</i> (V.iii.119- 120, p. 81)	apotecɹəɪ dəɪ	apotecɹɪ (no diphthong) similar to dəɪ	REDACTED	V.iii.119- 120, p. 113	V.iii.119- 120, p. 398
<i>lie</i> <i>enmity</i> (V.iii.303- 304, p. 85)	ləɪ enmitəɪ	lɪɪ different stress and no diphthong (<i>enmity</i>)	REDACTED	V.iii.303- 304, p. 121	V.iii.302- 303, p. 400

Table 4.7. Non-retrieved rhymes for [əɪ].

Leaving behind missed effects and phonetic inaccuracies in the production, my investigation into the restored rhymes of “Romeo” has not only brought me in contact with failed rhymes on the stage but also with near rhymes⁴⁹ on the page. In this respect, *shall-gall* is worthy of attention. Given my research signalling an evolution or simply a change of Crystal’s OP throughout time (see Chap. 1), the question arose as to whether *shall* and *gall* – which some critical literature holds as rhyming (Hutchings 1977, 101; Morris 1985, 70) ⁵⁰– may have resulted in a proper rhyme by the time the *Dictionary* was out. For the sake of clarity, however, I will first take a step back and explain how these terms were transcribed and uttered in “Romeo”, and then focus on their most recent reconstruction. The semi-phonetic

⁴⁹ I will be using either the label “near rhyme” or “imperfect rhyme” rather than generic rhyme, half-rhyme, etc. According to *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry & Poetics* (Fourth Edition) (2012), for near rhyme “[t]here is no standard term in Eng.; *near rhyme* will be used here as a cover term for several varieties of rhyming practice that are related to yet do not fulfil the canonical definition of **rhyme* nor exceed it, as in **rich rhyme*. [...] With the Eng. taxonomy, most forms of near rhyme, of which there are several, amount to various complex types of **consonance* and produce such rhymes as ‘justice’/‘hostess’ (Jonathan Swift), ‘port’/‘chart’ (Emily Dickinson), or word such as *grope/cup*, *maze/coze*, *drunkard/conquered*” (Brogan 2012, 924).

⁵⁰ In addition to the highlighted literature, a glance at the close rhyming co-text in the play (e.g. *meeting-greeting*; *hand-stand*; *this-kiss*) makes the hypothesis of a full rhyme all the more convincing.

feast), a theme (death) and a character (Friar Lawrence). Though to a more limited extent, my research has also contemplated inaccuracies and missed restored rhymes by illustrating the discrepancy between the staging and the transcription – with the latter being a greater proponent of rhymes. As stated in 4.2, the goal of this investigation consists in shedding light on both the restored devices in “Romeo” and in general terms as a part of OP, as to better understand their payoffs. I will then scratch beneath the surface of my analysis and draw specific and general conclusions, although the latter will be further developed when reflecting on both “Romeo” and “Troilus and Cressida”.

Starting with the restored rhymes in relation to the staging, it should be signalled what they concretely did, and what can be deduced from them or the absence of some specimens. Firstly, the recovered rhymes ‘uncovered’ textual elements such as the greater (phonetic) insistence on the party, the accentuation of a theme, and appear to have influenced the characterisation of Friar Lawrence. Secondly, if groups of rhymes were recovered, some others were not (e.g. *remedies*), and such a loss was not devoid of any consequence. In fact, failed restored rhymes would have contributed to enriching and emphasising themes or may even have recovered elements such as wordplay (*ay-eye-I*). Thirdly, focusing on the frequency of the imprecise pronunciation for [əɪ], this does not only confirm that inaccuracies marked the production (see 4.1.2.1) but also that rhymes were affected. On top of that, the inexact pronunciation corroborates the difficulty with the diphthong, encountered by actors in “Romeo” during rehearsals and put forward by Crystal (2005a, 115) and Johnson (2019, 130).

When it comes to recovered rhymes in general terms, among the elements influenced by restored rhymes, themes seem to be included; this will also be seen in the case of “Troilus and Cressida”. Furthermore, (some) retrieved rhymes do not limit themselves to recovering only one element but can also restore more features. It is true that groups of retrieved devices were clearly distinguished in my discussion, but some of the rhyming words were linked, as my tables and references tacitly suggested. For instance, *come-tomb* participate in the theme of death whilst contributing to shaping the character of the Friar. This means that the recovery of rhymes in OP may not generally be confined to one single type of restoration but, on the contrary, be multifunctional, that is, acting on more levels. Additionally, apart from the ‘correct’ pronunciation of sounds, the actors’ delivery seems to be fundamental for the recovery of rhymes. In this case, I also and foremost refer to the punctuation and emphasis given by actors to reintegrated rhymes; in other words, rhymes were vocally pointed to.

At least for the time being, my discussion on restored rhymes in “Romeo” has come to an end (my specific and general conclusions are summarised in Table 4.8), and audience response relating to the production can be analysed.

Conclusions in relation to the staging of “Romeo”	Conclusions in relation to the debate on OP and rhymes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restored rhymes uncovering textual elements and influencing the characterisation of Friar Lawrence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restored rhymes contributing to themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failed restored rhymes and subsequent loss of elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restored rhymes acting on more than one level: multifunctional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent imprecise pronunciation of the diphthong [əɪ] affecting rhymes and possibly showing the actors’ difficulty with it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Importance of the actors’ delivery

Table 4.8. Specific and general conclusions for restored rhymes in “Romeo”.

4.3 Audience response for “Romeo”: Comprehensibility and appreciation of OP

As stated in Chap. 3, Crystal ascribes intelligibility to the OP in “Romeo” by noticing that the play’s humour did not go unmissed. Furthermore, the linguist records positive responses to the staging by relying on the reactions of the teenage viewers and their words (“Well, they’re talking like us”), and by comparing applause. While constituting a precious point of reference for further studies, these and other conclusions by Crystal derive from rather informal investigations – not entirely hinging on scientific rigour. Thus, in order to gauge or simply gain a better insight into the audience response to “Romeo”, it is essential not to limit oneself to such statements but to carry out additional research.⁵² Then, with the aim of better

⁵² Though highly interesting, Weis’s comment cannot be clearly associated with comprehensibility and appreciation. He asserts: “It [Romeo and Juliet in OP] went remarkably well. [...] they [the performers] were superbly relaxed, as was the audience” (2012, 92). While outlining the behaviour of audiences as “relaxed”, no explicit element plainly shows the production as either comprehensible or liked or both.

determining the comprehensibility and appreciation of OP in the production, I have qualitatively looked into the following material: reviews to be found online and in selected publications, and those at the Globe – all consisting in written responses by theatre critics or scholars; the show reports of the three performances in OP, available at the Globe’s Archive; and written interviews of mine with Patrick Spottiswoode, former director of Globe Education, and Jane Grogan, professor at University College Dublin. Unfortunately, the recording of the Q&A session mentioned by Crystal and whose comments could have been particularly interesting was not digitised and uploaded onto the Plex system at the Globe’s Archive at the time of my research, so it could not inform my thesis.

As will soon become apparent, the three types of material outlined above have been investigated independently of each other, and have not been examined homogeneously. For instance, reviews have allowed for an analysis of the categories of comprehensibility and appreciation of OP from scratch, whereas show reports have only provided a counterpoint to existing literature. What is more, the material analysed has rendered it possible to consider different audience members: either specific segments (reviews) or individuals and groups of them (show reports and interviews). In the next sections, my findings will be discussed separately as deriving from my analysis of reviews, show reports and interviews.

4.3.1 Reviews

The reviews under scrutiny for “Romeo” are Dobson’s (2005) and Smith’s (2004). An additional text – Rockwell’s (2004) – has been utilised as a term of comparison but not contemplated on its own, since the author only saw a video recording of the production (“Watching the video, I found the sound...”). If the content of Dobson’s and Smith’s reviews, and their general positioning are largely known thanks to my analysis in Chap. 3, I now wish to look at them more closely. In so doing, my objective is to draw – limited – conclusions on the comprehensibility and appreciation of OP in “Romeo” in the eyes (or ears) of reviewers.

In general, the reconstructed pronunciation does not seem to have been perceived as particularly challenging in terms of comprehension. Dobson does not explicitly or implicitly comment on this aspect, which can then be considered indexical of high comprehensibility. Similarly, Rockwell does not point to any hurdles brought about by OP; yet, his stance must be taken with a pinch of salt, since it results from a different experience – watching rather than seeing the production. Unlike Dobson and Rockwell, Smith hints at a hiccup in comprehension. He labels Escalus as “barely comprehensible” and in this manner

reveals the opaque pronunciation of one character – but one character only. In fact, by not commenting on the OP of other figures, it can be assumed that the pronunciation was generally comprehensible. Thus, notwithstanding a minor difficulty ascribable to Escalus, the production appears as having been predominantly accessible, according to critics.

Prior to turning to appreciation, I wish to reflect on the factors intervening in the general comprehensibility of OP. As outlined in Chap. 3, Smith's attribution of low comprehension to one character (and performer) makes single actors, rather than OP, responsible for the comprehensibility/incomprehensibility of the pronunciation. But Rockwell seems to detach from such a view and to signal OP as challenging in itself, and less comprehensible than one would expect. Pointing to the difficulty encountered over the phone with Crystal, Rockwell suggests that, properly spoken, OP is not as easy to understand as one could infer from "Romeo" ("When Mr. Crystal ripped off a few lines over the telephone, the language was a little more difficult to understand"). It can then be deduced that inherent characteristics of the reconstructed sounds cause (perceived) difficulty. Yet, the conception of OP as inherently challenging cannot be fully accepted the way it has been put forward by Rockwell: OP lacked a proper contextualisation and was proposed abruptly over the phone, which may have generated some difficulty. Rockwell's words, however, cannot be discarded altogether either, since the inaccuracies pointed out by scholars such as Barrett in Sec. 4.1.2.1 may have simplified the pronunciation, at least at times. Ultimately, the question as to what makes OP comprehensible/incomprehensible cannot be settled here – and it was not my purpose to achieve this objective –, but Smith's and Rockwell's views deserved some highlighting.

Moving on to appreciation, I will examine the enjoyment of OP sounds and the impact of the pronunciation on the show. The enjoyment of the pronunciation is quite nebulous. While Smith does not make use of any evaluative language for the sonorities of OP, Dobson seemingly ascribes them hues of chaos and disorder: "the result was simply a random mix of stage Irish, stage West Country and stage West Indian" (Dobson 2005, 289). Also, Dobson's words could be seen as attaching some sort of fakeness to the reconstructed sound system; this is at least suggested by the use and reiteration of the word "stage", preceding different varieties and accents of English. For his part, Rockwell's review does not agree with Dobson: it deems the sounds of OP "beguiling" and, as such, extremely positive. Such a fascination comes as a surprise since Rockwell watched a video recording, which may not have had a

pure, crystalline audio quality. Eventually, excluding Rockwell's additional review, the portrayal of the OP sonorities oscillates between neutrality and negativity.

As for the actual impact of OP on the staging, the reviews do not recognise any real positive value of the pronunciation; rather, they assign the staging some responsibility for unsuccessful acting. To be fair, Rockwell displays appreciation towards OP, since he defines the performance "revelatory", after singling out "the sound of the language, and the piquant issue it suggests". Yet, as Rockwell himself affirms, he "cannot pretend to judge its overall artistic quality" having only watched a video recording, so his words will be set aside. Focusing on Smith, he openly maintains that OP greatly penalised the interpretation of performers:

The main effect was to undermine the actors' ability to perform, that is, *act* their roles. While some were more hamstrung than others in this respect there was a staggering thoughtfulness to the lines that could only have resulted from the difficulty of remembering a whole new part, most culpable here were Joel Trill's barely comprehensible Escalus and Tom Burke's Romeo, who managed to render his hormonally challenged, pubescent lover entirely passionless. As he met Juliet for the first time, a scene in which the text, at least, fervently articulates the most lyrical surges of ardor, he was concentrating so intently on getting the OP right, that he sounded quite bored (Smith 2004, 146; author's emphasis).

Here Smith decries the interpretation of Romeo as "passionless" and then goes on to list the deficiencies of another character, Mercutio. He only spares Capulet and Juliet from criticism, making however clear that "theirs [their interpretations] were the exceptions rather than the norm" (146). Compared with Smith's, Dobson's review is more subtle in its depiction of the influence of OP on the production, but I would define it still quite disapproving. At first sight, the text does not claim any real deficiency and states the superiority of the performances in OP over those in RP: the former "were at least enlivened by a professed attempt to give the play in a reconstruction of Elizabethan pronunciation". However, upon closer inspection, a minimal form of alienation or self-awareness on the part of actors can be read between the lines: "the cast did well not be more distracted by this phonetic challenge than they were" (2005, 289). The performers were "distracted" by OP – they were not fully concentrated on their roles. Consequently, while not openly condemning the pronunciation, Dobson's words lend themselves to being read as critical of and not completely flattering to OP; and, as a result, they corroborate Smith's strong disapproval, at least to some extent.

With the aim of shedding light on the negative impact of OP on the staging, the case of Romeo, played by Tom Burke, could be examined. I intend to problematise

the responsibility of OP for the actor's "passionless" interpretation by considering reviews on performances in RP. First of all, some online texts show affinity with the dull picture of the character in OP, as highlighted by Smith. Lyd Gardner (2004), who assigns just one star to "Romeo", refers to the male protagonist as "a less-than-ardent lover" and A. Hodges (2004) writes that "the passion between the two young lovers, played by Tom Burke and Kananu Kirimi is slightly under-powered – coltish rather than passionate". It would follow that Romeo's interpretation is not only 'weak' in OP but also in RP, rejecting the culpability of the pronunciation for Romeo's unsatisfactory characterisation. But the question cannot be resolved once and for all; actually, it grows in complexity, if one turns to the Globe's reviews pertaining to the RP staging. Unsurprisingly, some reviews deplore Romeo's interpretation. By way of illustration, Fiona Mountford (2004) decries Burke as "struggl[ing] to rise above the level of the lugubrious" and John Peter and Robert Hewison (2004) criticise the character as "a sullen youngster, his face expressionless, his voice monotonous". These words could be read as exonerating OP – once again – from the accusation of negatively influencing the character, but some other texts clearly praise Romeo. For instance, Emily Colston (2004) claims that "Burke is in fine form as Romeo" and Clive Wilmer (2004) considers his one of the "two first-rate performances" of the show. These latter texts then appear to support the loss the staging in OP suffered. Ultimately, gathering all the consulted reviews on the production in RP, it can be concluded that Burke's Romeo was both liked and disliked, and that on several occasions when his performance was held in no favour, the performer was regarded as "passionless", cold. Therefore, Romeo's interpretation may not have been negatively affected by OP but only perceived as such. Of course, no definitive answer can (nor should) be asserted at this stage, but, as a result of this small-scope analysis, some scepticism permeates the *real* impact of OP on the characterisation of Romeo.

To sum up, my analysis of comprehensibility and appreciation as portrayed by reviewers has revealed that for "Romeo" the former was generally high – but not immaculate –, whereas the latter appeared more problematic. If the sounds were tainted by bits and pieces of negativity, the impact of OP on the production was not appreciated at all. On the contrary, regardless of whether this matched reality or not, critics tended to perceive the use of the reconstructed pronunciation as subtracting from characterisation. Thus, in contrast with Crystal's positive testimony, OP was not so triumphant in the eyes (or ears) of the few critics whose written responses I have retrieved and scrutinised.

4.3.2 Show reports⁵³

Having examined the reviews, I will now turn to the show reports of the three performances in OP (GB 3316 SGT/THTR/SR/2004/3 2004), and look into the reactions of general audiences. The material these documents provide is rather limited and does not specifically deal with reception. For that reason, I will not investigate the reports on their own but rather consider them from a broader perspective – against the backdrop of Crystal’s testimony. Given the content of the documents under scrutiny, the concept of appreciation of OP has been prioritised, whereas that of comprehensibility has been dealt with only marginally. As will be seen, the reports make it possible to further question – after the reviews – the *exclusive* positive response to the staging as presented by Crystal.

As has been made clear in Chap. 3, Crystal maintains the younger people’s very positive reactions to “Romeo” and OP, advanced in the first place by actors; in fact, performers noted that there was no “inattention” but attentive listening on their part (2005a, 137). However, my reading of one report problematises the very involvement of these audience members. The text dating back to 25 June – the premiere of “Romeo” – records disturbance caused by some “kids”:⁵⁴

Some very young kids were playing tag around the Piazza Glass Doors and FOH had to tell them to shut up in no uncertain terms as we did not want any further accidents!

[...]

During the interval the stewards at Door 1 complained of a couple of kids being disruptive. And several members of the audience had complained about them. FOH approached them as they were also trying to sneak up to sit in Bay N! (GB 3316 SGT/THTR/SR/2004/3,⁵⁵ June 25, 2004).

Accordingly, some younger spectators were playing and making noise (“FOH had to tell them to shut up”), and, at some other point, spectators lamented the disruptive behaviour of “a couple of kids”. It is not clear whether the latter kids were the same as the former or simply others (and their age is not specified). Yet

⁵³ While Jane Fowler suggested that I use show reports, for the actual inclusion of these documents in my research, I have drawn inspiration from *This Distracted Globe* (2023) by Jennifer J. Edwards.

⁵⁴ This is the very word Crystal uses: “The litmus test for engagement, I always think, is the *kids*. The Globe yard can be full of youngsters, usually school parties of secondary-school age” (2005a, 137; my emphasis).

⁵⁵ As the reference number is the same for all the show reports, I will no longer be reporting it.

what is certain is that, in contrast with the actors' words, several "kids" did not listen attentively to OP. But, more importantly, if these younger spectators were busy playing or "being disruptive", they did not appreciate the pronunciation or the production or both in all likelihood. Or if they did, some other reasons must explain their behaviour.

So far, it has emerged that some teenagers were distracted audience members presumably not enjoying OP, but uncertainty still hovers over their appreciation. On the other hand, some adults were undoubtedly not appreciative of OP, according to my interpretation of one report. In literature, Crystal suggests a general and universal positive reception, by mentioning, among the others, the spectators' personal attachment to the sounds of OP. In the report of the 27th June, setting aside the existence of "[s]everal complaints" due to a misunderstanding concerning the beginning of the show ("Several complaints that people had been told that the performance started at 7.30pm, so they had missed the first hour"), the managers record the dissatisfaction of some spectators. Specifically, they relay: "A couple of patrons complained that they had not been told that the performance would be in Original Pronunciation, and were very unhappy about this". Such words lend themselves to being read in at least two different ways: 1. These spectators did not enjoy OP at all; 2. Although the audience members did not completely dislike OP, their expectations were betrayed – they wanted to see an RP production – and eventually the audience members expressed their deep unhappiness. Indulging in speculations, the complaints and unhappiness with OP may have depended on the perception of the pronunciation as not completely comprehensible. But whether this was also the case, the patrons' words clearly display some lack of enjoyment of OP.

In closing, my reading of reports casts some shadow on Crystal's extremely positive response to OP on the part of the "kids" and spectators in general. The younger spectators' general involvement, as claimed by actors, is questionable; and, as a result, their enjoyment of OP appears more limited than it is stated in literature. Additionally, although only "a couple of patrons" complained about the production being in OP, the very existence of complaints suggests that few spectators did not really appreciate OP, and may not have perceived OP as comprehensible. It should, however, be clarified that no evidence as of today disproves a large following to the staging; on the contrary, the cases reported entail an undefined number of people but seemingly not many: "some very young kids" and "[a] couple of patrons". Yet, these demonstrate that Crystal's statements on universal positive audience response need to be reformed and incorporate what look like alternative (and minority?) voices. Ultimately, though less vehemently than the reviews, my interpretation of

the reports has continued to challenge the official narrative concerning audience reactions to “Romeo”.

4.3.3 Interviews

In addition to the data and findings relating to the reviews and show reports, I have been able to collect information from my interviews with Jane Grogan, professor at University College Dublin (email to author, June 27, 2023; and November 4, 2023), and Patrick Spottiswoode, former director of Globe Education (email to author, August 18, 2022).⁵⁶ Their testimonies cover their experiences as spectators of “Romeo”, and the general audience response to the production. Therefore, they allow for further consideration of the comprehensibility and appreciation of OP in relation to the show, and do not greatly distance themselves from what has been discussed up to this point.

Both Grogan and Spottiswoode recall “Romeo” in positive terms. Starting with comprehensibility, Grogan depicts OP as highly comprehensible to her: on a scale from 1 to 6 – she assigns 4-5 (email to author, November 4, 2023), with the caveat that she does not remember OP “posing a significant challenge, although [she] did know the play quite well”. Thus, Grogan seems to have experienced a quite high comprehensibility of OP, though not total. Further, with reference to the spectators, she asserts that the pronunciation “did not seem hugely difficult for audiences”, and implies that it may have posed some challenges, but in the end it was rather comprehensible.⁵⁷ Spottiswoode’s words are even more optimistic regarding the audiences’ comprehensibility of OP: “I remember wondering if the audience would follow the story in OP and, it seemed that most did”. It can be inferred that OP was predominantly highly comprehensible. What is more, the pronoun “most” signifies that “Romeo” did not pose any major obstacle to the majority of audiences, while also suggesting that alternative, minority voices may have existed as well.

When it comes to the appreciation of OP, Spottiswoode hints at it arguing that “[t]he Romeo and Juliet was fascinating” and he “was only sorry that the company didn’t attempt more performances in OP.” It is evident through the use of the adjective “fascinating” that Spottiswoode had a positive experience; and, given his emphasis on OP (“... didn’t attempt more performances in OP”), it can be assumed that the scholar enjoyed both OP and the production. Grogan, too, admits

⁵⁶ Given their institutional roles and research fields (e.g. Early Modern theatre), they are both highly competent ‘listeners’.

⁵⁷ I did not specifically ask Grogan about reactions of audience members, but she made reference to them on her own, enriching her testimony with further data.

“enjoy[ing] the experience” and that she had “seen more plays in OP”, hinting at her appreciation of both the pronunciation and the production. In addition, Grogan gives a glimpse into the audiences’ (possible) positive reading of OP; in her opinion, OP “added an element of historic authenticity for an audience who were already (presumably) strongly invested in that concept”. This statement conveys the idea that to them OP was a valuable addition to the staging, providing a further layer “of historic authenticity” to encounter and gain from.

Having juxtaposed two different interviews, one clarification and one consideration are due. It should first be noted that Spottiswoode does not comment on his own comprehensibility but only on the audiences’, whereas Grogan’s words do deal with both her and the spectators’ perception and of how comprehensible OP “Romeo”’s was. The distance between the scholars’ testimonies must exclusively be ascribed to the different questions I asked rather than to personal choices and the possibility of averting answers. Entering the realm of considerations, Grogan and Spottiswoode seem to adopt a similar rhetorical strategy when discussing the reactions of audiences; they do not claim absolute comprehensibility but use cautious language. More precisely, Grogan states that OP “did not seem *hugely* difficult for spectators” (my emphasis), so the statement is not direct but blurs the idea of comprehensibility while conveying it; and, as already pointed out, Spottiswoode resorts to “most”, thereby admitting other experiences. The two scholars’ lexical choices may reflect, and stem from, the academic habit of not revelling in gratuitous generalisations.

To conclude, Spottiswoode’s and Grogan’s words recount positive experiences with OP, both on a personal and a collective level. What can eventually be remarked is a substantial comprehensibility of OP for “Romeo”, which however does not exclude some minor degree of personal non-comprehensibility (Grogan), and the possibility that OP was not comprehensible to everyone (Spottiswoode and Grogan). Additionally, a general appreciation of OP (Spottiswoode and Grogan) and a possible positive impact on the production (Grogan) are recorded. Eventually, these interviews seem to be much more in line with Crystal’s positive portrayal of audience response than the other material analysed, but at the same time they do make room for dissonant voices – whose existence has been highlighted by the examined reviews and reports.

4.3.4 Concluding remarks

Based on the evidence and findings presented above, I can draw conclusions on the comprehensibility and appreciation of OP in “Romeo”. I will temporarily set aside Crystal’s findings – a procedure which I have not followed before –, but I will eventually come back to them.

According to the data I personally gathered, comprehensibility was extremely high but not flawless; for instance, both a review and a complaint show that some people had problems with OP. With regard to appreciation, I will lay aside the evaluation of sounds, which features only in reviews, and concentrate on the general enjoyment of OP. While my interviews reveal a strong appreciation of OP, the words of critics and the existence of disruptive gestures and complaints in reports point to some lack of enjoyment of OP. In the case of the reviews, their authors find fault with one main effect of OP – lacking characterisation –, even though the pronunciation may not have been responsible for it. Therefore, what emerges is an OP much more understood than enjoyed – or, more precisely, little appreciated; however, it is necessary to highlight some limitations of my research. Firstly, I was not able to collect many reviews on the performances in OP, which makes the weight of my findings regarding reviews quite limited. Secondly, my interviews were not only different from each other but were also – and maybe more importantly – rooted in memories. As a result, there is a risk that different colours and evaluations may have been attributed to OP by the interviewees compared to when they saw the performance/s.⁵⁸

In closing, putting everything in perspective and reintegrating Crystal’s data, my research calls for a more nuanced reality than that portrayed in OP literature so far. In fact, the outcome of my analysis could be summed up as follows: whilst the general favour of “Romeo” cannot be denied given the limited amount of data on my possession, crevices infiltrate the perfect aura attached to “Romeo” and its OP. Crystal’s claims then require some rethinking and, if possible, more information.

⁵⁸ Another drawback of my research corresponds to the absence of any distinction between the different performances of “Romeo”, which were all conceived as manifestations of the general reception of the production. For future research, one could try to draw boundaries between the single performances, although, to do so, it may be necessary to recover more material.

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The director was not struck by the experimental “Romeo” as comprehensible; yet, as he pondered over it, he became cognisant of the influence of OP on physicality and acting, and consented to stage “Troilus”.⁶² Block’s acceptance – rather than initiative – to put on the production is also corroborated by Crystal’s words dating back to 2005: “the Globe has decided to do another OP production this year, *Troilus and Cressida*, directed by Giles Block” (2005b, 21). Then responsibility for the new staging in OP is to be allocated to the theatrical institution.

One may then wonder why *Tro* was selected by the board or whoever was in charge of the decision-making process, since the play stands out for its complexity (Kermode 2000, 127; Gregory 2013, 92; Bevington 2015, 6),⁶³ is not among well-known Shakespearean plays, and may have a puzzling impact on audience members (Faber 1990, 1).⁶⁴ While the specific reasons for the selection are not commented on or inferable in literature, it cannot be ruled out that *Tro* was chosen out of sheer necessity – e.g. number of characters – rather than deep interest. If that was the case, the play soon enough became an opportunity or a starting point for exploration of the problem play, at least for Crystal: “Not only do we have the distinction between older/younger and upper/lower class ways of speaking (as in *Romeo and Juliet*) but a contrast between Greeks and Trojans, too. Should I make their accents differ? The OP experiment is by no means over” (2005b, 21). It is not known whether Crystal’s purported differentiation between the two camps eventually took place; neither articles and reviews nor myself have paid attention

⁶² In an interview in the Globe programme, Block narrates a different story concerning his comprehension of “Romeo”. In fact, he admits being “very sceptical” at first, but “within five minutes” his reservations disappeared (“I realized yes, now I see, now I understand” Block, in the interview by Lee 2005, 30).

⁶³ John Gregory, author of a dissertation on *Tro*, emphasises the linguistic difficulties posed by the play through criticism: “As Restoration commentators had noticed, the language of *Troilus and Cressida* is often complex, contorted and strange, full of neologisms and Latinate diction. This has contributed to a rich vein of writing on the language of the play, from new criticism to structuralism, poststructuralism and deconstruction” (2013, 92). Bevington states that “the play is manifestly difficult, controversial, even avant-garde” (2015, 6). Finally, Frank Kermode labels *Tro* as possessing “a difficult text”, but he also goes so far as to say that the play is “often regarded as a failure of its apparent theatrical shortcomings, its apparent imbalances, and its cynicism” (2000, 127).

⁶⁴ Kristina Faber comments on possible reactions to *Tro* and the other problem plays: “At the end of these plays viewers may feel ambivalent, confused, dissatisfied, resentful, even repulsed” (1990, 1).

to the phonological/phonetic distinctions between the two groups.⁶⁵ Nonetheless, supposing the latter have not eventually found their way into the production, some sort of exploration of OP may still have occurred, especially in light of Spottiswoode's following words: "the experiment ["Romeo"] sparked an interest in exploring the idea further". As with "Romeo", I will not inquire into the topic of exploration with respect to "Troilus", which would imply too high a degree of inference and uncertainty; rather, I will trace major features of the reconstructed pronunciation.

4.4.2 Looking into OP

Prior to dealing with the dimension of the sounds proper, a few words on the production itself – still relevant to OP – should be said. Unlike its predecessor, "Troilus" did not employ RP along with OP; only the latter was spoken by the actors in the entire run, made up of six performances. Further, as Crystal claims, the actors learned the reconstructed pronunciation from the very beginning ("The rehearsals were in OP from the outset"; 2006a, 33) and had a longer rehearsal time ("there was a longer period of preparation"; 33).

Still dissimilarly from "Romeo", modern costumes were worn. As Block explains, the WWI-inspired costuming was chosen "not because there aren't more recent parallels in the history of our civilization, but because there is something about the madness of those trenches and the length of the war that seems

⁶⁵ Crystal may have desisted from assigning different phonological and phonetic features to the two groups (of soldiers) in the absence of any linguistic or textual evidence, viz., a clear-cut differentiation between the Greeks and the Trojans. As William Bowden argues, "Shakespeare probably intends no significant contrast between the Greeks and the Trojans. He uses the city and the camp as settings for two different plots. He does not show us how the two groups take characteristically different approaches to a common problem; the Greeks are just as ready as the Trojans to fight for what Helen symbolizes, and there is no need to give us the same debate twice. Collectively, the Greeks and the Trojans are all simply people" (1957, 177). However, it should not be forgotten that scholarship does not unanimously hold the similar characterisation of the Greeks and Trojans. Jan Kott sees the two camps as marked by dissimilar characteristics: "Troy was Spain, the Greeks were the English. [...] The Greeks are down-to-earth, heavy and brutal. [...] They are tradesmen. They know how to count. To them the war really makes no sense. The Trojans insist on their ridiculous absolutes and a medieval code of combat. They are anachronistic" (2015, 132-133). Also Wilson Knight assigns different traits to the two groups: "The Trojan party stands for human beauty and worth, the Greek party for the bestial and stupid elements" ([1930] 2001, 50), and they embody the contrast between intuition (the Trojans) and intellect (the Greeks) (64). Further, Robert E. Wood contends that "[t]he Greeks are a far more heterogeneous group than the Trojans and cannot be considered a coherent society" (1977, 67). Therefore, from a hermeneutic perspective, Crystal had evidence both in favour and against the differentiation of Greeks and Trojans; it was then up to him and/or the director to choose whether to embrace it or not on the plane of sounds.

particularly appropriate" (Block, in the interview by Lee 2005, 31).⁶⁶ As reasonable as Block's choice may sound, Barrett makes mention of the problematic nature of costuming in relation to OP:

The archive footage of this production shows a certain anachronistic conflict between what is seen (modern dress) and what is heard (historical speech). This effect may have been more pronounced when viewing the show on screen than in a live performance. While this might feel uncomfortable at first, after the initial few scenes, during which the listener becomes accustomed to the sounds of OP, the conflict becomes less noticeable (Barrett 2013, 160).

Barrett detects a "conflict" that weakens throughout time, and journalist McCrum, too, does not manage to reconcile the – unjustified – contrast between visual and sonic sphere ("One thing that makes no sense is the limit to authenticity"; 2005). Adopting a perspective as an audience member, I have not found the 'clash' disturbing probably out of personal taste, but the 'mismatch' may have interfered with the enjoyment of the staging. This is what Barrett subtly assumes by stating that "[i]t may be that the audience have certain expectations when they see characters dressed in a particular costume and problems might occur when these expectations are not met. This production was not popular and the use of OP may have been a contributory factor" (2013, 160-161). I will postpone the discussion of the show's audience and critic response until due time, but it is important to highlight that Barrett proposes examining and thus clarifying the relation between pronunciation and costumes (160).

Similarly to "Romeo", the production of "Troilus" sported the natural accents of the actors. Referring to this show, Crystal affirms that "[o]n the original Globe stage the audience would have heard the varied accents of the actors, who came from different parts of England [...] And so we heard tinged with Lancashire, the Midlands, and elsewhere" (2006a, 33). Barrett implies and shows appreciation of the production's various accentual nuances by maintaining that "there was a great variety in the delivery of the OP which was successful overall and may well enhance the viewer's enjoyment of the performance" (2013, 160). Another testimony, that of actor Yolanda Vazquez, does not only confirm the inclusion of one's accent but also points to the great welcoming acceptance of accentual diversity:

⁶⁶ The choice of employing costumes reminiscent of the First World War may also seem appropriate given the success enjoyed by the play in the last century (Plescia 2008, 130; see also Plescia 2020, 77), and its ability to "resonate with audiences" (Plescia 2020, 77) of the time, too familiar with war.

I am really useless when it comes to accents; I think it is because English is my second language. I can do them in Spanish, but I have to work really hard to do them in English, so I was petrified to begin with. I was playing Agamemnon. I thought the best thing would be to dive headfirst into it and see what happened. So from the very first day, I decided to do original pronunciation whatever came out of my mouth. This caused much hilarity because apparently I sounded Jamaican! But what was interesting is that David Crystal said, 'Well, why not, because Jamaica was one of the places where possibly this strand of accent went to', and he was so sweet about it and gave me a lot of encouragement and by the end of it, I really loved it. I loved trying to work out all the speeches (Rylance, Vazquez and Chahidi 2008, 203).

Crystal did not correct or ban Vazquez's 'other' sounds but linked them to the history of the English language, and in so doing fully supported them. On a side note, it could be argued that the actor experimented with (or explored) the OP sounds by provoking amusement, and ended up reproducing phonetic traits of a variety of English, the Jamaican one ("I decided to do original pronunciation whatever came out of my mouth. This caused much hilarity because apparently I sounded Jamaican!"). Back to the main point, the testimonies above make it clear that, like "Romeo", "Troilus" retained the natural accents of the performers.

Yet, at a closer look, a minor difference between the two productions emerges. The melting pot of accents and Vazquez's non-British sounds raise the question as to whether alien, viz., foreign sonorities marking characters were only typical of the performers' provenance and as such ornamental, or whether they were also 'artificial' and added in response to textual elements or interpretations. In the case of "Romeo", it must be borne in mind that the production resorted to Italian/Italianate sonorities at specific points, thereby mixing natural and 'artificial' accents (see Sec. 4.1.2.2). In contrast, "Troilus" did not appear to utilise any foreign accents as 'fake' or in connection with interpretations of textual passages. In other words, a peculiar and significant use of foreign accents as stemming from readings of the written play was not recorded for the production, or at least I did not notice it while watching the video recording.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ In her Introduction to the book *Greeks and Trojans on the Early Modern English stage*, Lisa Hopkins discusses the relationship between the English and the Greeks, illustrating some fracture or "distrust" between the two (2020, 2). Hopkins supports the presence of Greek immigrants in England at the end of the 16th century and throughout the following one (2-4). To me, this may beg the question of whether close or "direct encounters with both Greece and Greeks" (2) resulted in the adoption of certain accents or sonorities on the stage, including the Shakespearean one, when Greek roles were performed.

While “Troilus” did not employ foreign sonorities as interpretations of the text, it did recover textual elements that originated from and affected the sphere of sounds. I will not yet delve into rhymes and their effects – to which I have devoted Sec. 4.5 –, but I wish to bring to the fore the pun on *Ajax*, already mentioned in Chap. 3. As Crystal states, *Ajax* and *a jakes* were homophones in Shakespeare’s day, and in the production their identity was established: “The actor playing Thersites went out of his way to stress the ‘jakes’ pronunciation to Ajax, thrusting the pun into his face over the next lines, much to the delight of the audience, who – apart from the possible philologist standing in the yard – would never have encountered this joke before” (Crystal 2008, 144). This pun would not work today in RP due to the different pronunciation of the two terms, but it did in the production (and possibly in Shakespeare’s time), generating amusement. Crystal emphasises the effort of the performer (“The actor [...] went out of his way to stress the ‘jakes’ pronunciation to Ajax”), so presumably the insertion of the pun in the six performances of “Troilus” was based on an exploration of both the text and the sphere of sounds as a result of the necessary work to deliver the punning device.

At this point, evaluative comments on the rendition of OP are worth observing. According to Crystal, the pronunciation was exquisitely rendered: “Troilus produced some of the best OP I have ever heard. Most of the cast were faultless, and to my ear there were only a few dozen erratic sounds in the whole play” (2006a, 33-34). In another case, Crystal even praises how OP went hand in hand with other aspects of the show:

This isn’t the first time there has been an OP production at the Globe: that was in June 2004, when a weekend of three OP performances of *Romeo and Juliet* was put into the middle of the run. But there is a big difference with *Troilus*: the whole run of six performances is in OP, and the actors rehearsed the play in OP from the very beginning. Not for them the trauma of having to keep two versions of the play in their heads at the same time. The result is a production in which, to my mind, the OP ties in with the movement and the characters interaction even more seamlessly than it did last year. After a while, I think you will forget it is OP, and just enjoy the play – with the enjoyment, I hope, enhanced by the frisson of freshness which OP brings. This is as it should be. The play, not the pronunciation, is the thing (2005d, 27).⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Crystal argues exactly the same point in “Hark, hark, what shout is that?” (2005e): “The result is a production in which, to my mind, the OP ties in with the movement and the character interaction even more seamlessly than it did in 2004” (13).

4.4.3 Concluding remarks

To recap, “Troilus” was another production in OP at the Globe, following and deriving from “Romeo”. The staging in OP was commissioned by the theatre to director Block, but the precise reasons for the selection of the play remain uncertain to this day. The willingness to explore OP in relation to the text may have played some role, as suggested by some of Crystal’s and Spottiswoode’s words; yet, if exploration was not a real priority with regard to the play, it appears as a byproduct of the actors’ use of OP. Diverse but not to the same degree as “Romeo”, the OP of “Troilus” was not either perfectly rendered; however, its imperfections may also have been determined by other factors such as clarity and comprehensibility. While I will reprise the perception of OP sounds later by examining the critics’ words, my next section will give way to the identification of recovered rhymes and effects in the production.

4.5 Recovered rhymes in “Troilus”: An investigation

Tro is not known as one of the most rhyming plays by Shakespeare or as boasting a considerable number of rhymes. In fact, in consulted scholarship the work is not quoted among the Shakespearean texts with the higher number of rhymes, or its rhymes do not occupy centre stage.⁷⁰ It could then be assumed that the recovery of these devices in “Troilus” was extremely scant. Quantities are, however, unimportant here: as with “Romeo”, a quantitative analysis of restored rhymes will not be presented; only the latter, their sounds and effects in the show will be my main focus. And, in a similar vein to the previous production, my examination will be aimed at throwing further light on the OP sphere of “Troilus” through an analysis of restored rhymes in the show, and at reflecting on the debate on recoveries by means of OP (Sec. 3.3.1). As a consequence, as with “Romeo”, I have not attempted to analyse all of the identified rhymes but have only selected and examined some. As my methodology for the identification and the analysis of the rhyming devices for “Troilus” does not show any real differences from that of its predecessor, it has not been discussed here (see Sec. 4.2.1).

⁷⁰ This is not to say that rhymes are not discussed at all, but that they are not depicted as one of the main features of the work.

4.5.1 Recovered rhymes, pronunciation and effects in the production

For my analysis concerning the recovered rhymes for “Troilus”, I will begin with some reinstated devices contributing to a theme. Subsequently, I will turn to those rhymes reintegrated in a single passage or scene fragment, and those restoring some ‘phonetic kisses’ – a concept that will be handled in due time.

On looking at the retrieved rhymes in the entire production (see Appendix G, Table G.2), it emerges that some are linked to the theme of body fragmentation, which is delineated as a part of the play by literary scholarship. David Bevington draws attention to Vivian Thomas’ “‘fractured universe’ of the play in terms of its hyperbole of numbers”, before pointing out that “[i]n the same vein, the fragmentation of the human body is noted in vivid particularity: heels, hand, leg, arms, cheeks, blood, member and the like” (2015, 84). Eventually, Bevington affirms that “[t]he anatomizing of language is symptomatic of the anatomizing of the self” (2015, 84), but, generally speaking, he traces the origin of the widespread and “universal” fragmentation of the work back to “the sense of nostalgic longing for an imagined medieval, orthodox and chivalric past” (81). M. M. Burns, too, signals a form of fragmentation – more limited, though – consisting in the “macabre emphasis on human ‘joints’”, and explains that “[u]nable to distinguish people, as people, from the fact of their enmity, these Greeks and Trojans have degenerated to the hideous travesty of distinguishing particular ‘joints’ of people from the whole person” (1980, 127). All things considered, the fragmentation seems to stem from a distorted vision of characters – either in response to their own sense of fragmentation or to their loss of sympathy and humanity.⁷¹

Having highlighted the presence and meaning/s of body fragmentation within the play, it should be noted how the restoration of some OP rhymes contributed to the aforementioned theme in the production. In “Troilus”, the rhyming couplets associable to bodily dismemberment were as follows:

⁷¹ Both the Folio (1623; Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019g) and the Quarto (1609; Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019h) appear to build this theme. Through a word search, I looked up *eye*, *foot* and *hand* – representatives of body fragmentation – in the two texts and found them greatly present in both, though in slightly different quantities. Of the utmost importance is, however, the actual existence of the fragmentation theme in the two works.

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	<i>The Eloquent Shakespeare (names)</i>	<i>The Complete Works</i> ⁷²
<i>Diomed-head</i> ⁷³ (IV.ii-iv. 2531-2532, p. 94)	dəɪoməd head	dəɪoməd hed	REDACTED	'daɪəməd	IV. v. 136-137, p. 766
<i>doth-tooth</i> (IV.v. 2868-2869, p. 107)	dʌθ tʌθ	vowel oscillating between [ʌ] and [ʌ] (<i>doth</i> , <i>tooth</i>)	REDACTED		IV.vii.176-177, p. 770
<i>down-bone</i> (V. iv-x. ⁷⁴ 3508-3509, p. 135)	do:n bo:ne	do:n bo:n	REDACTED		IV.v.11-12, p. 776

Table 4.9. Retrieved rhymes for body fragmentation.

As can be seen, the rhymes featured human parts – *tooth*, *bone*⁷⁵ and *head* – and, as a result, reduced the body to fragments or, in keeping with scholarship, reflected the twisted vision of the figures uttering the rhyming devices. It seems to me that no additional meanings or elements were to be associated with the theme, but the very fact that body parts were part of (restored) rhymes helped to foreground body fragmentation. In terms of pronunciation, there was no substantial distance from the transcription, but the pair *doth-tooth* is worth noticing. The phonetic realisation of /ʌ/ oscillated between [ʌ] and [ʌ]; this slight imperfection may have been due to the accent of the actor or even my mishearing – the audio quality of the video recording was poor.

⁷² In an email exchange, Crystal explains that “Giles Block chose the First Folio for his production of *Troilus*” (email to author, August 17, 2022). For that reason, I have only included the lines in the *Complete Works*, which, as I made it clear in 4.2.1, was my point of reference.

⁷³ Modern spelling – taken from the *The Complete Works* (Jowett et al. 2005) – is utilised.

⁷⁴ Crystal does not distinguish scenes.

⁷⁵ This rhyme – but also other ones – could also be read within the framework of grandiosity. According to Robert E. Wood, “[t]he formality of their speeches [the heroes’] is heightened by the presence of an unusual number of solemn rhymed couplets” (1977, 72).

Also worthy of attention are the delivery of the restored rhymes and their role within the staging. The rhyming pairs under scrutiny were all punctuated and foregrounded by the actors, who stressed them with their cadence. But if on a verbal and acoustic level the dismemberment of the body took place, the visual plane did not show to pay great heed to it. The vocal disjunction of the body did not have as a parallel the visual accentuation of bodies through, say, costumes, but it must be admitted that a subtle visual insistence may have gone unnoticed given my focus on aurality. Nonetheless, the fragmentation displayed by the restored rhymes may have highlighted the impression of dismemberment to (some) spectators, especially if they had noted the other lexicon aimed at forging fragmentation (e.g. *hand*, *eyes*).

If, up to this point, I have looked into retrieved rhymes, an imperfect device still linked to body disjunction can be subject to scrutiny. As has been noted, *Diomed-head* was one of the restored rhymes, but it did not occur just once; it was deployed twice. However, the second occurrence of the terms (Table 4.10) did not result in a perfect identity of sounds. In fact, the secondary stress on *med* (*Dio-med*) was not audible, so there was some remarkable closeness between the two words but not a perfect adherence to each other. This inaccuracy or compliance with linguistic evidence then begs the question of what would have happened in Shakespeare's time: whether the stress would have been manipulated in the playwright's day (based on Chap. 1), or the similarity would have been deemed adequate enough and thus preserved.

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	<i>The Eloquent Shakespeare</i> (names)	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>Diomed-head</i> (V.ii.3183-3184, p. 122)	Dəɪoməd head	No stress on <i>med</i> (<i>Diomed</i>) hed	REDACTED	'daɪəməd	V.ii.189-190, p. 773

4.10. Non-retrieved rhyme *Diomed-head*.

Detaching from restored rhymes in connection with the theme of body fragmentation, two pairs of retrieved devices – *hardiment-argument* and (possibly) *kiss-his* – featured as a part of a longer passage permeated by rhymes and revolving around kissing. The excerpt under scrutiny belongs to the scene in which Cressida arrives in the Greek camp; for the sake of readability, I have not included the entire

passage,⁷⁶ which however can be found in Appendix G (G3). In the production, the perfect rhyming couplet *hardiment-argument* – reintroduced by OP – inaugurated a set of rhymes. The couplet, whose *argument* may resonate with the play’s “highly philosophical tone” (Jowett et al. 2005, 743),⁷⁷ was followed by rhymes also available in present-day pronunciation (RP) (e.g. *scorns-horns*, *trim-him*, *leave-receive*, *give-live*), but one pair, *kiss-his*, was exclusive to OP, as Table 4.11 shows. Yet, to be precise, *kiss-his* was a rhyme only in the show, since it is not presented as a perfect rhyme in the transcription due to the different sounds [s] for *kiss* and [z] for *his*; however, I will come back to this element later. In terms of delivery, the actors punctuated the rhyming words, and made them particularly detectable.

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal’s transcriptio n)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>hardiment- argument</i> (IV.v, 2580-2581, p. 96)	ha:rdiment a:rgument	<u>-ment</u> <u>-ment</u>	REDACTED ⁷⁸	IV.vi.29-30, p. 767
<i>kiss-his</i> (IV.v.2605-2606, p. 98)	kiss his	-is -is	REDACTED	IV.vi.50-51, p. 767

4.11. Restored rhymes for the exchange between Cressida and the Greek generals.

As regards the meaning or effect of *hardiment-argument*, this pair restored a ‘phonetic kiss’. How was it so, one may ask. Broadly speaking, all the rhyming couplets of the passage can be seen as producing ‘phonetic kisses’. This idea is made

⁷⁶ In the passage, taken from 4.5 in the transcription, the rhymes are not used from beginning to end owing to textual – the Folio’s – peculiarities (“Why beg then” and “An odd man lady, every man is odd”), but overall the devices weave the excerpt.

⁷⁷ The role of philosophy in the work is abundantly acknowledged. Drawing upon Soellner, Bevington links Ulysses’s, Troilus’s and Thersites’s positions to philosophical skepticism (2015, 72), and Kott argues that “they [characters] philosophize, but it is not an easy or apparent philosophy. Nor is it just rhetoric” (2015, 131). What is more, Jowett et al. remark philosophy as imbuing the spirit of the play: “*Troilus and Cressida* is a demanding play, Shakespeare’s third longest, highly philosophical in tone and with an exceptionally learned vocabulary” (2005, 743). Finally, Plescia (2004), among others, highlights the fact that the play engages with philosophical debates; by way of illustration, she observes the rejection of the principle of non-contradiction (“Nulla, in questo dramma, sembra essere quello che è; non si può contare sul principio di non contraddizione”; 60) and a quasi-parody of the philosophical debate (“Il tono del dramma della conoscenza si abbassa così sensibilmente, fino quasi a parodiare il dibattito filosofico”; 65).

⁷⁸ Because the word *hardiment* was not in the OED, I looked it up in the *Cambridge Dictionary* (2023) but without any success. I eventually was able to find it in the *Collins Dictionary* (2023).

possible by a proper contextualisation of the lines; and to that end I will take into consideration the Shakespearean text in the Folio version, the one supposedly used by Crystal and Carroll. When Cressida enters the Greek camp, the generals discuss kissing the female protagonist and eventually kiss her,⁷⁹ and the word “kiss” in its different tokens is repeated 13 times by my count (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019g).⁸⁰ The importance of kisses is then generally suggested in the broader passage, which may already hint at an underlying conceptualisation of rhyming couplets as phonetic kisses.

Yet, more solid proof is provided by both internal and external evidence to Shakespeare’s works. In fact, the association between rhyming couplets and kiss is applicable to *RJ*, where the rhyming couplet ending the beautiful sonnet shaped by the lovers leads to a kiss (I.v.92-109; Jowett et al. 2005, 377). Although the rhyme engenders an actual kiss, what should be observed is the underlying correspondence between kiss and rhyming couplet. Further, and more importantly, Pablo Maurette’s research in an outstanding piece on kissing in *Venus and Adonis*, underscores the conception of rhyming couplets as kisses in Shakespeare’s day:

That English poets in Shakespeare’s times would have been familiar with the idea that the rhyming couplet is a kiss, is shown by the prefatory letter to the reader of the *Iliad*, where George Chapman discusses the virtues of the English language and its abundance of monosyllables that “so kindly fall and meet, opposed in rhyme as they did kiss” (Maurette 2017, 25).

Maurette makes clear the association between rhyming couplets and kisses and the poets’ familiarity with it, but he also points out the source of such connection, that is, the “prefatory letter to the reader of the *Iliad*”. According to Bevington, Shakespeare was knowledgeable about Chapman’s translation: “Shakespeare knew Homer’s *Iliad* in George Chapman’s translation (1598), at least in part, certainly enough to have savoured its tragic grandeur and its insistence on the war’s great significance to the gods and to the human race” (2015, 21). Other scholars such as Robert K. Presson (1952,184) and Tucker Brooke (see Sacharoff 1970, 1) also

⁷⁹ As the Folio and Crystal’s transcription do not include any stage directions regarding the generals’ kisses, those of the *Complete Works* have been followed.

⁸⁰ I have counted the occurrences of “kiss” and related words (e.g. kissing) from “Our Generall doth salute you with a kisse” until “Neuer’s my day, and then a kisse of you” (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019g). In the Quarto, too, the tokens amount to 13 by my count (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019h).

recognise the playwright's debt to Chapman's *Iliad*.⁸¹ Therefore, even supposing an imperfect knowledge of the work on the part of Shakespeare, his familiarity with such a substantial part as the prefatory letter is rather likely. But, supposing that Shakespeare did not read this text and returning to Maurette's point, the connection between rhyming couplets and kisses was generally disseminated among poets and hence knowable to Shakespeare, who was not only a playwright but also an author of poems. The idea of rhyming couplets as kisses then appears rooted in quite convincing evidence, and subsequently it can be argued that at least one phonetic kiss – *hardiment-argument* – was recovered in the staging.

Until this moment, I have concentrated on rhyme restoration and phonetic kisses, but it is time to reprise the retrieved rhyme *kiss-his*. The staging had a perfect rhyme thanks to the identity of [s] in the two words, but, as mentioned before, the transcription displays a distinction and REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. The transcription leaves the two words as they are, thereby suggesting a difference, REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED. Why did the two words result in a rhyme in the show? And would a perfect or imperfect rhyme have been preferred in Shakespeare's time? The latter question should be neglected since no real answer can be provided. Yet, with reference to the production, I contend that the perfect identity was chosen on purpose; of course, the reading of *kiss-his* I will provide is not to be seen as inherent to the Shakespearean text but as deriving from the performance and my own reading of it.

It is easier to start with the non-choice of the imperfect rhyme, rather inadequate for "Troilus". Theoretically speaking, the non-rhyme could be quite promptly linked to the image of a strong Cressida and a defeated Ulysses. Taking a step back and referring to the Shakespearean play, Johannes Ungelenk claims that "[b]y insisting on 'his' kiss, Menelaus gives Cressida the opportunity to take the floor and show her verbal prowess. Instead of 'touching' him with her lips, Cressida touches him with her tongue – in a linguistic way – by responding to his advances with rhyming replies that take control of the situation and outwit him in a spectacular fashion" (2022, 32). As a result, Cressida's rhymes give voice to her asserting "control" of the situation, also evident when the character speaks with Ulysses. In fact, Ungelenk declares that "Cressida even matches the smartest and wittiest of the Greeks, Ulysses, who joins the rhetorical battle of rhymes when

⁸¹ Presson asserts that "Shakespeare [...] knew this translation more than fairly well" (1952,184), whereas Sacharoff relays that "Tucker Brooke [...] maintains that Shakespeare followed Chapman in turning 'Homer's 'temperamental primitives' into arrant cowards, baggarts, and bullies'" (1970, 1).

Menelaus has arrived at his wits' ends" (2022, 32). In light of this view of the heroine as a non-victim and a strong opponent to subjugation, Ulysses's rendition of *kiss-his* as an imperfect rhyme could secure and claim Cressida's victory in her exchange with the clever general. To put it differently, Ulysses's near rhyme after perfect ones could suggest that Cressida prevailed at the expense of the Greek. But the victory of Cressida is not an interpretive element that the show favoured or conveyed.

By contrast, in the performance Cressida was shown as being abused. She was first mistreated by the Greeks, who, encouraged by Ulysses ("'Twere better she was kissed in general"), used her lips at their pleasure. The violation of Cressida was evident: the facial expressions and body language of the actor gave away her fear, powerlessness and resistance; and her being passed around dehumanised the heroine and made her akin to a toy. Cressida's participation in the creation of rhymes – e.g. *one-none* – could be read as an appropriation of the abusers' logic and rhetoric, corresponding to a defence mechanism. Then the female character experienced an additional type of abuse, rejection, on the part of Ulysses. This treatment was brutal: the male figure burst into laughter and physically distanced himself from Cressida, and the latter's emotional wounds could be glimpsed through the actor's expressiveness. Cressida was then not victorious in her exchange with Ulysses, while the general was.

Within this framework, although a near rhyme would possibly not have declared Cressida triumphant, it would still have subtracted from Ulysses's predominance and superiority in the confrontation with Cressida. On the other hand, the perfect rhyme *kiss-his* crowned Ulysses as the triumphant duellist, but it did even more than that; and the idea of phonetic kisses is central in such a case. In the play, interpretations vary as to whether Shakespeare's Ulysses refuses to kiss Cressida or is denied the kiss.⁸² In the show, Ulysses rejected Cressida's kiss and

⁸² Some form of violence underlies Jan Kott's description: "Even on her [Cressida's] way to the Greek camp Diomedes makes brutal advances to her. Then she is kissed in turn by the generals and princes, old, great and famous men: Nestor, Agamemnon, Ulysses" (2015, 137). Alexander Leggatt, too, sees the kissing in the Greek camp as violent by finding in Cressida's 'welcome' echoes of Lavinia's rape ("Yet the kissing of Cressida – alone, outnumbered, unreadable both in silence and in speech – has had disturbing echoes of the rape of Lavinia, and suggests that what is at stake here may be, if not the breakup of the universe, the breakup of a human identity" 2005, 86; see also 84/ "The kissing, I have suggested, is the play's equivalent of the rape of Lavinia: a character is set upon, broken and changed"; 103), and by connecting it to Hector's visit to the Greek camp, an occasion for violation (94-94). By contrast, Robert E. Wood does not give voice to or hint at any violation, since he contends that "[t]he custom of kissing as a form of greeting, while not without some currency, usually indicates more extensive moral permissiveness in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama" (1977, 76). Daniel Juan Gil does not either read any violated body by maintaining Cressida's "role of coquette once she has been removed to the Greek camp" (2001, 350).

mocked her, but in so doing a rupture took shape: the general's rejection of the young woman contrasted with the rhyming – kissing – endings of lines. In other words, the kiss, denied on the stage, did occur in the phonetic lines. I argue that the incongruity between the formal kiss and the stage non-kiss drew attention to the latter, and highlighted its violence. How, one may ask. The 'kissing' rhyme corresponding to *kiss-his* offered a counterpoint to Ulysses's non-kiss and brutal rejection – clashed with it – and hence emphasised it. Consequently, the perfect rhyme originating from *kiss-his* was of pivotal importance in the show, and eventually constituted a phonetic kiss, devised or non-devised in the original text (Folio) or performances.

To conclude, as has been seen, "Troilus" featured restored rhymes as contributing to a theme, that is, body fragmentation, and restored phonetic kisses, with one of them possibly nonexistent in Shakespeare's day. But the staging was not immaculate in terms of rendition: inaccuracies and a missed perfect rhyme have already surfaced through my analysis. In the next section, I will continue to concern myself with imperfect pronunciation and rhymes not finding their way into the production.

4.5.2 Inaccuracies and missed rhymes

In the previous section, occasional references to phonetic inaccuracies have been made, but another one will be presented here. In a similar vein to *doth-tooth*, the pair *prove-love* did not feature [ʁ] in the production: while the vowel of the former words was on the [ʌ] side, the was closer to [ə]. As stated above, these may not have been actual inaccuracies but sprung from the actors' personal accents, which are retained in OP, or even from the poor quality of the audio, a non-rare obstacle possibly preventing justice from being done to the performers' pronunciation. But it is also interesting to see the rhyme *prove-love* in comparison with "Romeo". The actor playing Friar Lawrence did not produce the transcribed sounds, and the two words resulted in no rhyme at all. By contrast, in "Troilus", the imprecise pair did not entirely adhere to the OP frame of reference, but it still allowed for the identification of identical rhymes. Could this difference be read as a greater adherence to the transcription, or as else – e.g. an attempt to be much more precise on the part of actors?

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>prove-love</i> (I.iii.751-752, p. 25)	prʏve lʏve	-əv -əv	REDACTED	I.iii. 284-285, p. 751

4.12. Inaccurate rhyme for *prove-love*.

Inaccuracies, then, featured in “Troilus”, but on several occasions they did not only correspond to imprecise sounds; they also brought about no rhymes in the staging. Noteworthy are those ‘errors’ concerning [əɪ], also highlighted for some missed rhyming devices in “Romeo”: *dignity-idolatry*, *purity-fancy*, *ready-die*, *courteously-wholly* and *alacrity-lie-chivalry*. I will only deal with a couple of them – the first and the last – both closing a scene. In *dignity-idolatry* the final diphthong, available in the transcription, was not audible for *idolatry* and sounded extremely quick for *dignity*. About *alacrity-lie-chivalry*, the transcription clearly displays an identity of sounds – vowelwise, consonantwise and stresswise. Yet, on a practical level, the realisation of *alacrity* excluded the supposed realisation of the diphthong [əɪ], which could not be heard for *chivalry* either; so only *lie* unambiguously hinged on the diphthongal sound. As a result, this rhyme failed to materialise and end a scene, leaving a potentiality of the transcription unaccomplished. The missed effects of such rhymes will not be delved into, but, as the discussion for “Romeo” has shown, the absence of OP sounds and rhyming pairs may have subtracted from reverberations of the text.

Rhyming words	OP (Crystal's transcription)	My notes (staging)	REDACTED	<i>The Complete Works</i>
<i>dignity-idolatry</i> (II.ii. 1039-1040, p. 37)	<u>dig</u> nɪtəɪ <u>idolatr</u> əɪ	- no diphthong (<i>idolatry</i>)	REDACTED	II.ii.53-55, p. 753
<i>purity-fancy</i> (IV.ii-iv.2408- 2409, p. 89)	<u>pu:ri</u> təɪ fancəɪ	no diphthong for either	REDACTED	IV.v.23-24, p. 765
<i>ready-die</i> (IV.ii-iv, ⁸³ p. 90)	readəɪ dəɪ	- <u>di</u> -	REDACTED	IV.v.48-50, p. 765

⁸³ The number of lines is not clear on the basis of my count.

<i>courteously- wholly</i> (IV.ii-iv.2518- 1519, p. 93)	<i>who:lləɪ</i> <i>cʌrtəsleɪ</i>	stress on <i>who_ (wholly)</i> no diphthong for either	REDACTED	IV.v.120-121, p. 766
<i>alacrity-lie- chivalry</i> (IV.ii.iv.2538- 2539-2540, p. 94)	<i>alacritəɪ</i> <i>leɪ</i> <i>chivalrəɪ</i>	no diphthong (<i>alacrity</i> <i>lie</i> <i>chivalry</i>)	REDACTED	IV.v. 145- 147-148, p. 766

4.13. Non-restored rhymes for [əɪ].

In conclusion, my analysis has revealed that, despite being regarded by some as better pronounced than “Romeo”, “Troilus” also included inaccuracies and missed rhymes. And the failings I have contemplated are not even too dissimilar from those of “Romeo” in terms of sounds.

4.5.3 Concluding remarks

In “Troilus”, sets of recovered rhymes were to be seen in connection with a theme (body fragmentation), and as bearing a special meaning/effect (phonetic kisses). Yet, it was also noted that some rhyming devices, visible in the transcription, were not implemented in the production. As with “Romeo”, I will proceed to reach conclusions concerning both the restored rhymes in the staging, and in more general terms.

In the show, the recovery of rhymes allows for three main observations relating to “Troilus” itself. Firstly, some devices contributed to a textual element, that is, the theme of body fragmentation, and some others could be regarded as shaping phonetic kisses. Secondly, not all of the rhyming devices were always pronounced accurately or even produced, as based on the transcription. The pronunciation of certain words (*prove-love*) may not necessarily have been inaccurate; as I mentioned before, the provenance of actors or the poor quality of audio could have had an impact on my listening experience. Taking then non-restored rhymes into account, they may have caused a loss of effects; for example, some retrieved devices were supposed to close scenes and other – more significant – effects may also have been due. Thirdly, several possible and non-fledged rhymes featured the sound [əɪ], which was problematic in “Romeo” as well and is portrayed as difficult in literature, as has been seen before (Sec. 4.2.5).

Let me now draw conclusions broader in scope, two of which do not vary from those for “Romeo”. My analysis for “Troilus” has corroborated that rhymes can be

linked to themes, and that the actors' delivery gives emphasis to restored rhymes, which otherwise may go unnoticed. Yet, a third reflection is quite idiosyncratic, originating from my discussion for the production, and consists in the following: recovered rhymes in OP are not necessarily reintroduced but may be *introduced*. It has been demonstrated that the rhyme *kiss/his* is not included in the transcription and REDACTED REDACTED; however, it was part of the staging. It is not possible to determine what exactly would have happened in theatrical performances in Shakespeare's time: whether such a rhyme was supposed to be spoken or not, or even whether it meant to be and eventually was manipulated. In "Troilus", the case of the rhyme *kiss-his* suggests that restored devices in OP do not necessarily forge new interpretations (see Chap. 3) but *may* stem from readings of the Shakespearean texts. Thus, today a rhyme or a non-rhyme in reconstructed pronunciation could be embraced depending on the meaning one associates with such a device, lines and characters.

Conclusions in relation to the staging of "Troilus"	Conclusions in relation to the debate on OP and rhymes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovered rhymes linked to the textual theme of body fragmentation and the effect of phonetic kisses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restored rhymes contributing to themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failed restored rhymes and subsequent loss of elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of the actors' delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inaccurate pronunciation of [əɪ] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restored (or possibly non-restored) rhymes in OP as readings

4.14. Specific and general conclusions for restored rhymes in "Troilus".

4.6 Audience response for "Troilus": Comprehensibility and appreciation

Having gained an insight into the recovered rhymes of "Troilus", it is time to delve into the audience response to the production, viz., the comprehensibility and appreciation of OP with reference to the show. In terms of comprehensibility, scant information is offered, and it is rather mixed. In a newspaper article, Colin Murphy states that "Rylance's more idiosyncratic experiments alienated some (like a Troilus and Cressida staged in "original pronunciation", which the audience could barely understand)" (2012); however, it is not clear where Murphy took this information. Sonia Massai examines and discusses one negative review, Lahr's, and suggests the

author's lacking comprehensibility as a result of biases. In contrast, Anne Thompson asserts that "[a]udiences did not seem to have too much difficulty picking up the unusual sounds; indeed many people remarked that the actors sounded more natural or 'like us' than usual, picking up on the fact that several features of the speech they heard sounded like modern British regional accents, especially western and northern ones" (2012, 146). As Thompson seems to have been an audience member,⁸⁴ it is conceivable that she observed and heard or spoke with other spectators to reach her conclusions. But she may as well have been influenced by David Crystal's accounts, given the similarity of her words with Crystal's ownership rhetoric (see Chap. 3). As for appreciation, findings are still quite meagre. Massai's research hints at limited enjoyment of OP on the part of Lahr (2020, 99). Additionally, Barrett claims that "the production was not popular and the use of OP may have been a contributory factor" (2013, 161),⁸⁵ and implies that OP did not meet with favour; it can then be inferred that it brought no real enjoyment to spectators.

In the following sections, I will attempt to clarify the matter of comprehensibility and appreciation of OP for "*Troilus*" by utilising similar material to that for "*Romeo*" – reviews, show reports and two interviews – and by analysing it qualitatively. First, I will be looking at critical reviews, then at show reports, and finally I will be giving voice to two scholars I interviewed.

4.6.1 Reviews

As previously mentioned, Massai scrutinises one review, Lahr's, and suggests both little comprehensibility and appreciation for "*Troilus*". Here, I intend to determine the general response to OP conveyed by critical reviews. To that end, I will take into account the 4 texts examined in Chap. 3 and another one available at the Globe's Archive: Miranda Sawyer's (2005), published in *The Sunday Telegraph*. I will also take note of McCrum's article (2005), centred on rehearsals, but more as an additional, informative piece rather than as an autonomous testimony of the production. As with "*Romeo*", I will refer to the parameters which have also guided my analysis of "*Romeo*"'s reviews (4.3.1): comprehensibility and twofold appreciation meant as both the enjoyment of OP sounds and the (perceived) impact of pronunciation on the performance.

⁸⁴ Thompson states that "[n]o comparison was possible in the case of *Troilus* because all performances were in Original Pronunciation, but it seemed to me an extremely fast presentation of the full text of a long and linguistically complicated play" (2012, 146).

⁸⁵ This conclusion on the popularity of "*Troilus*" may have been drawn by means of reviews such as Sawyer's (Barrett 2013, 157).

Starting with comprehensibility, my examination shows that the production posed some obstacles to the critics' understanding. Except for Dobson (2006, 320) – neither making any comment on how comprehensible the production was nor hinting at any difficulties – all the other critics voice some sort of clash with OP. If Lahr denounces a significantly reduced comprehension (“[b]y my estimate, only about thirty per cent of the production, which is unamplified, is comprehensible”; author’s emphasis), more cautious but still quite critical appear the other reviewers’ remarks. In fact, Sawyer envisions an adjustment period lasting at least 20 minutes, and points to a “confusing [...] night”, for which OP was also responsible. Carey portrays an incomplete acclimatisation, preventing him from fully “absorbing the language of the play” (2007, 403), and admits consulting the written text. Finally, Howland acknowledges that “when it [OP] was not clear, it did become difficult to understand” (2007, 406), even while praising the production and revealing other spectators’ detection of wordplay. On the other hand, almost entirely positive is McCrum’s judgement of comprehensibility, serving as a mere tool for reflection: “there’s no loss of clarity in the switch from RP (received pronunciation) to OP, though it is momentarily disorienting”. While disorientation cannot be equated with a perceived lack of comprehension, it nonetheless casts a shadow on the absolute (perceived) clarity of OP. Summing up all the ‘evaluations’ above, it can then be concluded that either temporarily or permanently “Troilus” was experienced as non-comprehensible.

The reviews also render it possible to speculate on possible reasons for the (perceived) lack of comprehensibility. As highlighted in Chap. 3, Lahr’s words seem to establish a relation with volume; in contrast, Howland exposes some actors’ inability to properly utter OP. In both cases, it is notable that inherent characteristics of OP are not hinted at as responsible for incomprehensibility. McCrum’s idea of OP as comprehensible also deserves some attention, in that it can contribute to a better understanding of the low comprehensibility of “Troilus”. In his article, the critic does not recount attending the performance but only “sitting in the Globe on a sunny summer’s morning watching the cast rehearse the heartbreaking moment in *Tro* (act v, scene 2) when the heroine betrays her love and surrenders herself to Diomedes”. This very short description – through the indication of the act and the scene – presupposes some very good acquaintance with the text, which may have facilitated McCrum’s comprehension of OP. This is not the place to carefully gauge or make detailed hypotheses on the impact of the textual knowledge on the comprehensibility of “Troilus”, but, in light of what I have just said, I posit that for reviewers low comprehensibility may also have derived from the lack of solid

acquaintance with the Shakespearean text. Such an idea appears to be supported by two reviewers acknowledging the (partial) non-comprehensibility of OP: Sawyer, holding that “a well-known play” would have been a better choice (“Why not use a well-known play to help the audience along? *Romeo and Juliet* would have been fun”), and Carey, preferring “a more familiar play” (2007, 403).

Let me now examine the perception of sounds, which seems to have been predominantly positive. The word *allure* can be used to capture most of the critics’ reactions. For Lahr the sonorities of OP had “a certain fascination”, to Carey the pronunciation constituted “a tantalising mix of the wonderfully strange and oddly normal-unfamiliar pronunciations knocking up against almost contemporary sounds”; and Dobson ascribes “potential interest” to the sphere of sounds (2006, 320). However, other views must be added to this flattering portrayal. Sawyer describes OP as “an accent that combines country bumpkin, northern English and southern Irish” and, in so doing, she partially decries the pronunciation: “country bumpkin” carries a negative or REDACTED meaning REDACTED. Even more interestingly, Howland claims:

Does one lose *poetry*? Here perhaps I might say yes, insofar as you could never imagine Gielgud speaking OP. But is that a bad thing? Perhaps we could look at this as a gain- something in the vowel sounds seems to put a hold on artful musicality. There is something very *practical* about this way of speaking, which certainly helped Ulysses-those long speeches that could so easily become meandering rivers of voice beautiful, lulling one to sleep, here became business-like, rational, a means to an end-intention behind the words uppermost (2007, 406; author’s emphasis).

No harmony or alluring sonorities are attached to OP, but practicality and rationality are called into play. Yet, lack of charm does not result in a negative reading of the sounds of the production; in fact, Howland demonstrates an appreciation of the impact of OP on the production by emphasising its human-like quality: “[...] these actors at the Globe sounded like real people [...]. They do not sound like actors wishing to be admired for their diction [...]; they sound like nervous lovers, dirty old men, devious politicians, anxious soldiers – and that surely is the important thing?” (2007, 406). The implied target for “actors wishing to be admired for their diction” can be assumed to be ‘artificial’ RP, in opposition to which OP allows experiencing characters as “real”. Therefore, although Howland did not see OP as harmonious, the pronunciation still held positive sway over her. This is especially clear when the critic indulges in a generalisation and comes to state that “the plays [in OP] are livelier, more robust and engaging than I have seen

in a long time". Overall, then, OP was conceived as alluring or harmonious, but when it was not, in one case it was depreciated to some extent, and in another it was still appreciated.⁸⁶

If Howland conveys some artistic value of OP, the remaining reviews express their disapproval of the pronunciation in relation to the play and ultimately the staging. I will re-use some quotations employed before, but they will be examined through new lenses. Whilst underscoring the confusion of the night, Sawyer openly denounces the choice of the problem play for OP: "Why not use a well-known play to help the audience along? *Romeo and Juliet* would have been fun". Setting aside the fact that Sawyer "seems unaware that *Romeo and Juliet* had already been performed in OP at Shakespeare's Globe" (Barrett 2013, 157), OP is seen as unsuitable for a challenging play like *Tro*, and as having added up to its chaos. Carey, too, expresses his preference for "a more familiar play", with more to restore and 'show off' in terms of rhymes and puns (2007, 403), but he also suggests the negative impact of OP on characterisation. Before indulging in any details, it should be clarified that Carey is not the only one criticising this aspect. Except for Howland's and Sawyer's, all the other reviews – Dobson's, Lahr's, and obviously Carey's – refer to the poor characterisation of the staging. Dobson does not establish a straightforward link with OP, whereas Lahr and Carey signal some definite connection between the two. In fact, according to Lahr, the actors' speaking effort is portrayed as subtracting from the performances: "The actors here aren't feeling the words they strain to pronounce". In the case of Carey, his suggestion that adequate time should be spent on "accent work and acting work" (404) and his focus on OP – his text presents itself as a response to the implications and advantages of OP as described by Crystal – indicate that the pronunciation is at least partly responsible for the weak characterisation of some roles. A predominantly negative influence of OP on "Troilus" is then to be found in reviews and mainly corresponds to poor characterisation. While according to the critics' perception OP played a role in the shaping of characters, it should not be forgotten that, as suggested for "Romeo", OP may not have been really or fully responsible for deficiencies attributed to performers.

⁸⁶ McCrum (2005) is quite vague in his evaluation of the OP sonorities ("But is this Shakespeare or is it a quasi-Elizabethan staging of *The Archers*?"; "audience will have the odd sensation of having strayed into an Irish-American bar somewhere in Warwickshire"), and openly comments on only one specific sound, that of *r*: "And the sound of the 'post-vocalic' R in words like 'heart' and 'hard' gives every line an earthy rusticity appropriate to the lines of a poet who grew up in the English countryside". It seems safe to deduce that for McCrum such a sound was appropriate.

Upon analysing the reviews, it can be concluded that “Troilus” did not generally meet with the critics’ favour: both comprehensibility and the impact of the pronunciation were substantially conceived of as negative. But even among these quite unenthusiastic responses, traces of positivity surface. The sounds of OP were generally regarded as alluring and positive, and, at least on the plane of sheer sounds, the devoted study of the pronunciation on the part of actors paid off.

4.6.2 Show reports

So far, I have given consideration to the critics’ views, but the reactions of general audiences can now be scrutinised by means of the show reports – 6 in total (GB 3316 SGT/THTR/SR/2005/7 2005). Unlike my analysis of the reviews, that pertaining to the reports will not display a predominantly negative reception but a general positive response in terms of enjoyment. Nonetheless, my examination will also call attention to some perceived flaws of the staging. For the sake of precision, I have not utilised the reports as with “Romeo”: in that case, they were brought into dialogue with Crystal’s words, whereas here, given their greater number and self-sufficient content, they will be considered on their own and offer a limited perspective on audience response, prioritising comprehensibility of OP.⁸⁷

First of all, the reports overall record positive reactions of audiences:

A really drizzly, wet evening but that did not stop the *amazing reaction* from a very, very supportive audience. A really amazing response to our OP production (Managers: Paul and Celia; GB 3316 SGT/THTR/SR/2005/7,⁸⁸ August 24, 2005).

A really humid evening, with a virtually full house!!! (Managers: Verna and Paul; August 31, 2005).

Slightly better show this week. The company have settled down (Managers: Paul and Tanya; September 7, 2005).

Slightly better show this week. The company have settled down. (Managers: Tanya and Cristin; September 14, 2005).

A *warm response* from our smallest audience yet. Managers: Paul and Cristin (Managers: Paul and Cristin; September 21, 2005; my emphasis).

⁸⁷ There exists no book or testimony by Crystal detailing the “Troilus” experience, including its audience reception.

⁸⁸ As the reference number does not change, I will not keep repeating it.

A lovely audience with lots of support for our last performance (Managers: Paul and Kevin; September 29 (*sic*),⁸⁹ 2005; my emphasis).

For those accounts reading “slightly better show this week” (September 7 and 24, 2005), acting – rather than audience – appears to be the focal point of such words (“The company have settled down”); and the 31 August document does not comment on the response to the staging. The remaining three reports, however, seem to portray a well-received production. Their degree of positivity varies – “amazing response”, “warm response” and “lots of support” –, but the different lexical choices may be put down to the presence of one different compiler each night: while Paul signs all three reports, the other manager or his partner changes – Celia, Cristin and Kevin. As a result of the changing identity of the managers, it would seem impractical to make a precise differentiation between the three nights and take the words above as an accurate index of response. In an attempt to draw general conclusions, then, it can simply be argued that audiences showed some positive enjoyment of the production.⁹⁰

Yet, one element – a description of younger people’s reactions – invites caution in the examination of both the enjoyment of the show and eventually the comprehensibility of OP. On 14 September, the managers signal some disruption provoked by French students:

There were a group of troublesome French students in tonight. The steward repeatedly asked them not to sit in the yard but they ignored him. FOH were brought in and the students stood up. They then talked incessantly and kept opening and rustling sweet wrappers. The people sitting in the seats behind them weren’t happy so FOH told them to be quiet. They pretended not to understand so FOH resorted to telling them to leave. A French speaking steward was then found to translate and told them they could go back in whenever they liked as long as they respected those people trying to watch and enjoy the play and be quiet (September 14, 2005).

⁸⁹ The right date is September 28, 2005.

⁹⁰ At first sight, such appreciation may be shadowed by what looks like an enigmatic statement dating back to 7 September. Managers Paula and Tanya report: “Slightly better show this week”. Without any further elements to rely on, this statement could be interpreted as an evaluation on the audience response. Yet the 14 September 2005 document, also penned by Tanya (and Cristin), turns out to provide a direction of interpretation. In this case, the managers write the very same sentence but then add: “The company have settled down”. Thus, acting – rather than audience – appears central, and, it can be inferred, that it is the main focus in the previous one, too (September 7, 2004). It seems logical to conclude that no explicit statement obfuscates or diminishes the positive response to the production.

The behaviour and distraction of these French youths suggest that they were not enjoying the performance (they were speaking with each other “incessantly”), and it cannot be ruled out that comprehensibility of OP was quite low. The younger audience members were French and, it can be assumed, native speakers of French, so the pronunciation may have posed some real obstacles.

Additionally, a remark casts a darker shadow on the comprehensibility of OP and ultimately the enjoyment of the production, just proceeding in the opposite direction to the description above. The report of the 21st September states that “FOH [Front of Office] received several complaints about volume”, and that a couple lamented that “[t]hey had come to London especially to see the original pronunciation performance and were very disappointed and frustrated that they could not hear”. This echoes and, in a way, reinforces the criticism about volume included in one review, which however must have concerned another performance;⁹¹ and hints at the spectators’ low comprehensibility for “Troilus”. The same report also – sarcastically? – informs that the “gentleman” ended up detaching from the production and reading his copy of the Evening Standard (“FOH later learned from a steward that the gentleman in question had begun reading his Evening Standard fifteen minutes into the performance”).⁹² The very act of reading while seeing the production denotes some distancing from the show, presumably signifying lack of enjoyment.

As a conclusion, the reports suggest that “Troilus” was somehow positively received, but these records also bear traces of negative responses for some performances. Of particular interest are the disruption of French kids on 14 September, and the complaints regarding volume on 21 September. Leaving behind the enjoyment of the entire production, and letting OP take centre stage, low comprehensibility may have played a role for the younger audience members,⁹³ but

⁹¹ The review was published on 11 September 2005.

⁹² The report also records that some misinformed women did not want to leave the theatre: “The ladies said that they had been told by the box office that the show didn’t end until 10:45 pm, and they were determined to stay in the theatre until that time so as to get their full money’s worth”. The spectators’ words and behaviour are quite difficult to speculate on, and escape one single hypothesis. They could both suggest that the two women enjoyed the space and felt entitled to be there until the very end, or that the not-so-enjoyable experience persuaded them to stay in to ‘make up for’ the deficiencies of the production.

⁹³ The ‘restlessness’ of the French youths could be compared with that of the “kids” playing some havoc during “Romeo” (they possibly belonged to the same age group). However, I have not highlighted this similitude, since the two groups were in all likely divided by a non-negligible trait: their first language. I have neither drawn attention to Crystal’s words on the “kids” response (Sec. 4.3.2), because, apart from referring to teenagers having English as their first language, they solely describe the “Romeo” experience.

4.6.3 Interviews

[illegible]

⁹⁴ REDACTED and Spottiswoode are of course to be regarded as well-informed spectators.

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disappointed when the theatre experiment in the Globe was not continued after T&C [“Troilus”] and felt that Globe Education could and should support the Crystal experiment”. Yet this is a broad-scope inference. Spottiswoode’s testimony offers much more input to ponder over the reactions of audiences, rather than his personal response:⁹⁶

T and C was not a success. The company had a very limited rehearsal period. It is also a much less well-known play for audiences and actors. And it was one of the early experiments with an all-women company. This was a difficult cocktail. I sensed that the audience was confused and that both production and experiment were hampered. Perhaps this is why the theatre department lost confidence in the experiment (Spottiswoode, email to author, August 18, 2022).

The scholar describes the puzzled response of audiences (“I sensed that the audience was confused”),⁹⁷ and assumes that this possibly provoked a loss of “confidence” in the OP experiment, that is, its termination.⁹⁸ But, remaining within the boundaries of comprehensibility and appreciation, the puzzlement of audiences suggests that OP was not that comprehensible in “Troilus”, and implies that spectators did not appreciate the pronunciation in the show. Obviously, Spottiswoode does not indicate the responsibility of OP directly, but the very fact that a few lines above he comments on comprehensibility in the case of “Romeo” (“I remember wondering if the audience would follow the story in OP and, it seemed that most did”) (“Romeo and Juliet was fascinating”; see 4.3.3) makes the intervention of this factor all the more relevant. About appreciation, the actual suspension of the OP use after “Troilus” and for about ten years – until the advent of “Macbeth” in OP – corroborates the limited enjoyment of the pronunciation only hinted at.

That said, Spottiswoode’s words are also worthy of attention in another regard. They depict the general non-success or failure of the production and the issues responsible for it: 1. Limited time for preparation (“The company had a very limited

⁹⁶ I asked two questions: “Did you see the above-mentioned performances [“Romeo” and “Troilus”] while they were on? - If so, what was your reaction in each case? - If so, can you remember any general or specific reactions on the part of audience members?”.

⁹⁷ During the Q&A session of the panel “Why a Rhyme is not a Rhyme: Phonological Change, Prescription and Adaptation” (*The First Folio at 400. The Linguistic Legacies of Early Modern Times*, November 10, 2023), one audience member said that he attended the production, and that a Japanese gentleman nearby “looked very puzzled”.

⁹⁸ Shakespeare’s Globe is a charity that receives no regular government subsidy” (Globe Theatre 2023b), that is, a self-sufficient institution, predominantly counting on its own revenues. Therefore, the fact that the OP experiment was actually stopped after the non-success of “Troilus” is a compelling argument.

given by volume and lacking knowledge of the play. Volume is not only pointed to by one reviewer, Lahr, but it was also criticised by some spectators, as my analysis of show reports underlines. As for the audience's little familiarity with *Tro*, several comments and sources (reviews, Spottiswoode's interview) put it forward.

On the other hand, appreciation of OP is a vaguer and more complex element to shed light on. The reviews offer definite material regarding the evaluation of sounds, quite positive, and the impact of OP on the production, predominantly negative. But all the other sources are only able to provide broader data and conclusions referring to a general enjoyment of OP or lack of it. What does eventually emerge? Spottiswoode's words indicate that audiences did not enjoy OP, but this needs to be taken with a pinch of salt, since positive responses emerge as well. For instance, REDACTED and Howland demonstrate to have appreciated the impact of OP on "*Troilus*", and the spectators' complaints in the show reports are limited. And, although it has not been pointed out before for "*Troilus*", my research material is also limited: it certainly exceeds that for "*Romeo*" but still cannot account for the response of the thousands of people who may have attended the production.¹⁰⁰

I would argue, then, that the OP in the production posed some obstacles in terms of comprehension, and was surely not appreciated by everyone. However, my research cannot provide any ultimate answer regarding how widespread the low comprehensibility and non-enjoyment of OP were. It can only be speculated that, given the interruption of the OP experimentation after "*Troilus*", either lack of comprehension or appreciation or both must have been significant, but I stress the hypothetical nature of this claim and current lack of substantial evidence.

4.7 *Romeo*", "*Troilus*" and OP: Conclusions

Although I have discussed and presented my remarks about single aspects of "*Romeo*" and "*Troilus*" in connection with OP, I will not make a close comparison between the two as these were different stagings. In fact, the two shows were not only based on two distinct Shakespearean plays, even in terms of genre (a tragedy, *RJ*, and a problem play, *Tro*), but they also emerged under different circumstances: "*Romeo*" was a feeble attempt at OP, whereas "*Troilus*" was a more decisive embracement of the pronunciation due, in all likelihood, to the former's success.

¹⁰⁰ As stated by its website, the theatre "can hold 1,570 people, 700 standing and the rest seated" (Globe Theatre 2023a; author's emphasis).

Thus, in accordance with my stated intention to reach conclusions on both the OP experimentation at Shakespeare's Globe and the pronunciation in general terms, I will bring to the fore specific elements of the OP experimentation at the theatre, and general characteristics of the reconstructed pronunciation.

Specific conclusions:

- The reconstructed pronunciation was more of an explorative enterprise than a recreation of a historical practice, considering the words of participants (e.g. Carroll), and at least some sounds (e.g. Mercutio's, the rhyme *kiss-his*), which seem to have rested on artistic – possibly directorial – decisions.
- The OP of both productions counted on several accents, and included inaccuracies pertaining to sounds.
- Thanks to OP, (some) rhyming devices were restored and brought along meanings or effects, but not all of the rhymes in the transcription were adequately rendered (as rhymes).
- In terms of comprehensibility, OP was not immaculate, but, as based on existing material, "Troilus" can be inferred as having posed more challenges.
- The low comprehensibility of OP appeared linked to factors other than its own features (e.g. volume, actors' rendition).
- OP sounds were not perceived as so negative; in the case of "Troilus", a prevailing allure was noticed by reviewers.
- In terms of general appreciation or enjoyment, OP was less appreciated than it has been portrayed in literature, with some reviewers and audience members complaining about it.
- On several occasions, OP was perceived as responsible for weaker characterisation.

General conclusions:

- OP can restore rhymes contributing to themes in plays.
- The reconstructed pronunciation can retrieve multifunctional rhymes.
- OP rhymes and sounds can derive from interpretations and decisions on the part of the linguist and ultimately the director.
- The delivery of actors is fundamental to signal restored rhymes.
- The comprehensibility of OP may rest on several factors and, among these, acoustic problems (e.g. volume) should be included.

- OP may not be as comprehensible and appreciated as it has been affirmed in official narratives.

Above, I have attempted to capture the main findings of my collation of material and research; however, some further observations stemming from them will be offered, and they will occasionally be fusing specific and general conclusions, and the limitations of my study. As regards the actors' *parole*,¹⁰¹ it is not clear up to what extent inaccuracies were actual errors, or constituted regional hues or deliberate efforts to make the pronunciation more accessible to the audiences. Certainly, the diphthong /əɪ/ seems to have been rather challenging and not phonetically mastered by actors,¹⁰² but what about the other 'imperfections'? For instance, the near rhyme *prove-love* in "Romeo" appears as intentional in that it is justified by the notes accompanying the transcription, particularly the so-called closeness between past and present sounds. Still regarding the actors' rendition, I have – repeatedly – maintained the performers' merit of stressing rhyming words, but this delivery can probably be better understood when juxtaposed with its opposite. In some cases (e.g. *sit-yet* in "Romeo"), I observed that rhymes or failed rhymes were 'run over'; they were not isolated but amalgamated into following words. It then became evident that, to acknowledge or perceive retrieved (or simply) rhymes as such, 'proper' delivery is much more effective.

Dealing with restored rhymes in relation to both OP and the two productions at the Globe, a broader consideration is in order. As has been hinted at, the reading of reinstated rhymes in "Romeo" and "Troilus" on the part of audience members has not been empirically investigated by any scholar thus far, and I did not study it myself in the absence of adequate material. Thus, such an aspect of audience response is substantially an "undiscovered country" (to borrow a Shakespearean phrase), and it will remain so with respect to the audiences attending the 2004 and 2005 performances in OP. In fact, the responses of those audiences have

¹⁰¹ Here *parole*, a Saussurian concept, corresponds to the concrete use of OP on the part of individuals rather than to the abstract system.

¹⁰² In an article published in 2023, which then goes beyond the time span of this thesis, Новикова et al. point to code-mixing as marking the use of OP in a production, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by Paul Meier (2010). Specifically, the authors of the study depict Meier's actors as not having consistently and precisely spoken OP, but as having combined the reconstructed pronunciation and their American variety in line with Crystal's 'liberal' philosophy accepting lack of "exactitude and precision". If one considers the inaccurate pronunciations and missed rhymes surfaced in this chapter, the term "code-mixing" may also apply to "Romeo" and "Troilus".

irremediably gone unrecorded. Yet, looking ahead, investigations into the reading of rhymes, including the restored ones, could still be carried out for new productions staged in, say, the United States, which are quite interested in the reconstructed pronunciation. In this way, OP would be better understood both as part of specific shows and in more general terms.

Lastly, some observations on audience response should be put forward. Among my bullet points, I have claimed that OP was not completely comprehensible, and that “Troilus” was more challenging. Several reviewers and my interviewees suggested that *Tro* is a difficult and less familiar play, so it could be surmised that the general lesser familiarity with the work played a role in the comprehensibility of the production. To further prove this point, *RJ* is an extremely popular story, as pointed out in 4.1.1, and *Tro* was regarded as a problem and challenging work in 4.4.1. Ultimately, stressing what has been mentioned before, my research does not entirely capture audience response to OP since material was limited, too scarce. However, my study has sought to analyse accounts neglected before (e.g. show reports), to reflect more deeply on the tenability of Crystal’s positive rhetoric regarding reactions to OP in the case of “Romeo” and in general terms, and to display a different side to the OP story at the Globe.

In conclusion, my study has provided an understanding of the OP used in “Romeo” and “Troilus”, its characteristics and its audience response, while offering general conclusions on OP itself. Yet, more work is to be done. For instance, in future studies, puns and phonoaesthetic effects of OP and actors’ testimonies could be systematically looked into so as to unveil further traits of the OP sphere of the two stagings, and in such a way even better understand the experimentation at Shakespeare’s Globe.

4.8 Coda: OP after “Romeo” and “Troilus”

Having examined the OP in “Romeo” and “Troilus” and in general terms, I intend to give an insight into “Macbeth” and “Henry V” – the experiments that followed “Romeo” and “Troilus” –, viz., how these came to be. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED RED. Upon learning that “Henry V” had not been transcribed, I set out to work on a transcription of the text and thus attempt to address this scientific void. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED

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4.8.1 The return of OP to Shakespeare's Globe

Following "Troilus", the OP experiment came to a halt at Shakespeare's Globe for about ten years, before "Macbeth" (2014) and "Henry V" (2015) were mounted at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse. The question then arises as to why these new experiments with OP were devised. Available literature does not report the reasons for the resumption of OP in 2014, but in this respect my interview with Patrick Spottiswoode is of service.

The motivations for the re-adoption of OP appear to reside in the interest of Spottiswoode in OP as the director of Globe Education, and his pragmatism. Much to Spottiswoode's disappointment, the OP experiment was interrupted,¹⁰³ but he "felt that Globe Education could and should support the Crystal experiment", because "one part of [his] mission for Globe Ed [Education] was to excite curiosity and interest in the plays/playhouses of the early modern period". He, however, was "resistant to staging Henry V and Macbeth" within the framework of the existing initiative *Read not Dead* (henceforth *RnD*), in that he had set it up "to ensure that the Globe (especially when it became known as Shakespeare's Globe) did not become too Shakespeare-centric" (email to author, 2022).¹⁰⁴ Therefore, Spottiswoode's willingness to promote the OP experiment co-existed side by side with his reluctance to welcome Shakespeare within a project aimed at giving visibility (and audibility) to other playwrights of the period. Finally, the stagings or, more precisely, staged readings were agreed on, since

there were pragmatic reasons for staging both Macbeth and Henry V: I knew that they would attract audiences BECAUSE they were by Shakespeare (!); the T&C "failure" was due in part because audiences weren't too familiar with the play. An

¹⁰³ In this regard, Spottiswoode claims: "I was disappointed when the theatre experiment in the Globe was not continued after T&C and felt that Globe Education could and should support the Crystal experiment" (Spottiswoode, email to author, August 18, 2022).

¹⁰⁴ Apparently, Shakespeare was not prioritised at all within *RnD*. James Wallace maintains that "[t]he first aim of the project was to give staged readings to all the surviving plays by Shakespeare's contemporaries. [...] *Read Not Dead* has also allowed the staging of 'bad' Shakespeare quartos, adaptations of Shakespeare (from Restoration versions to a staging of Edward Bond's *Lear*), of narrative poems, and a couple of new plays (by Rowan Joffe and John Wolfson)" (2008, 147). What is more, in his chapter "Contextualising Globe Education", Spottiswoode claims that "*Read Not Dead* was initiated in 1995 to shed light on plays written between 1567 and 1642 that were *not* by Shakespeare" (2008, 139; author's emphasis).

unknown play by one of Shakespeare's contemporaries would have been very difficult both for actors (who rehearse the play in a day) and for audiences (Spottiswoode, email to author, August 18, 2022).

The performances in OP were then accepted as a part of *RnD* thanks to practical considerations, that is, the likely interest aroused by the Shakespeare brand, and the unfeasibility of using a non-Shakespearean text for OP – if an unknown work by another playwright had been mounted, this would have posed challenges to both performers and audience members. For the latter factor, unfeasibility, the experience with the not-well known “Troilus” must have served as a valuable lesson. It can then be concluded that the two staged readings came about thanks to practical evaluations, which excluded taking risks with writers of the time,¹⁰⁵ as well as Spottiswoode's association of OP with one of the objectives for Globe Education.

But one may wonder why staged readings were selected for “Macbeth” and “Henry V”; after all, these plays could have been proposed as independent, full productions. Spottiswoode once again underscores the role of practicalities:

There was an even more basic pragmatic reason for staged readings as opposed to full productions: budget!! It would have been prohibitively expensive to mount a full production of the plays in OP. It is why the *RnD* model is practical as well as exciting. Actors arrive on a Sunday morning and rehearse the play in half a day before presenting it on a stage in front of an audience: hence the scripts. Ben's company had the added obstacle of playing in OP so he “was allowed” to work with his actors on OP before the day of the performance.

Accordingly, the readings were more viable thanks to their limited expenses. In fact, if Kevin A. Quarmby's words were still valid in 2014 and 2015, performers were “unpaid professional actors” in the *RnD* project (2011, 357). Thus, “Macbeth” and “Henry V” could not have been full productions mostly owing to financial reasons; either the institution was unwilling to take any risks or high expenses could not have been afforded.

In conclusion, the staged readings in OP of “Macbeth” and “Henry V” were the output of a non-immediate process. In line with his mission for Globe Education, Spottiswoode wished to support experimentation with OP; and, following attentive evaluations derived from the not-so-positive experience with “Troilus”, he agreed on low-budget staged readings within *RnD*. At this stage, it is unknown whether

¹⁰⁵ This is what happened in an initial stage. In 2016 an event regarding the reading of extracts from Henslowe's Diary was mounted in OP (see Appendix D, Table D.8).

full productions were actually considered at first and then discarded; or whether “Macbeth” and “Henry V” were planned at the same time or not. However, Spottiswoode’s testimony appears to give hints. It does not report anything on full productions ever being given some thought and as such seems to reject this hypothesis. Furthermore, the fact that the director’s words do not make any distinction between the staged readings implies that they were devised jointly (“I know, at first, I was resistant to staging Henry V and Macbeth in our RnD seasons” “But there were pragmatic reasons for staging both Macbeth and Henry V”; email to author, August 18, 2022).¹⁰⁶ As a last observation, my discussion has not inquired into the reason/s why the Sam Wanamaker playhouse was used for the new OP performances instead of the Globe. Yet, unless new findings emerge, this is to be linked with *RnD* having the indoor theatre as its home (Globe Theatre 2023c).

4.8.2 “Henry V” and the *Dictionary*

To understand how OP was, concretely speaking, ‘resuscitated’ at the Globe, it would have been ideal to look into the OP dimension of “Macbeth” and “Henry V”, but due to time constraints and my prioritisation of full productions (“Romeo” and “Troilus”) rather than staged readings,¹⁰⁷ this proved impractical. Yet, as mentioned before, I transcribed the text for “Henry V”, for which no official transcription exists, and the process enabled me to further ponder over the *Dictionary* – “the crowning glory of the recent OP movement” (Johnson 2019, 130) – and its use, viz., its features and possible limitations. Before commenting on my findings, I will briefly outline the methodology I deployed for my transcription.

4.8.2.1 Methodology

The act of transcribing “Henry V”, staged by Ben Crystal’s company “Passion in Practice”¹⁰⁸ in July 2015,¹⁰⁹ entailed two phases:

¹⁰⁶ My question was rather general and did not impose a real conflation of the two performances. It was phrased as follows: “After several years since the first experiments with OP (“Romeo and Juliet”, 2004; “Troilus and Cressida”, 2005), Shakespeare’s Globe organized some events and performances resorting to said pronunciation. Was the Education department in charge of all of them? And why did the Education department, of which you were director at the time, resolve to explore OP?”.

¹⁰⁷ Different evaluations would have been necessary.

¹⁰⁸ The staged reading featured David Crystal himself who played Fluellen.

¹⁰⁹ While at Globe’s Archive, I looked for publicity material concerning the performance, but, unlike “Romeo” and “Troilus”, there was none.

1. *Initial Construction of the script:* After an initial attempt at reconstructing the script, I came into possession of the prompt book of the performance – written in early modern spelling – by contacting David and Ben Crystal (Shakespeare 2015). As David Crystal explained to me, no semi-phonetic transcription of the performance existed: “I never made a transcription of H5. Ben’s company was so familiar with OP by then that he felt it wasn’t needed, so everything was done ‘through the air’” (email to author, August 17, 2022). At the Globe’s Archive, I watched the video recording of “Henry V” (GB 3316 SGT/ED/LIB/REC/2015 Globe Ed/RND3) to verify whether the prompt copy and the text for the performance matched. Whenever they did not, I took note of the different lines and alterations in the performance by primarily resorting to the Penguin Edition (Shakespeare 1968, 1996) used by Ben Crystal (Shakespeare [1995] 2020),¹¹⁰ and to passages from other history plays (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019d, 2019e, 2019f). By the end of this stage, I had gathered the lines of the text – not the transcription¹¹¹ – utilised for the performance.
2. *Transcription of the text into OP:* Once the text was available to me, I proceeded to transcribe it into OP by resorting to Crystal’s *Dictionary*. One may argue that I could have directly transcribed the text into the reconstructed pronunciation whilst watching the performance. Yet, in practice, it was impossible to do that: I had to reconstruct the script first and afterwards I had little access to the Globe’s resources, which did not allow for listening to and transcribing every single word into phonetic symbols.

Finally, it should be highlighted that my transcription (Appendix I) proposes the *Dictionary*’s phonetic variants rather than the ones to be found in the performance; and whenever more options were available, I did not make a choice but reported all of the alternatives.

¹¹⁰ In an email, Crystal points to the use of the Penguin Edition, accompanied by the consultation of the First Folio: “Ben’s company used the Penguin editions as a rule, for convenience (and they are the ones we use in Shakespeare’s Words [SW]), but he’s always aware of F1 (which we also include in SW)” (email to author, August 17, 2022). The awareness of the Folio is evident from the spelling of the prompt book.

¹¹¹ Highly interested in transcriptions, Barrett (2013) analyses the transcription styles of several scholars, belonging to both the 20th and 21st century (276-289). Crystal, with his transcription for “Romeo”, is included among them.

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¹¹² I will not dare to say what its point of reference was (e.g. British English), since I have not looked into it systematically.

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¹¹⁵ The spelling in modern English is *Plack* according to the *Penguin* (1968, 1996, 145) and *Arden Editions* ([1995] 2020, 618) and the *Complete Works* (2005, 318).

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¹¹⁶ I have noted a few mismatches between the pronunciation of foreign languages in the staged reading and that in the *Dictionary*; however, due to lack of time, I have not been able to study the matter.

[illegible]

4.8.3 Concluding remarks

This coda has made manifest that, after “Romeo” and “Troilus”, the OP experimentation was dormant for several years, before returning to Shakespeare’s Globe, viz., Sam Wanamaker playhouse in 2014 and 2015. The performances had a new ‘shape’ – that of staged readings rather than full productions –, but what is of greater significance here is the actual return and adoption of Shakespeare’s OP at the reconstructed theatre after the first two experiments. This renders it clear that the OP exploration was not permanently completed after “Troilus”. Even more significant is the determination of Spottiswoode’s actual support to OP: it was the former director’s involvement that brought back the pronunciation at the institution.

That said, it is still possible that other unmentioned, or rather, unrecalled factors may have served the OP cause (and return). In my interview with Spottiswoode, he reminisced about other OP, non-theatrical events co-organised by the Crystals

between 2005 and 2014: “I was interested to see that we only ran OP experiments from 2014 to 2016. My recollection is that we continued working with David and then Ben on different projects/programmes from 2005. I am pretty sure that David gave talks to students and teachers on courses at the Globe” (email to author, August 18, 2022). It is then not unreasonable to surmise that the Crystals themselves – still gravitating around the theatrical institution after 2005 – proposed that Shakespeare’s OP could make its entrance into *RnD* performances. More studies and particularly interviews could help to clarify what exactly happened, adding up to or modifying Spottiswoode’s narrative.

On a final note, I have not scrutinised the staged readings due to time constraints and owing to their different nature from “Romeo” and “Troilus” – staged readings rather than full stagings. But one of these performances has not remained completely untouched: I have tried my hand at “Henry V”’s transcription. This work, filling a scientific gap, has allowed me to examine Crystal’s *Dictionary* from a more practical perspective, and eventually contribute to a better understanding of this tool, particularly its possible and real limitations. However, what I have presented has been nothing but a contribution: research on the *Dictionary* – as well as OP performances – is still in its prime.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have investigated the OP of the two full productions staged at Shakespeare’s Globe, “Romeo” (2004) and “Troilus” (2005). Experimental rather than historically faithful, the reconstructed pronunciation had features of several accents, including Italian/Italianate (in “Romeo”), and was ‘smeared’ by sound inaccuracies, which on several occasions, impacted the plane of rhymes. Speaking of the latter, some were retrieved thanks to OP and brought about textual meanings and effects; yet, even more rhymes and related effects could have been restored, as can be deduced from the transcriptions of “Romeo” and “Troilus”. Tackling audience response, OP was generally comprehensible but not entirely, and the familiarity of each work – *RJ* and *Tro* – may have played a major role in the comprehensibility of the pronunciation. In terms of appreciation, the reconstructed sounds were and were not enjoyed, with the voices acknowledging the positive impact of OP being rather scant. That said, my study is not without limitations (e.g. a relatively small corpus compared with the number of spectators) and evinces the need for further research.

In the current chapter, I have also looked into the ‘resurrection’ of OP after 2005. After “Troilus”, the OP experimentation came to a halt at Shakespeare’s Globe, and, as has been suggested, the non-success of this second production may have caused this interruption. More studies, particularly interviews, into the rationale behind the suspension of OP stagings are necessary; in the meantime, Patrick Spottiswoode’s words can be accepted. Accordingly, when the pronunciation returned in performances at the institution, it did thanks to the support of Globe Education in the person of Patrick Spottiswoode, and through a different shape: no longer in expensive full productions but staged readings of “Macbeth” and “Henry V” within the project *RnD*. In my research, the latter performance – “Henry V” – has served to shed light on features of the *Dictionary*. Instead, the sonic dimension of this performance and of “Macbeth” – including rhymes and audience response – still awaits to be investigated.

Conclusions

The major thrust of this thesis has been to produce a systematisation of the principal data and debates concerning OP and OP productions in the 21st century through qualitative research. Initially, I looked into (selected) works exploring the segmental and suprasegmental dimensions of OP, and recorded limited attention to regional and foreign sounds, for which I have eventually drawn on non-OP scholarship. After that, I gathered discussions and data on OP in theatre, with a special focus on textual and actorial effects and audience response reviews also filtered through the lenses of newspapers articles and reviews. Finally, I provided a close study of the OP dimension and its reception for “Romeo and Juliet” and “Troilus and Cressida” at the Globe by means of both new and existing material, and offered final thoughts on the OP experimentation and on a major OP tool, Crystal’s *Dictionary*.

If one finally looks at this thesis as whole, what will emerge is that I have made abundant use of testimonies from a number of scholars, theatre practitioners and critics; however, above all of them stood the voice and the expertise of David Crystal with as much regard to reconstructed sounds as theatrical practice, and with particular reference to audience reactions. Though contributing significantly to “a new era of interest in Shakespearean pronunciation” (2013, 5), Crystal’s output does not always do justice to OP and its theatrical life in the 21st century. As my data and observations have suggested, it does not tell the whole story (and neither does this thesis for that matter). I will now summarise the key findings of my research and further reflect upon them, and I will also address questions – posed in my Introduction – regarding the advantages and disadvantages of OP and its value: What are the advantages and disadvantages of OP? What is its value?. As a final step, I will illustrate future directions of OP studies, and foreground major limitations of my work.

Reconstructions and sounds

Starting with Shakespeare’s reconstructed sounds, OP literature has been shown to pursue, despite minor divergences, the pronunciation of Shakespeare’s works, and to use evidence both external and internal to the playwright’s texts. Whether all such evidence is reliable or adequately fulfils its purpose – e.g. the identification of identical sounds for (supposed) rhymes – is disputable, and my research has called for an expansion of the supposed corpus of scholars on several occasions. Setting aside the actual usefulness of the aforementioned evidence, its use is not described

in detail and nor is the scholars' methodology. What is more, OP literature has been portrayed as generally according priority to phonetic realisations rather than phonemes, and accounting for vowels more than consonants, which tend to be portrayed in their 'deviations' from their current counterparts. As should be clear by now, the present is an essential term of comparison or even a substantial point of reference in the field of reconstructions: it makes it possible to deduce sounds and, especially if one focuses on Crystal's output, suprasegmentals. Broadly speaking, these, or rather those explicitly mentioned, appear as less transparent than single sounds or segments, but Crystal often conceives of them in relation to present practices, although it is unclear which current shape/s suprasegmentals such as intonation may have concretely taken on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage.

Staying within the bounds of identified sounds, according to my research, OP literature does not indulge in (detailed) discussions on regional and foreign sounds. Attempts at portrayals have been made (Venegas 2022; REDACTED), but much is left undone – while being present elsewhere (Crystal and Crystal 2004) – especially in terms of foreign languages such as Italian and Spanish. This does not mean that these sounds are not contemplated at all; in the case of the *Dictionary*, at least some items are portrayed. However, the main issue is the absence of any actual reasoning on the reconstruction of such sounds or, to put it differently, the absence of a theoretical and methodological framework. Before this void (how were these 'deviant' sounds portrayed on the Shakespearean stage then?), I have attempted to offer valid input by considering accessibility to foreign languages on the part of Shakespeare and his actors; yet, more detailed theatrical investigations, shedding light on stage practices, could better help to reconstruct verbal sonorities.¹

Apropos of theatrical studies, the theatrical branch of OP literature has been portrayed as providing new findings and a fresh perspective on the Shakespearean sounds as a whole. These may not have been as 'colourful' and variable as Crystal suggests, with actors retaining their unrecorded and native regional hues; according to Sonia Massai, a proto-standard or "usual speech" was used in theatre in Shakespeare's day, though not deployed for all characters. Given the lack of standardisation at the time, it seems impossible to conjecture that this stage pronunciation – or sort of pseudo-standard – had the same degree of inner uniformity as RP. In other words, this proto-standard accent must have allowed for more variability in terms of segmental and suprasegmental dimension than we

¹ It cannot be ruled out that they already exist. As stated on numerous occasions, I have accorded priority to OP literature.

know of in RP due to the lack of codification. But what do we concretely have of this “usual speech”? To what extent Crystal’s or Barrett’s reconstructions reflect it? My transcription of “Henry V” has shown that for a few words Crystal has more than one pronunciation; could any or all of them be part of the aforementioned stage accent? These linguistic questions cannot receive any answer here, but OP sounds, particularly Crystal’s, still deserve attention.

It has been seen that Crystal’s OP – a major point of reference for this work –² aims to portray the sound system of the Shakespearean time, applicable to the plays, without considering any specific accent. And, whenever social variants based on age, gender and education are contemplated, they do belong to the period rather than to Shakespearean evidence or the stage. Some problems then arise: 1. Crystal’s sound system constitutes a phonological framework, a basis for different accents. But how is such a generalisation possible, given the EmE abundance of phonological variants resulting from the Great Vowel Shift, and even today’s phonological differences marking accents?³ 2. Is Crystal’s system more linked to a variety or accent than the scholar is willing to admit?⁴ 3. Were general socio-linguistic practices, as depicted by Crystal, reflected in theatre? If so, to what extent were they reproduced in a theatrical setting largely featuring stylised acting? While I have previously expressed my doubts regarding the actual possibility that Crystal’s identified social variation was used in Shakespeare’s day, once again I cannot provide any ultimate answer to any of these questions. Nonetheless, I found it important to highlight here critical aspects, which may need to be addressed in future studies, if not reconstructions.

My last point on sociolinguistic practices paves the way for a further observation on the use of sociolinguistics or, more precisely, of a sociolinguistic principle in OP reconstructions. Crystal resorts to presenting categories for, say, suprasegmentals and observations on gender variation; and, when proposing variation, he seems to apply the Uniformitarian Principle (henceforth UP). This enunciates that “the linguistic forces that cause variation today are similar to those that have operated in the past; it is therefore permissible to apply reasoning based on modern observations to the analysis of earlier stages of a language” (Crystal qtd.

² Crystal’s different sounds are here regarded as the manifestation of the same system evolving throughout time.

³ Another question – ancillary to Question 1 – could be added: Whenever phonetic realisations are provided in Crystal’s reconstruction as in Chap. 2, of which variety/ies were they a part?

⁴ For example, could Crystal’s reconstruction refer to the London dialect considered “cutting-edge” (“all’avanguardia”; my translation), as Gabriella Mazzon states, and not reflect the less advanced, different developments or the lack of them in language varieties in remote areas (see Mazzon 1994, 41)?

in Baldi and Cuzzolin 2015, 41).⁵ To put it simply, as Philip Baldi and Pierluigi Cuzzolin claim, the present is used to explain the past (2015, 38). The association between past and present may appear problematic; Alexander Bergs, for example, warns against the risk of anachronism (2012),⁶ i.e. the risk of superimposing our modern view on the analysis of material from the past, the historical sociolinguist's version of the 'observers' paradox'" (Mazzon 2015, 60). What should we do then? Should we keep or suspend the application of the UP for OP? I contend that, to have a reconstruction as accurate and close to the Shakespearean period as possible, it would be ideal not to rely solely on the UP but delve more deeply into sociolinguistic studies with reference to drama. Instead of (only) linking present tendencies to the past and making assumptions on that basis, one could consult various investigations prioritising, for example, diastatic and diaphasic variation not necessarily relating to phonology or phonetics.⁷ Questions such as the following may be useful: Are female characters in Shakespearean plays represented as adopting more innovative forms than male *dramatis personae*?⁸ If so, in what situations? And in other non-Shakespearean corpora? Returning to Crystal, it is not clear to what extent he adheres to the UP in his research,⁹ but if, as Carroll suggests, OP is a means to explore the present more than the past, the UP may suffice.

One last reflection, sociolinguistic in nature, can be made; this, however, only considers the present and does not derive from what has been discussed above. In my research, while incorporating the actors' natural accents, OP has been associated with varieties such as American and Irish English, but why do we have such connections on the part of speakers? Do common perceptions and biases play a role? In the case of American English, one may hypothesise the impact of myths whereby secluded communities in America still speak Shakespearean English; yet, the existence of these myths would be nothing but a preliminary (and possibly

⁵ William Labov's original definition is the following: "the forces operating to produce linguistic change today are of the same kind and order of magnitude as those which operated five or ten thousand years ago" (Labov qtd. in Auer et al. 2015, 4).

⁶ Also William Labov – advocate of the principle – does not accept the principle blindly. For him, if the present were identical to the past in every respect, there would be nothing to explain (Putzu 2015, 45).

⁷ Obviously, it would be preferable to use phonological/phonetic studies, but, in the absence of these, findings in other fields could be taken as models.

⁸ My source of inspiration has been Alexander Bergs's "The Uniformitarian Principle and the Risk of Anachronisms in Language and Social History" (2012), in which a case study concerning gender is put forward. Accordingly, gender differentiation is already visible in the EmE period thanks to a study by Nevailanen (1996), who examines morphosyntactic variables and finds women "us[ing] more innovative (-s) forms than men, except for the lower gentry" (92).

⁹ We only have access to Crystal's presentation of his research, not his own research.

incomplete) explanation. It would then make for a viable path to systematically investigate and compare phonological and phonetic features of OP and present-day varieties and accents, especially American and Irish, in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of perceptions and biases behind current associations.

Theatrical productions

Thus far, I have offered a general overview of my findings on Shakespearean sounds and their reconstructions in OP literature, while insisting on the importance of carrying out theatrical research and raising further questions. But what is there to say with respect to the theatrical productions in OP and their debates in the new millennium?

According to my research, in the 2004-2021 period, 2016 and 2017 were the years that recorded the highest numbers of performances in OP, and, although the theatrical ‘phenomenon’ began in the UK, the US was a much more fertile ground. Further, OP was not only deployed in full OP shows but also in otherwise non-OP productions; in particular, traces of the pronunciation were adopted for restored elements such as rhymes. These devices, together with puns and other phonoaesthetic effects such as assonances, have been pointed to as OP recoveries or benefits in both OP literature and newspaper articles, and portrayed as capable of influencing characterisation and creating new effects. Rhymes and the other uncovered textual elements are then one (positive) implication of OP, but others exist. In fact, various testimonies and publications depict actors as being influenced by OP in their conceptualisation of characters, approach, behaviour, impersonation and ultimately movement; and a sense of liberation and of attachment to OP surfaces as well in some accounts. However, as has been signalled, findings on actorial effects need to be further investigated, and, more importantly, light should be shed on alternative voices, which do not appear to have been given adequate space so far. Accounts have focused on, and pursued, positive and optimistic portrayals, not searching for experiences that, for example, detail possible difficulties of performers.

Before tackling my investigation in relation to audience response, rhymes are still worth lingering on for their primary role within my work. They have not only been investigated in a general sense but also in relation to the Globe stagings of “Romeo and Juliet” and “Troilus and Cressida”. In such cases, selected rhyming devices appear to have contributed to thematic elements; for instance, in “Romeo” *come-tomb*, *married-bed* and *bed-maiden-widowed* were linked to death and in “Troilus” *Diomed-head*, *doth-tooth* and *down-bone* were associated with the theme of

body dismemberment. Another effect of rhyming devices was that of impacting the characterisation of *dramatis personae* such as Friar Lawrence for “Romeo” and Cressida for “Troilus”. But, apart from restored rhymes and effects for the productions, inaccuracies have surfaced in my research and so has the stage absence of recovered rhymes which were instead available in Crystal’s transcriptions. For instance, a few rhymes were inaudible in the examined performances but present in the transcriptions, and could have, for instance, emphasised the theme of death in “Romeo” (e.g. *grave-have* and *apothecary-die*). This type of analysis in both of its components – restored rhymes and non-restored rhymes – is unprecedented in OP literature: so far, no 21st-century study has investigated rhymes within the space of single productions (by delineating a methodology for their identification and tracing patterns), and examined losses or failings along with gains.

Finally turning to audience response, it has been seen that some scholars and theatre practitioners in the 21st century posit the understandability of OP on an abstract level and report the pronunciation as being comprehensible or intelligible in general terms. However, such ‘evaluations’ do not always derive from research but rather from informal accounts and are mostly shaped by people committed to the OP cause. Obviously, these testimonies still bear value, since they concern otherwise non-investigated or under-investigated productions, and offer unique perspectives; yet, they need to be supported by additional and ‘external’ material. Some is provided by scholars such as Massai, who gives an insight into the critics’ response to OP; however, this material is still quite limited and in need of expansion. For that reason, my research has included a small-scope study on reviews of theatrical productions (2004-2021), whose main parameters were comprehensibility and appreciation. This has revealed that, for critics conceived of as a group, OP is largely comprehensible but that ‘alternative’ opinions are also expressed, thereby confirming the non-universal positive comprehensibility, already identified by Massai. In terms of appreciation, the sonic dimension of OP tends to be praised, but its impact on productions is seen as originating the actors’ diminished ability to interpret their characters with robustness.

This portrayal has been partly confirmed by my research on the productions at the Globe. As with rhymes, audience responses have not only been investigated on a general plane but also in a specific sense, with reference to “Romeo” and “Troilus” at the Globe. In terms of critical responses, for “Romeo” OP is mostly regarded as comprehensible, whereas in “Troilus” it appears quite opaque; and, if the sounds of OP are lauded for “Troilus”, for both productions the impact of OP on characterisation is often perceived as negative. Adding other material to the

reception for the two stagings (show reports and interviews), the general response to the OP at the Globe generally configures itself as ‘tainted’, not as spotless as Crystal’s accounts claim. This is not to say that only negative aspects are remarked or that they are predominant (for instance, REDACTED and Howland appear to have appreciated the impact of OP on “Troilus”), but that, contrary to what OP literature shows, negative voices exist. In fact, apart from unenthusiastic responses in reviews, some spectators also seem to have had difficulty comprehending OP as suggested by complaints, or not to have appreciated it greatly as inferable from disruptive gestures, originating from younger echelons of the theatre population. But was OP really at fault? In truth, perceived non-comprehension of OP may also have derived from problems with volume, lamented in both reviews and show reports for “Troilus”, or from the inability of speaking OP on the part of actors (“Romeo”). And the actors’ weaker characterisation, generally decried, may have stemmed from the critics’ perception or even of the performers’ interpretive choices. But attempting to clarify responsibility/ies does not change the fact that the general response to OP at the Globe features negative reactions.

To be sure, my research has not captured the entire OP reception at the reconstructed institution and has not overturned Crystal’s positive testimonies. Rather, it has problematised ‘official’ accounts and demonstrated that other voices – in a minority? – exist and should be considered in relation to the performances at the Globe. But at this point, combining my analysis of the Globe productions with all that I have gathered and examined in my thesis, I would like to consider the value of OP in theatre.¹⁰

Advantages, disadvantages and value of OP in theatre

As has been shown in my work, scholars and proponents of OP such as David and Ben Crystal maintain the great value of OP through, for example, the discussion of its recoveries and a conception of OP as a “space” for “discovery” and exploration.¹¹ And they even suggest the worth of OP by pointing to the spectators’ sense of ownership; such a sense is a consequence of audiences recognising bits and pieces

¹⁰ I have not drawn attention to Crystal’s *Dictionary* in this Conclusion, since I have yielded to other phonological/phonetic and theatrical aspects, more significant within my research. But it should be said that, while the *Dictionary* has proved to be an inestimable source of information, it has also shown possible and real limitations.

¹¹ “That is what this space should be about – discovery, about seeing how these plays may have worked in the past, how we can learn from that, what we can do with them now and how we can go forward. Then it does not become a museum or archaic; it is something fruitful and in the moment” (Crystal 2005a, 202).

of their own accents and thus feel at home with OP. But, without questioning the reliability of these testimonies proposed by OP advocates, I do not intend to accept them at face value either – it would be impossible to do so after much collection and collation of material on the topic. Rather, in accordance with my objectives delineated in the Introduction to this thesis, I wish to consider what my research generally suggests in terms of value of OP, through an examination of the most significant advantages and disadvantages of OP in theatre that will culminate in a reflection on the value of the pronunciation.

An advantage of OP seems to be its ability to restore textual devices in theatrical productions. In this work, I have dealt with rhymes, puns and phonoaesthetic effects on a general plane and focused on (perfect) rhymes in the case of “Romeo” and “Troilus”. As has been seen, all these devices may offer fresh interpretations (of passages), and, as the previous section has reiterated, rhymes within the two productions at the Globe were responsible for effects such as emphasis of themes and contribution to characterisation. Thus, OP uncovers textual elements that can enrich our vision of the plays and that otherwise – in RP – would remain in an aural darkness. But, still looking at OP at the Globe, the rhyming potential of the individual plays was not completely untapped, so one of the advantages of OP, the recovery of rhymes, was partly lost in the transition from page to stage. It must then be acknowledged that not all of the textual recoveries would always take shape in productions; they may encounter some obstacles along the path. Should this failing discourage us from pursuing OP? I do not think so, since the absence of some retrieved features would not undo the presence of others and their effects. However, there exist further aspects of rhymes which may complicate the picture, and diminish the value of these restored devices.¹²

¹² But how important are rhymes in actual fact today? And for “Romeo” and “Troilus” did audience members notice rhymes or deduce any real meaning during the performances, in spite of their predominantly visual culture, and their possible illiteracy in detecting aural meanings? My analysis pertaining to retrieved rhymes was theoretical, and did not contemplate the actual readings of spectators – impossible to reconstruct without empirical studies. However, generally speaking, rhymes did not appear to be extremely important in the eyes (or ears) of audience members, namely critics: for “Romeo” no references to restored rhymes surfaced; for “Troilus” only one reviewer – Carey – lamented the few rhymes emerging from “Troilus” as a result of the play itself, and it is not certain that semantic meaning would have been paid attention to. One could then conclude that rhymes and their recovery are not of the utmost importance today. Yet this conclusion would be nothing but a simplification, and would disregard the widespread use of rhymes in (Western) society: from childhood one is exposed to them through nursery rhymes, commercials etc. This is not to say that they are thoroughly interpreted, but some actual and varying impact is still possible. For hypotheses on the reception of rhymes in Shakespeare’s day, see Burt Raffel’s “Who Heard the Rhymes, and How: Shakespeare’s Dramaturgical Signals” (1996).

Firstly, some restored rhymes may also be perfect rhymes in RP – with some tweaking. In my discussion on “Romeo” and “Troilus” in Chap. 3, I have foregrounded the working of retrieved rhymes, but several could have morphed into perfect rhymes in current English, were adequate ‘measures’ adopted. For instance, if a rhyming pair such as *excellent-different* was manipulated in terms of stress or the *ed* tradition was followed for *married-maiden-widowed*, several rhymes would not only have marked OP but also have been audible in RP. It can then be inferred that some OP rhymes could also exist in RP, if tweaked. Obviously, these devices would not be ‘authentic’ but highly artificial; yet, they would soften the advantage of OP over Present-Day English. Secondly, it is doubtful whether all of the restored rhymes in OP productions (such as “Romeo” and “Troilus”) were supposed to produce perfect rhymes in Shakespeare’s day: their similarity may have been sufficient at times. After all, in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period, careful listening was an activity more usual than it is today (Halliday qtd. in Raffel 1996, 191; see also Barber 1997)¹³, and some scholars are not certain of the perfect identity of these devices. Thus, it cannot be excluded that the rhyming identity proposed in productions in OP may not always be historically accurate.

Can it then be concluded that the benefit consisting in the restoration of OP rhymes is limited? Yes, but it should also be clarified that the points outlined above have some limitations of their own. RP may tweak some rhymes but not restore all of the OP rhyming devices unless some great alterations are made: for example, in order to make *die-remedy* and *grave-have* produce perfect rhymes, the vowel quality of these words should be significantly changed in an arbitrary way – without following any tradition or historical pronunciation. As for the uncertain perfect rhymes, the current reconstruction in the direction of identity – though possibly inexact – would not be in vain: given our visual rather than aural culture, perfect rhyming could strike spectators more easily, and may have a closer effect – connection between words – to that in Shakespearean times. In other words, current means may be different from those used in the Elizabethan or Jacobean period, but today’s effects would not be necessarily so.

¹³ Halliday’s argument goes as follows: “It used to be thought that the Elizabethan audience was an ignorant and ill-smelling assembly, capable of nothing but bawdiness, inexplicable dumb-shows and noise. Ill-smelling they may have been, but in those days when few could read, and talk took the place of books [movie houses, television, records, and tapes] the ear must have been delicately trained and quick to appreciate fine language. No doubt some of the gallants who sat on the stage and smoked, and some of the ladies in the galleries, came to be seen rather than to listen, but recent research discovers an audience made up for the most part of eager and attentive listeners, generous with their applause, though equally ready to hiss and mew their disapproval” (qtd. in Raffel 1996, 191).

Another (multilayered) benefit of OP is linked to the actors' retention of traits of their accents in compliance with what is presumed to have happened in Shakespeare's day, at least according to scholars such as Crystal. Throughout my thesis, I have referred to the performers' accentual preservation, and, for the stagings of "Romeo" and "Troilus", I have closely looked at the mixture of various sonorities in OP, ascribable to the actors' natural accents. The integration (and survival) of one's own sounds into OP imply a great openness towards phonetic diversity in theatrical productions. In other words, performers do not need to give up on their linguistic identity to embrace Shakespeare's sounds but can preserve their roots and weave a diverse soundscape. The advantage here may then consist in granting visibility (or audibility) to heterogenous accents, with the possibility of contributing to disrupting established accentual hierarchies in theatrical productions and shaping a diverse soundscape (see Massai 2020). However, while diverse sounds are accepted within OP, it is not known up to what point they are recognisable and identified. The general perception of OP sees it in relation with American and Irish sonorities and with amalgamations of sounds including them and other accents. But what other varieties and accents are concretely recognised within OP by audiences? And to what extent? In the absence of any proper evidence, one cannot regard audible phonetic diversity as a proper advantage of OP, but the following fact is beneficial: OP conveys an inclusivity-oriented message whereby performers do not need to renounce their phonetic roots, co-existing along with OP, in spite of any ultimate outcomes. And, as shown in Chap. 3, OP can also be considered valuable in that it originates some disconnection of Shakespeare from RP, an accent greatly used when staging the playwright's works throughout the centuries. Apart from disseminating the correct idea that current RP was not spoken at the time and making some actors experience a sense of liberation, OP – through such a disassociation – possibly deprives Shakespeare of his highbrow patina in the eyes of some, thereby rendering him more approachable.¹⁴

But here is the other side of the coin. While OP welcomes phonetic diversity and disengages itself from RP in theatre, there is a possibility that its presentation and actual reconstruction as composite does not completely do justice to what was happening in Shakespeare's day. In fact, as Massai claims, "usual speech" – a proto-standard – was used in theatrical performances in Shakespeare's England; we do not know how widespread it was, but its very existence is also suggested by few other sources. As this accent does not find any theoretical place in reconstructions

¹⁴ For the time being, a very abstract benefit of OP is given by the possibility of exploiting the pronunciation to promote sociolinguistic awareness (Chap. 3).

such as Crystal's, the risk is that, while OP is imbued with an aura of phonetic inclusivity, the pronunciation reflects our needs more than Shakespeare's historical pronunciation. Is that necessarily a disadvantage? Not according to critic John Rockwell, who asserts:

Sometimes, when you look back, you see a mirror. Something in our contemporary culture responds to the idea of more colloquial, more personal performance. Perhaps we project that need back into the past. But if original performances can help us find ourselves in the present, while pointing to the future, that is hardly to be scorned -- by modernists or anyone else.

Although Rockwell concentrates on the colloquialness of OP due to its contractions and not to acoustic diversity, he makes it clear that the pronunciation is more rooted in the present than the past, and this aspect is not to be disdained but appreciated in that "original performances can help us find ourselves in the present". I argue that Rockwell's laudatory perspective can be adopted, as long as the possibly 'partial' nature of OP is acknowledged.

Finally, while up to this moment disadvantages have indirectly resulted from a discussion of benefits, it is time to turn to proper drawbacks of OP. As my research has demonstrated in both my general systematisation and my investigation on the Globe productions, not all of the recorded voices were favourable to OP,¹⁵ especially in terms of comprehensibility and appreciation. It is true that dissonant opinions may have been the expression of a minority; and I have also shown that OP may not have been responsible for its non-comprehensibility, and that an aspect such as weaker characterisation may not have been brought about by said pronunciation. Nonetheless, it must be conceded that critics and spectators may find OP at fault and, given its different components from, for instance, RP, OP may *really* cause difficulties in comprehension.¹⁶ In the future, a way to mitigate the force and likelihood of this scenario could be the staging of more familiar plays such as *RJ* so that general audiences would be better equipped to comprehend (and appreciate) OP performances.

¹⁵ As my thesis has made manifest, some scholars express scepticism towards OP.

¹⁶ Another drawback of OP may pertain to its speculative character; this has indirectly emerged when I have discussed the mirroring of present needs through the pronunciation. This disadvantage, however, is not absolute, as my drawing on an article by Steven Purcell and statements by Farah Karim-Cooper (qtd. in Purcell 2017, 436-437) can demonstrate. Although OP is a reconstructed, uncertain system, its very existence and adoption may help to ask ourselves – as actors and spectators – questions and to reflect on some past practices (and their possible indeterminacy?). From a humanist perspective, the speculative nature of OP may eventually be seen as an added value; after all, is the process of reasoning and investigating more important than actual outcomes?

At this point, in an attempt to draw conclusions from the advantages and disadvantages above but also from my entire thesis, the following question can be answered: what is the value of OP? As an accurate reconstruction of past practices, the worth of OP should not be exaggerated; choices and interpretations are made, and they may not always correspond to the historical truth. The pronunciation is not defined as authentic by scholars and rightly so.¹⁷ OP – in its various shapes – is a present reconstruction of the Shakespearean pronunciation, imbued with historical evidence but above all with modern sensibility and current readings of past data. As such, said pronunciation appears as a precious tool for experimentation and for an exploration of the present through the past.¹⁸ New elements such as rhymes (and puns and phonoaesthetic elements), unconsidered by theatre practitioners but also by scholars, can emerge from OP: they may be traceable to Shakespearean texts or not, they may have been part of the Shakespearean productions or not. Their possible absence in Shakespeare does not subtract from the value of OP, which resides elsewhere: in the possibility of eliciting different interpretations from performers and directors compared to when using Present-Day English, especially RP;¹⁹ in its advocacy of phonetic inclusivity, an essential value for a fairer society, and in the truthful disassociation of Shakespeare from RP. Thus, OP can help us to explore Shakespearean texts through our own lenses while we immerse ourselves in *reconstructed* past sounds: it is a (variable) artefact combining our modern ideas and values with sounds in all likelihood available in Shakespeare's day but not necessarily Shakespearean. But, as has been demonstrated, this pronunciation does not come without drawbacks: it causes or may be seen as causing loss of comprehension or not appreciated;²⁰ and some point

¹⁷ As Stephen Purcell explains, "the term 'Original Practices' itself emerged as a result of Rylance's attempts to distance his work at the Globe from suspect no-tions of recreating the past. While early productions at the Globe were sometimes labelled 'authentic,' including by Rylance himself, he evidently found the claim impossible to defend, and eventually settled on 'Original Practices' because he felt it implied, more accurately, that the work was selecting only *particular* historical stage practices for reconstruction in the present" (2017, 438).

¹⁸ For this conclusion I am indebted to much OP literature but also to scholarship wider in scope, which concerns original practices altogether. By way of example, Don Weingust (2014) stresses the importance of the present: he affirms that "[w]hether or not original practices as engaged by theatres today mirror those of Shakespeare's own playing company, they are nonetheless expressions of theatrical potential in the present age" (406), and that "historically informed practices" may be a better phrase to refer to original practices (408).

¹⁹ OP also seems to produce different stage movement in the case of (some) actors, but research is still needed in this field.

²⁰ As an afterthought, inspired by Pascale Aebischer's *Viral Shakespeare: Performance in the Time of Pandemic* (2021), could the loss of comprehension be seen as an opportunity to engage oneself with the sounds themselves and other aspects of the stagings in OP (such as costumes, movement)? And

to the pursuit of financial gains of the experimentation. Specifically, OP, as a part of the original practices' movement, is said to "savvy in realizing the economic advantages garnered by its drawing power in an evergrowing market for heritage tourism" (Bennett 2017, 24). As I have not investigated the revenues and monetary value of OP,²¹ I will venture into any consideration relating to the economic goals of OP, which I leave to future studies.

Future directions and limitations of my study

When it comes to the future of OP studies, a few directions have already been illustrated for both the reconstruction of sounds and the examination of theatrical performances throughout my work and in this Conclusion. For instance, works by other playwrights and Shakespeare's theatrical practices could aid in reconstructing the OP sounds; and actorial experiences with OP and 'alternative' voices could further be looked into so as to give a better insight into effects and audience response. Yet, some other lines of research could be pursued and one, for example, might consist in an investigation into provincial performances. As some theatrical literature states (e.g. Gurr 2009), performers and Shakespeare's companies went on tours in provinces, where, it can be surmised, local people had not gained proper or constant exposure to the "usual speech". In that case, what kind of pronunciation/s were to be adopted? Would performers still resort to "usual speech" and if so, to what extent? Would the spectators be able to follow this accent? And what would the audiences make of the actors' natural accents, if used? It would then be useful to examine provincial spectacles in order to gather information on accents/pronunciations used and their reception, and ultimately inform reconstructions of OP.²²

concentrating on Shakespeare's day, was the language understood at all times? Crystal implies (2002) that some words or "difficult and challenging thoughts" would also have posed an obstacle at the time (15). James Shapiro (2015) also makes a case for Shakespeare language being difficult in Early Modern England: "His great rival, Ben Jonson, reportedly complained about 'some bombast speeches of 'Macbeth', which are not to be understood". And, as a more concrete example, it cannot be excluded that many Latinate words such as those in the prologue to *Tro* may have caused puzzlement. In all these cases, however, vocabulary – rather than pronunciation – is the focal point of attention, but the possible lack of 'full understanding' at Shakespeare's time may suggest that reduced comprehension as a result of reconstructed sounds should not necessarily be viewed negatively.

²¹ There is no real debate on the monetary goals fuelling the OP enterprise (not the entire Original Practices movement), and whenever I tried to look into this aspect for the performances at the Globe, I did not succeed.

²² Another line of research could detach from the dramatic sphere and engage with musical genres like lutenist airs to contribute to the determination of OP sounds. This is what Evelyn H. Scholl

Another future avenue of research may be a greater differentiation of OP effects. As may have been noticed, I have not distinguished the effects of distinct reconstructions in theatrical productions anywhere, taking for granted that most of the productions relied on Crystal's system, and whenever they did not, that they sprang from Meier's system, highly informed by Crystal's systems, or were somehow traceable to Crystal. But probably the most important factor for my non-differentiation was the non-distinction of effects in OP literature itself, in which, in spite of differences in reconstructions, the theatrical effects of OP are associated to the reconstructed pronunciation, rather than to its different manifestations. In the future, then, it may be interesting to set clear boundaries between reconstructions as used in theatre, if enough material is gathered, and see whether reconstructions by different scholars result in, say, different audience reactions.²³

Having pointed to future fields of enquiry, my work could be brought to an end; yet, this research would not be complete and would not meet the scientific criteria it has strived to pursue, if its limitations were not clarified. It is true that, throughout my thesis, I have often highlighted or hinted at the criticalities of my investigation, whilst outlining those of OP publications and studies. However, in accordance with good scientific practice, I now find it necessary to concisely define two major limitations of my study. In my systematisation of OP sounds, I have concentrated on few works dealing with segments more or less extensively.

proposes and concretely does by investigating *The English School of Lutenist Song Writers* (1944). However, the use of musical compositions may not meet with unanimous favour in academia; as based on my informal conversations with music experts, criteria other than those for speech must also be considered for the sounds of musical pieces – e.g. notes and rhythm. Yet, lutenist airs are nothing like other musical pieces: they seem to bridge the gap between music and speech, and to be closer to the spoken word than one might expect. As Scholl avers, lutenist airs strike “the hearer as not so much song, in our usual acceptance of the term, as speech to which definite pitch has been given” (1944, 400). Additionally, they generally have “one note for one syllable of music”, and were authored by “contemporary musicians who were peculiarly fitted to understand the poetry and to give it adequate expression” (400). Thus, the specific character of lutenist airs renders these tools rather suitable for the purposes of better understanding pronunciation of non-sung words. I must, however, confess that my knowledge of the mentioned pieces is confined to what Scholl claims, and that I am unable to establish whether these texts would ultimately benefit the field of OP sounds. In the absence of any further proof, the usefulness of the genre can be assumed – excluding it would potentially discard a viable and enriching path – and will be proven or rejected by those willing to check the potential of lutenist airs.

²³ My research has not looked into productions in 2022 and 2023, but a quick online search has revealed an utter silence. Crystal's website – not as detailed as the one I carried out for my study – does not show any OP stagings, and the Baltimore Shakespeare Factory did not stage any spectacle in 2022; it only prepared a radio production based on the play *TWT* (2023). Is this the end? Or a temporary interruption? Did Covid have an impact on funding OP productions? Research on the reconstructed pronunciation in theatre may take a new direction, as a completed experiment.

Although such a selection was aimed at offering an accurate portrayal (and analysis) of sounds, I could have integrated into my comparison 'minor' works, also tackling single sounds, to provide a more comprehensive picture of OP reconstructions. Further, I have often prioritised David Crystal's output and perspectives over those of other scholars, even though without accepting them at face value. My prioritisation of Crystal's observations has stemmed from his copious output and from him playing a leading role in the OP movement. Yet, a more pronounced detachment from Crystal may have helped to identify other debates possibly gone unnoticed. OP or Shakespeare's reconstructed pronunciation is still a rich field to delve into, and thanks to which both past and present practices can be explored.

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Abstract

This thesis engages with Original Pronunciation (OP) or the reconstructed pronunciation of Shakespeare's works. In particular, my work intends to systematise 21st-century scholarly debates and information on OP and related theatrical productions by also resorting to non-academic sources such as newspaper articles and reviews. Further, my research aims to examine the overall use of OP at the Globe – which has only been object of limited investigation – by looking into the adoption of OP, the recovery and non-retrieval of textual elements and the audience response to "Romeo and Juliet" (2004) and "Troilus and Cressida" (2005). To those ends, I have qualitatively analysed existing material by focusing on main debates and information, and carried out small-scope investigations aimed at gaining better insight into the reconstructed pronunciation in theatre.

While shedding light on the object, evidence and methodology of present-day reconstructions of OP, this thesis comes to question the complete reliability of some tools (e.g. rhymes) and calls for an expansion of the supposed corpus of scholars. It also shows greater or lesser differences between scholarly reconstructions and within the reconstructions by the very same linguist, David Crystal, a leading figure in the OP field. Still in terms of reconstructions, my research records a certain opacity of suprasegmentals, the existence of a "usual speech" and the lack of clear indications for some regional and foreign sounds. When it comes to theatrical productions, OP, generally speaking, is shown to retrieve textual elements, impact actors and to be not always comprehended and appreciated by spectators. My analysis concerning the stagings at the Globe does not greatly detach from such a portrayal; yet, it also reveals the non-recovery of textual elements such as rhymes, and makes voices critical of OP stand out, which cast a shadow on official accounts and testimonies on the pronunciation. Eventually, OP appears as a present artifact still in need of being investigated and fusing modern ideas and values with reconstructed sounds.

Adopting a multifaceted perspective that combines historical linguistics, literature and audience reception, this work attempts to provide an outline of OP and its use in theatre and to shed light on unexplored elements so far. Ultimately, this thesis contributes to enriching debates on the value of OP in theatrical productions, expanding the field of OP scholarship and paving the way to further studies on the reconstructed pronunciation, both phonological and theatrical in nature.

Keywords: Shakespeare, original pronunciation, 21st century, theatre, evidence, rhymes, audience response, Globe.

Streszczenie

Niniejsza rozprawa dotyczy oryginalnej wymowy (*Original Pronunciation*, OP) lub inaczej zrekonstruowanej wymowy dzieł Williama Szekspira. W szczególności moja praca ma na celu usystematyzowanie XXI-wiecznych debat naukowych i informacji na temat OP i związanych z nią przedstawień teatralnych, odwołując się również do źródeł nieakademickich, takich jak artykuły prasowe i recenzje. Ponadto moje badania mają na celu zbadanie ogólnego wykorzystania OP w teatrze Globe (które do tej pory było przedmiotem ograniczonych badań) poprzez przyjrzenie się zastosowaniu OP, odtwarzaniu i utracie elementów tekstualnych oraz reakcji publiczności na spektakle „Romeo i Julia” (2004) oraz „Troilus i Cressida” (2005). W tym celu przeanalizowałam jakościowo istniejący materiał, koncentrując się na głównych debatach i informacjach, oraz przeprowadziłam ograniczone badania mające na celu uzyskanie lepszego wglądu w zrekonstruowaną wymowę w teatrze.

Rzucając światło na przedmiot, dowody i metodologię współczesnych rekonstrukcji OP, niniejsza rozprawa kwestionuje całkowitą wiarygodność niektórych narzędzi (np. rymów) i postuluje rozszerzenie przez badaczy domniemanego korpusu językowego. Pokazuje również większe lub mniejsze różnice między rekonstrukcjami naukowymi a rekonstrukcjami językoznawcy Davida Crystala, czołowej postaci w dziedzinie badań nad OP. Niemniej jednak, jeśli chodzi o rekonstrukcje, przeprowadzone przeze mnie badania wykazały pewną nieprzejrzystość suprasegmentaliów, istnienie tzw. „zwykłej mowy” oraz brak wyraźnych wskazań dla niektórych regionalnych i obcych głosek. Jeśli chodzi o produkcje teatralne, OP, ogólnie rzecz ujmując, wykazuje możliwość odzyskiwania elementów tekstualnych, wpływania na aktorów, lecz nie zawsze jest zrozumiała i doceniana przez widzów. Moja analiza dotycząca inscenizacji w teatrze Globe nie odbiega znacząco od takiego ujęcia, ale ujawnia również nieodzyskiwanie elementów tekstowych, takich jak rymy, i wyróżnia głosy krytyczne wobec OP, które rzucają cień na oficjalne relacje i świadectwa dotyczące wymowy. Ostatecznie OP jawi się jako obecny artefakt, który wciąż wymaga zbadania i połączenia ze sobą współczesnych idei i wartości ze zrekonstruowanymi dźwiękami.

Przyjmując wieloaspektową perspektywę, która łączy językoznawstwo historyczne, literaturę i odbiór publiczności, niniejsza praca stara się przedstawić zarys OP i jej wykorzystanie w teatrze oraz rzucić światło na dotychczas niezbadane elementy. Ostatecznie niniejsza rozprawa przyczynia się do wzbogacenia debat na

temat wartości OP w produkcjach teatralnych, poszerzając pole badań nad OP i torując drogę do dalszych badań nad zrekonstruowaną wymową, zarówno o charakterze fonologicznym, jak i teatralnym.

Słowa kluczowe: Shakespeare, oryginalna wymowa, XXI wiek, teatr, dowody, rymy, reakcja publiczności, teatr Globe.



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Systematising debates and data, and exploring OP at the Globe in
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APPENDIX A

REDACTED

REDACTED

2. Lexical sets and RP

KIT	ɪ	FLEECE	i:	NEAR	ɪə
DRESS	e	FACE	eɪ	SQUARE	eə
TRAP	æ	PALM	ɑ:	START	ɑ:
LOT	ɒ	THOUGHT	ɔ:	NORTH	ɔ:
STRUT	ʌ	GOAT	əʊ	FORCE	ɔ:
FOOT	ʊ	GOOSE	u:	CURE	ʊə
BATH	ɑ:	PRICE	aɪ	happY	i
CLOTH	ɒ	CHOICE	ɔɪ	lettER	ə
NURSE	ɜ:	MOUTH	aʊ	commA	ə

Table A.2.

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APPENDIX B

REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED

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APPENDIX C

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REDACTED

APPENDIX D
1. Productions and single scenes in OP (2004-2021): List for my count³

Title¹	Time	Place	Company/Theatre and director	Source
"Romeo and Juliet"	June 25-27, 2004	Shakespeare's Globe, London, UK	Director: Tim Carroll	Crystal 2019b, Crystal 2016a
"Troilus and Cressida"	August 24 - September 28, 2005	Shakespeare's Globe, London, UK	Director: Giles Block	Crystal 2019b, Crystal 2016a
The Closet Scene from <i>Hamlet</i>	2005	Blackfriars, Virginia, US	Director: Mary Mayo	Crystal 2006 Mayo 2005
"As I Pronounced It To You: Shakespeare as it Originally Sounded" (extracts) ²	2007	Playwright Tavern, New York, US	Director: Alex Torra	Crystal 2019b, Crystal 2016c, Meier 2011
"Twelfth Night"	June 6-7, 2010	Circle in the Square Theatre School, New York, US	Director: Edward Berkeley	Crystal 2019b
"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	November 11- 21, 2010	University of Kansas, US	Director: Paul Meier	Crystal 2019b, Meier 2011, Meier 2016 (182)
"Hamlet"	November 1- 20,	University of Nevada, US	Director: Rob Gander dramaturge Eric	Crystal 2019b, University of Nevada 2011

¹ Information varies depending on what I was able to cover from the sources consulted.

² The production only featured scenes from plays, as can be inferred from director AlexTorra's words: "We presented thirteen scenes from eleven different plays performed by seven actors" (Meier 2011, 2016).

³ Only productions or performances featuring plays have been taken into account, whereas for all those productions whose content is not known or clear, have been excluded and so have those performances featuring sonnets as well as plays. It cannot be ruled out that some entire productions in OP may have incorporated other pronunciations, but, given the retrieved information and reviews focusing on OP, it seems safe to postulate that, if they were used, they played a minor role.

	2011		Rasmussen, artist in residence Ben Crystal University of Nevada Repertory Company	
"Twelfth Night"	February 15-19, 2012	American Theatre of Actors, Chernunichin Theatre, 314 W 54 th St, New York, NY 10019, US	Director: Hamilton Meadows	Crystal 2019b
"Shakespeare's Amazing Cymbeline"	January 31-April 8, 2012	Ellen Bye Studio, 128 NW Eleventh Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97209, US	Director: Chris Coleman Portland Center Stage Six actors also using Welsh, Italian, French and RP	Crystal 2019b, Coleman 2021
"Macbeth OP"	February 1-24, 2013	American Theatre of Actors, 314 W 54 th St, New York City, US	Director: Hamilton Meadows	Crystal 2019b
"As You Like It"	April 19-21, 2013	Bangor University, US	ROSTRA. Drama Society	Crystal 2019b, see also Karen 2014
"Macbeth in OP"	July 20, 2014	Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at Shakespeare's Globe, US	David and Ben Crystal, Passion in Practice	Crystal 2019b
"Julius Caesar in Original Pronunciation"	August 3-9, 2014 4.10 pm	Edinburgh Fringe, UK	University of Houston-Downtown, University Theatre	Crystal 2019b
"Twelfth Night in OP"	November 1-23, 2014	Minneapolis, US	Classical Actors Ensemble	Crystal 2019b
"Macbeth"	December 6-7,	47/49 Tanner Street, London,	Passion in Practice	Crystal 2019b

	2014	UK		
"Pericles in OP"	January 29, 2015 6.00pm	Berwaldhallen, Stockholm, Sweden	Ben Crystal's Shakespeare Ensemble Trondheim's Soloists and the violin soloist Daniel Hope (music) Talk by David Crystal Panel discussion	Crystal 2019b
"The Merchant of Venice in OP"	Between March 27 and April 25, 2015	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, US	Director: Tom Delise	Crystal 2019b
"Scenes from As You Like It in OP"	July 29-30, 2015 7pm	The Circus Room on the 5 th Floor at 721 Broadway, New York City, US	Narrated by Jennifer Geizhals, directors: Louis Scheeder and Daniel Spector	Crystal 2019b
"Henry V in OP"	July 26, 2015 4pm 3-5 August 2015	Shakespeare's Globe in the Read Not Dead series, Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, UK 47/49 Tanner Street, London SE1 3PL, UK	Ben Crystal's Passion in Practice Shakespeare ensemble	Crystal 2019b
"Twelfth Night"	November 12, 2015 (opening)	Wellesley College, US	Director: Katherine Bussert OP coach: Rowan Winterwood	Bussert 2016
"As You Like it"	Over the weekend of November 11,	Swarthmore College LPAC's Pearson-Hall Theater stage,	Director: Alex Torra Assistant Director: Simon Bloch	Hawthorne 2016 Swarthmore College 2016 Archival videorecording 2016

	<p>2016</p> <p>4 performances November 11 (8pm), 12 (2 and 8pm) and 13 (2pm), 2016</p> <p>Short exemplification of sounds at the beginning and presentation of the characters</p>	US	<p>Sound Designer</p> <p>Elizabeth Atkinson</p> <p>Technical information</p> <p>Assistant Scenic Designer: Yoshi Nomura (a senior at Haverford).</p> <p>Stage Manager: Anne Ketcham. Scott Cassidy: Production Manager</p> <p>Scenic Designer: Matt Saunders</p> <p>Lighting Designer: James Murphy Sound Designer: Elizabeth Atkinson Costume Designer: Laila Swanson</p> <p>Choreographer: Brett Cassidy</p> <p>Assistant stage manager: Rachel</p>	
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			Pomerantz Lighting Designer James Murphy	
"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	March 28, 2016 7pm	Grand Stafford Theatre, 106 S. Main St., Bryan, US	Bryan Austin Shakespeare	Faires 2016
"The Winter's Tale"	April 1-24, 2016	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory St. Mary's Community Center, 3900 Roland Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21211, US	Director: James Keegan	Crystal 2019b
Presentation of sounds (before the production)	Fridays (8 pm), Saturdays (8 pm), and Sundays (4 pm)			Teachman 2016
"Pericles: Recomposed"	April 5, 2016 6 pm	Savannah Music Festival, Lucas Theatre for the Arts, US	Ben Crystal's Passion in Practice Shakespeare Ensemble and L'Arte del Mondo with Daniel Hope	Crystal 2019b
"King Lear" Pre-show announcement	May 5-8, 2016 May 5 and 6, 7.30 pm May 7, 2.00 pm and 7.30 pm May 8, 2.00 pm	Wells-Metz Theatre, Indiana University, US	Director: Murray McGibbon	Crystal 2019b Bourus 2016
"Antony and Cleopatra"	March 31-April 23,	Baltimore Shakespeare	Director: Tom Delise	Crystal 2019b

Presentation of OP (before the production) Q&A session (after the production)	2017 Performances: Fridays and Saturdays at 8	Factory St. Mary's Community Center, 3900 Roland Ave, Baltimore, MD 21211, US		Crawford Samios-Uy 2017
"Much Ado About Nothing"	May 12, 2017 7:30 pm Length: approx. 90 minutes	Weyward Ensemble Theater at Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA 02143, US	Director: Daniel Thomas Blackwell	Crystal 2019b
"The History of the World in 100 Performances" including the Premiere of Hamlet and actors performing a scene in OP	May 22, 2017 7.30 pm	Lincoln Center, New York, US	With Adam Gopnik, Stephen Greenblatt, Actors: Dan Banlieu and Claire Warden	Crystal 2019b
Three OP productions by the Prague Shakespeare Company	July 25, 2017 7pm 30 July, 2pm, "Romeo and	Divadlo na Pradle, Besední 487/3, Praha 1- Malá Strana, 118 00, Czech Republic	Director: Steve Urkowitz	Crystal 2019b, see also BWW News Desk 2017

	<p>Juliet"</p> <p>26 and 29 July, 7pm</p> <p>"A Midsummer Night's Dream"</p> <p>27 and 30 July, 7pm</p> <p>"Richard II"</p>		<p>Director: Lisa Wolpe</p> <p>Director: Robert Gander With Ben Crystal as Richard</p>	
"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	August 1-3, 2017	Presented by the Sam Houston State University's Department of Theatre and Musical Theatre Summer Repertory at the University Theatre Center's Showcase Theatre, US	Director: Penny Hasekoester Dialect coach and music director: Laura Avery	Crystal 2019b
"Twelfth Night"	February 21 – March 23, 2018	Orlando Shakespeare Theater in partnership with UCF, an AEA, Elizabethan, all male, shared lighting, OP production, US	Director: Carolyn Howarth Accent Master Coach: Paul Meier Accent Coaches: Jim Helsinger and Dan Romano	Crystal 2019b
"Romeo and Juliet"	February 23 – March 3, 2018	Chelsea Theatre Works, US	Underlings Theatre Company Director: Lelaina Vogel	Crystal 201b9, see also Goodwin 2018

			Voice and text coaching by Daniel Thomas Blackwell	
“Othello” Pre-show entertainment before every show beginning one half hour before curtain	April 6-29, 2018 Performances every Friday and Saturday (8 pm) and Sunday (4 pm)	St. Mary’s Community Center, 3900 Roland Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21211, US Pre-show lectures before each Saturday performance at 7 pm	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory Director: Tom Delise	Crystal 2019b
“Taming of the Shrew”	2018	Drama School Mumbai, India	Director: Deshik Vansadia	Phukan 2018
“Hamlet” Pre-show festivities in OP Pre-show discussion (Saturday) Pre-show announcements After-show talkback	April 12 – May 5, 2019 Fridays (8 pm), Saturdays (8 pm), and Sundays (4 pm). Pre-show 30 minutes before curtain.	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory The Great Hall of the St. Mary’s Community Center, 3900 Roland Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21211, US	Director: Chris Cotterman	Crystal 2019 Pomeroy 2019 Minton 2019
“The Rage and	June 1-2,	Saturday 1 at 7 pm in	Performed as part	Crystal 2019b, Inglis

Reconciliation of King Lear" ¹	2019	Westminster Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 3208 Exposition Blvd. Austin, Texas 78703, US Sunday June 2 at 3pm in Redeemer Presbyterian Church, 2111 Alexander Ave. Austin, Texas 78722, US	of the two-day initiative Inversion Ensemble: 'Heroes and Monsters: songs of legends and beasts' Directed by Trevor Shaw	2019, Inversion Ensemble 2019, Adrienne Inglis, email to author, October 25, 2021 A special thanks to Adrienne Inglis (for all the material she provided)
"King Lear" ²	November 1-24, 2021	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, US	Director: Marshall B Garrett	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory n.d.
"A Midsummer Night's Dream in OP" (A dramatic reading)	February 10, 2021 ³ 5 pm	University of Salzburg, Austria		Crystal 2019b

Table D.1.

¹ Thanks to an email exchange with Adrienne Inglis, I have learnt that actual passages from *King Lear* were set to music (Act III Scene ii lines 1-9 and Act IV Scene vii lines 51-56, 83-84) and that the performance was 6 minutes long (Adrienne Inglis, email to author, July 15, 2023). The performance also features German, Latin and modern English pronunciations (Adrienne Inglis, July 15, 2023), but as it was principally and mostly in OP, it has been inserted here rather than in the following table.

² Crystal's website reports that it was performed between 30 October and 20 November 2020, but it was postponed due to covid.

³ During a conference, I asked David Crystal about other future projects involving OP and he mentioned the "Year Long Shakespeare Project" in collaboration with the Shakespeare North Playhouse, but more information is not yet available online (Shakespeare North Playhouse n.d.; The Year Long Shakespeare Project n.d.).

2. Productions with traces⁴ of OP (2004-2021): List for my count

Title	Time	Place	Company/Theatre and director	Source
"Henry V"	June 21, 2012 and on tour	Winchester Cathedral, UK In the grounds of the Cathedral	Illyria Theatre Company Director: Oliver Gray Actors/performers: James Dangerfield (Henry V, Nym), Ben Goodridge (Pistol, Dolphin, Mountjoy, Archbishop Canterbury, Queen of France), Ffion Glyn (Katherine, Fluellen, Constable of France, Bardolph), Kevin James (Gloucester, Gower, King of France, Boy, Alice), Andrew Lindfeild (Essex, Mrs Quickly, Orleans)	Ridden 2013 Ridden, email to author, July 25, 2023

⁴ Traces are recorded single words or phrases in OP or the reconstructed pronunciation in performances.

"Hamlet"			<p>Waschke (Hermione) and Miriam Laube (Paulina)</p> <p>Director: Lisa Peterson. Performers: Danforth Comins (Hamlet), Christiana Clark (Horatio) and Derrick Lee Weeden (Polonius)</p>	
"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	Until April 29 2017	Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, 811 S. Palm Ave, US	<p>FSU/Asolo Conservatory's production</p> <p>Director: Jonathan Epstein</p> <p>Actors/Performers: Nolan Fitzgerald Hennelly (Lysander), Amber Lageman (Hermia), Colleen Lefebber (Helena), Dustin Babin (Demetrius), Anthony J. Hamilton (Theseus, Oberon), Mary Ellen Everett (Hippolyta, Titania), Andrew Bosworth (Puck), Aleksandr Krapivkn (Peter Quince), Kedren Spencer (Bottom),</p>	Fugate 2017

			<p>Wes Tolman, Christopher Carlson, Amy Helms</p> <p>Costume designer: Becki Leigh</p> <p>Choreography: Eliza Ladd</p>	
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Table D.2.

3. Productions and single scenes in OP (2004-2021): General information

Title	Time	Place	Company/Theatre and director	Source
"Romeo and Juliet"	June 25-27, 2004	Shakespeare's Globe, London, UK	Director: Tim Carroll	Crystal 2019b, Crystal 2016a
"Troilus and Cressida"	August 24 - September 28, 2005	Shakespeare's Globe, London, UK	Director: Giles Block	Crystal 2019b, Crystal 2016a
Closet Scene from - <i>Hamlet</i>	2005	Blackfriars, Virginia, US	Director: Mary Mayo	Crystal 2006 Mayo 2005
OP extracts from Shakespeare	2006	Jamestown, US		Crystal 2016c ⁵
"As I Pronounced It To You: Shakespeare as it Originally Sounded" (extracts)	2007	Playwright Tavern, New York, US	Director: Alex Torra	Crystal 2019b, Crystal 2016c, Meier 2011

⁵ I came into contact with Mark Summers, public historian at Jamestown Rediscovery, who, not having any information regarding OP within the framework of the Jamestown celebrations, hypothesised that the event may have taken place in Staunton Virginia (Mark Summers, email to author, March 12, 2023). Eventually, I contacted "Staunton Virginia" (2023) and the American Shakespeare's Center (n.d.), but even in the face of the institutions' availability and willingness to cooperate no performance has been identified.

"Twelfth Night"	June 6-7, 2010	Circle in the Square Theatre School, New York, US	Director: Edward Berkeley	Crystal 2019b
"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	November 11- 21, 2010	University of Kansas, US	Director: Paul Meier	Crystal 2019b, Meier 2011, Meier 2016 (182)
"Shakespeare in Clark Park" (extracts)	May 2, 2011	Shakespeare in Clark Park, Philadelphia, US	Director: Alex Torra	Crystal 2019b, Meier 2016 (182)
"Hamlet"	November 1- 20, 2011	University of Nevada, US	Director: Rob Gander dramaturge Eric Rasmussen, artist in residence Ben Crystal University of Nevada Repertory Company	Crystal 2019b, University of Nevada 2011
"Twelfth Night"	February 15-19, 2012	American Theatre of Actors, Chernunchin Theatre, 314 W 54 th St, New York, NY 10019, US	Director: Hamilton Meadows	Crystal 2019b
"Shakespeare's Amazing Cymbeline"	January 31- April 8, 2012	Ellen Bye Studio, 128 NW Eleventh Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97209, US	Director: Chris Coleman Portland Center Stage Six actors also using Welsh, Italian, French and RP	Crystal 2019b, Coleman 2021

"Scenes from Shakespeare in OP" ⁶	May 2012	King's Theatre, Southsea, UK	Director: David Barrett	Crystal 2019b
"Macbeth OP"	February 1-24, 2013	American Theatre of Actors, 314 W 54 th St, New York City, US	Director: Hamilton Meadows	Crystal 2019b
"As You Like It"	April 19-21, 2013	Bangor University, UK	ROSTRA	Crystal 2019b, see also Karen 2014
"Macbeth in OP"	July 20, 2014	Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at Shakespeare's Globe, UK	David and Ben Crystal, Passion in Practice	Crystal 2019b
"Julius Caesar in Original Pronunciation"	August 3-9, 2014 4.10 pm	Edinburgh Fringe, UK	University of Houston-Downtown, University Theatre	Crystal 2019b

⁶ It is not clear what was included in this production.

"Twelfth Night in OP"	November 1-23, 2014	Minneapolis, US	Classical Actors Ensemble	Crystal 2019b
"Macbeth"	December 6-7, 2014	47/49 Tanner Street, London, UK	Passion in Practice	Crystal 2019b
"Pericles in OP"	January 29, 2015 6.00pm	Berwaldhallen, Stockholm, Sweden	Ben Crystal's Shakespeare Ensemble Trondheim's Soloists and the violin soloist Daniel Hope (music) Talk by David Crystal Panel discussion	Crystal 2019b
"The Merchant of Venice in OP"	Between March 27 and April 25, 2015	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, US	Director: Tom Delise	Crystal 2019b
"Scenes from As You Like It in OP"	July 29-30, 2015 7pm	The Circus Room on the 5 th Floor at 721 Broadway, New York City, US	Narrated by Jennifer Geizhals, directors: Louis Scheeder and Daniel Spector	Crystal 2019b
"Henry V in OP"	July 26, 2015 4pm	Shakespeare's Globe in the Read Not Dead series, Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, UK	Ben Crystal's Passion in Practice Shakespeare ensemble	Crystal 2019b

	3-5 August 2015	47/49 Tanner Street, London SE1 3PL, UK		
"Twelfth Night"	November 12, 2015 (opening)	Wellesley College	Director: Katherine Bussert OP coach: Rowan Winterwood	Bussert 2016
"As You Like it"	Over the weekend of November 11, 2016 4 performances November 11 (8pm), 12 (2 and 8pm) and 13 (2pm), 2016 Short exemplification of sounds at the beginning and presentation of the characters	Swarthmore College LPAC's Pearson-Hall Theater stage, US	Director: Alex Torra Assistant Director: Simon Bloch Sound Designer Elizabeth Atkinson Technical information Assistant Scenic Designer: Yoshi Nomura (a senior at Haverford). Stage Manager: Anne Ketcham. Scott Cassidy: Production Manager Scenic Designer: Matt Saunders Lighting Designer: James Murphy Sound Designer: Elizabeth Atkinson Costume Designer: Laila Swanson Choreographer: Brett Cassidy Assistant stage manager: Rachel Pomerantz Lighting Designer James Murphy	Hawthorne 2016 Swarthmore College 2016 Archival videorecording 2016

"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	March 28, 2016 7pm	Grand Stafford Theatre, 106 S. Main St., Bryan, US	Bryan Austin Shakespeare	Faires 2016
"The Winter's Tale" Presentation of sounds (before the production)	April 1-24, 2016 Fridays (8 pm), Saturdays (8 pm), and Sundays (4 pm)	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, US St. Mary's Community Center, 3900 Roland Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21211, US	Director: James Keegan	Crystal 2019b Teachman 2016
"Pericles: Recomposed"	April 5, 2016 6 pm	Savannah Music Festival, Lucas Theatre for the Arts, US	Ben Crystal's Passion in Practice Shakespeare Ensemble and L'Arte del Mondo with Daniel Hope	Crystal 2019b
"Shakespeare: The Sonnets Out Loud"	April 30, 2016 7pm	Street 1, The Street Theatre, Canberra, Australia	Some sonnets in Original Pronunciation Director, musician and Churchill Fellow: Dianna Nixon	Wilkins 2016

“Much Ado About Nothing”	May 12, 2017 7:30 pm Length: approximately 90 minutes	Weyward Ensemble Theater at Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA 02143, US	Director: Daniel Thomas Blackwell	Crystal 2019b
“The History of the World in 100 Performances” including the Premiere of Hamlet and actors performing a scene in OP	May 22, 2017 7.30 pm	Lincoln Center, New York, US	With Adam Gopnik, Stephen Greenblatt, Actors: Dan Banlieu and Claire Warden	Crystal 2019b
“Crystal Clear Shakespeare” ⁷	May 31 to June 3, 2017		Director: Ben Crystal presented by Shakespeare Globe Centre New Zealand (SGCNZ) in association with Circa Theatre & TACT Scenes and sonnets	Crystal 2019b, Theatre review 2017
Three OP productions by the Prague Shakespeare Company	July 25, 2017 7pm 30 July,	Divadlo na Pradle, Besední 487/3, Praha 1-Malá Strana, 118 00, Czech Republic	Director: Steve Urkowitz	Crystal 2019b, see also BWW News Desk 2017

⁷ The nature of this event is not clear.

	<p>2pm, "Romeo and Juliet"</p> <p>26 and 29 July, 7pm "A Midsummer Night's Dream"</p> <p>27 and 30 July, 7pm "Richard II"</p>		<p>Director: Lisa Wolpe</p> <p>Director: Robert Gander With Ben Crystal as Richard</p>	
"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	August 1-3, 2017	Presented by the Sam Houston State University's Department of Theatre and Musical Theatre Summer Repertory at the University Theatre Center's Showcase Theatre, US	<p>Director: Penny Hasekoester</p> <p>Dialect coach and music director: Laura Avery</p>	Crystal 2019b
"Twelfth Night"	February 21 – March 23, 2018	Orlando Shakespeare Theater in partnership with UCF, an AEA, Elizabethan, all male, shared lighting, OP production, US	<p>Director: Carolyn Howarth</p> <p>Accent Master Coach: Paul Meier</p> <p>Accent Coaches: Jim Helsinger and Dan Romano</p>	Crystal 2019b

"Romeo and Juliet"	February 23 – March 3, 2018	Chelsea Theatre Works, US	Underlings Theatre Company Director: Lelaina Vogel Voice and text coaching by Daniel Thomas Blackwell	Crystal 2019b, see also Goodwin 2018
"Othello" Pre-show entertainment before every show beginning one half hour before curtain	April 6-29, 2018 Performances every Friday and Saturday (8 pm) and Sunday (4 pm)	St. Mary's Community Center, 3900 Roland Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21211, US Pre-show lectures before each Saturday performance at 7 pm	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory Director: Tom Delise	Crystal 2019b
"Taming of the Shrew"	2018	Drama School Mumbai, India	Director: Deshik Vansadia	Phukan 2018
"Hamlet"	April 12 – May 5, 2019 Fridays (8 pm), Saturdays (8 pm), and Sundays (4 pm).	Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, US The Great Hall of the St. Mary's Community Center, 3900 Roland Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21211, US	Director: Chris Cotterman	Crystal 2019b

<p>Pre-show festivities in OP</p> <p>Pre-show discussion (Saturday)</p> <p>Pre-show announcements</p> <p>After-show talkback</p>	<p>Pre-show 30 minutes before curtain.</p>			<p>Pomeroy 2019</p> <p>Minton 2019</p>
<p>“The Rage and Reconciliation of King Lear” *</p>	<p>June 1-2, 2019</p>	<p>Saturday 1 at 7 pm in Westminster Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 3208 Exposition Blvd. Austin, Texas 78703, US</p> <p>Sunday June 2 at 3pm in Redeemer Presbyterian Church, 2111 Alexander Ave. Austin, Texas 78722, US</p>	<p>Performed as part of the two-day initiative</p> <p>Inversion Ensemble: ‘Heroes and Monsters: songs of legends and beasts’</p> <p>Directed by Trevor Shaw</p>	<p>Crystal 2019b, Inglis 2019, Inversion Ensemble 2019, Adrienne Inglis, email to author, October 25, 2021</p> <p>A special thanks to Adrienne Inglis (for all the material she provided)</p>
<p>“King Lear”</p>	<p>November 1- 24, 2021</p>	<p>Baltimore Shakespeare Factory, US</p>	<p>Director: Marshall B Garrett</p>	<p>Baltimore Shakespeare Factory n.d.</p>
<p>“A Midsummer Night’s Dream in OP” (A dramatic reading)</p>	<p>February 10, 2021</p> <p>5 pm</p>	<p>University of Salzburg, Austria</p>		<p>Crystal 2019b</p>

Table D.3.

**4. Productions with small parts or traces in OP (including those featuring sonnets and mixed productions)
(2004-2021): General information**

Title	Time	Place	Company/Theatre and director	Source
<p>"Henry V"</p> <p>(Traces)</p>	<p>June 21, 2012 and on tour</p>	<p>Winchester Cathedral, UK</p> <p>In the grounds of the Cathedral</p>	<p>Illyria Theatre Company</p> <p>Director: Oliver Gray</p> <p>Actors/performers: James Dangerfield (Henry V, Nym), Ben Goodridge (Pistol, Dolphin, Mountjoy, Archbishop Canterbury, Queen of France), Ffion Glyn (Katherine, Fluellen, Constable of France, Bardolph), Kevin James (Gloucester, Gower, King of France, Boy, Alice), Andrew Lindfeild (Essex, Mrs Quickly, Orleans)</p> <p>Also starring other actors of the company</p>	<p>Ridden 2013</p> <p>Geoff Ridden, email to author, July 25, 2023</p>
<p>"What You Will – A Sea Dog's Tale"</p> <p>(rewriting of <i>Twelfth Night</i>)</p> <p>(Traces)</p>	<p>2014</p>	<p>St James Cavalier, Malta</p>	<p>Griffin Theatre Arts in collaboration with the Malta Arts Fund</p>	<p>Delicata 2014</p>

<p>"Romeo and Juliet"</p> <p>(Traces)</p>	<p>Until July 12, 2015</p> <p>Until September 27, 2015</p>	<p>Pleasanton's Amador Valley Community Park, US</p> <p>Parks in Cupertino, Redwood City, US</p>	<p>San Francisco Shakespeare Festival</p> <p>Director: Rebecca J. Ennals</p>	<p>Hurwitt 2015</p>
<p>"Richard II"</p> <p>"The Winter's Tale"</p> <p>"Hamlet"</p> <p>(Traces)</p>	<p>February-November 2016</p>	<p>Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Canada</p>	<p>Director: Bill Rauch Performers: Christopher Liam Moore (King Richard II), and Jeffrey King (Henry Bullingbrook)</p> <p>Director: Desdemona Chiang Performers: Eric Steinberg (Leontes), Amy Kim Waschke (Hermione) and Miriam Laube (Paulina)</p> <p>Director: Lisa Peterson. Performers: Danforth Comins (Hamlet), Christiana Clark (Horatio) and Derrick Lee Weeden (Polonius)</p>	<p>Ridden 2017</p>
<p>"An Evening Celebrating Shakespeare: The Dark Lady of the Sonnets by George Bernard Shaw and Upstart Crow"</p>	<p>March 25-April 9, 2016</p> <p>Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30pm, Sundays at 2:30pm</p>	<p>Asheville Masonic Temple 80 Broadway, Asheville, NC, US</p>	<p>Produced by Montford Park Players</p> <p>Director: Scott Keel</p>	<p>Staff reports 2016, Hesse 2016</p>

(the character of Richard Burbage using OP)				
<p>"A Strange Eventful History"</p> <p>(OP used for the first Act chorus of <i>Henry V</i>, Orlando Gibbons' <i>The Cries of London</i> Part 1 and Jaques' The Seven Ages of Man from <i>As You Like It</i></p> <p>Present-Day Pronunciation of Sonnet 44)</p>	<p>June 25, 2016 6pm⁸</p>	<p>Wesley Uniting Church, Forrest, Australia</p>	<p>The Song Company in collaboration with Gary Watt</p>	<p>Wilson 2016</p> <p>Watt, email to author, March 25, 2023</p> <p>Special thanks to Prof. Gary Watt</p>
<p>"A Midsummer Night's Dream"</p>	<p>Until April 29 2017</p>	<p>Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, 811 S. Palm Ave, US</p>	<p>FSU/Asolo Conservatory's production</p> <p>Director: Jonathan Epstein</p> <p>Actors/Performers: Nolan Fitzgerald Hennelly (Lysander), Amber Lageman (Hermia), Colleen Lefebber (Helena), Dustin Babin (Demetrius), Anthony J.</p>	<p>Fugate 2017</p>

⁸ I have recently learnt that there were other performances: 18 June 2016: Blue Mountains, Blackheath Uniting Church, 3.00pm; 19 June 2016: North Sydney, Independent Theatre, 3.00pm; 21 June 2016: Sydney, Eugene Goossens Hall, ABC, 7.30pm; 23 June 2016: Newcastle, Newcastle Conservatorium, 7.00pm; 25 June 2016: Canberra, Wesley Uniting Church, 6.00pm; 26 June 2016: Wollongong, Wollongong Art Gallery, 3.00pm; 27 June 2016: Berry, Uniting Church, 7.00pm (Watt, email to author, April 4, 2024).

(Traces)			<p>Hamilton (Theseus, Oberon), Mary Ellen Everett (Hippolyta, Titania), Andrew Bosworth (Puck), Aleksandr Krapivkn (Peter Quince), Kedren Spencer (Bottom), Wes Tolman, Christopher Carlson, Amy Helms</p> <p>Costume designer: Becki Leigh</p> <p>Choreography: Eliza Ladd</p>	
<p>Shakespeare's plays and sonnets</p> <p>(not clear whether OP was involved or not)⁹</p>	<p>June 22, 2017</p>	<p>Circa Theatre, Wellington, New Zealand 5-6pm</p>	<p>Ben Crystal and Maori actor delving into the sound of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets</p> <p>"with a Kiwi twist"</p>	<p>Staff DP 2017</p>
<p>"Bach and Sonnets" (sonnet 116 in OP)</p>	<p>June 6, 2018</p> <p>6pm</p>	<p>Ronnie Scott's Upstairs, 47 Frith Street, London, UK</p>	<p>Director: Wolfgang Mittelmaier</p> <p>Justine Viani reads Sonnet 116 in OP</p>	<p>Crystal 2019b, Mittelmaier 2018</p>

⁹ I contacted Circa theatre but did not receive any answer (Emiliana Russo, email to Circa Theatre, January 16, 2022).

<p>“The Spirit and Taste of Christmastide or Noël in Tudor England” (including passages from <i>Hamlet</i> and <i>Love’s Labour’s Lost</i>)</p>	<p>December 18, 2018</p>	<p>Auditorium of the State University of Applied Sciences in Tarnów, Poland</p>		<p>Akademia n.d.</p>
<p>“Bach and Sonnets” (sonnet 116 in OP)</p>	<p>October 3, 2019 6pm</p>	<p>Ronnie Scott’s Upstairs, 47 Frith Street, London, UK</p>	<p>Director: Wolfgang Mittelmaier</p> <p>Oliver Hayes reads Sonnet 116 in OP</p> <p>Costumes: Janet Rodney French Vocalist: Fatine Boumaaz Social Media & PR: Rose Reade Programme: Veruschka Haas Assistant: Eliška Bouzková</p>	<p>Mittelmaier 2019</p>

"Shakespeareaze"	Prior or in 2020	South Africa	<p>Director: Fiona Ramsay</p> <p>OP as a part of the production</p> <p>Not clear what passages were included (whether lines from sonnets were selected as well)</p>	Ramsay 2020 ¹⁰
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Table D.4.

¹⁰ Not included in my analysis and in my count since it is not clear when it was performed and if it entailed only passages from plays or also sonnets.

5. Radio productions, CDs and podcasts¹¹

Title	Time	Place	Company/ Director	Source
Commentary for CD produced by Shakespeare's Globe	2005			Crystal 2019
"Shakespeare's Original Pronunciation" (CD of extracts from the British Library)	March 2012		Ben Crystal	Crystal 2019b, Crystal 2016c
"A Midsummer Night's Dream" (audio production)	April 12, 2012	Kansas Public Radio, US	Director: Paul Meier Ryan McCall (music) Jason Slote (sound design and post production)	Crystal 2019b, KU News Release 2012
Sonnets by William Shakespeare" for the iPad (App)	2012		Ben Crystal Reciting sonnet 141 in OP	Carmody 2012, Donahoo 2012
"How Shakespeare Spoke" (radio)	January 26, 2016		BBC Michael Rosen and Laura Wright. Featuring David Crystal	BBC Sounds 2016
"A Midsummer Night's Dream"	July 2020	Publication on the website	Kansas University Director: Paul Meier	Crystal 2019b

¹¹ No date is provided here or for the following tables in that, as I mentioned in Chap. 3, I did not specifically look for these productions or products, but I encountered them while I was looking for theatrical performances.

"Sonia Massai: Shakespeare's Accents"	December 6, 2021		Thomas Dabbs in conversation with Sonia Massai	Dabbs 2021

Table D.5.

6.Music (Early Modern music with or without lyrics)

Title	Time	Place	Company/ Director	Source
Commentary for CD produced by Shakespeare's Globe	2005			Crystal 2019
Sumer is Is Icumen in - A Journey through the History of the English Language" Concert of songs from Middle English to Modern English	June 25, 2010	Institut für Anglistik, University of Leipzig, Germany Apostelkirche	Director: Sylvia Reuter	Crystal 2019b, Reuter 2022
William Byrd's Great Service	May 2011	Recording	Musica Contexta Director: Simon Raven	Crystal 2019b
Lute Songs from the Time of Shakespeare (music event) (including music by John Dowland, Thomas Morley)	September 21, 2011 7.30 pm	University of Nevada, US		University of Nevada 2011
"Sumer is Is Icumen in" - again. A Journey through the History of the English Language"	July 12, 2013	Zimeliensaal at Museum für Musikinstrumente, Leipzig, Germany	Director: Sylvia Reuter	Reuter 2022

Concert	March and May 2016 17 March 2016 8 pm 22 May 2016, 5 pm	Kammermusiksaal Havelschlösschen, Waldmüllerstr. 3, Potsdam Klein Glienicke Schlosskirche Köpenick, Alt- Köpenick 1, 12557 Berlin, Germany	Performed by the EGG ensemble Including readings of Shakespeare's sonnets in OP	Crystal 2019b
York Madrigal Singers, York Late Music	September 3, 2016	St Saviourgate Unitarian Chapel, York, UK	Stef Conner	McGinn 2016
"British Bard-Song! A Shakespearean Pageant of Voices Performers: Cambridge Timeline Choir and Juice Vocal Ensemble Workshop"	November 19 and 26, 2016 Workshop: 5.30-6.30 pm Concert: 7.30 pm-9.30 pm	Nov. 19: Emmanuel United Reformed Church, Trumpington St. Cambridge 26 Nov. 26: St Martin's Church, Dorking, UK	Performers: Leith Hill Timeline Choir and Juice Vocal Ensemble Workshop Director: Stef Conner	Crystal 2019b Staff DORKAD 2016
"Il canto di Shakespeare - viaggio tra musiche e parole nel teatro elisabettiano" ¹²	July 24 and 31, 2017	Silvano Toti Globe Theatre, Rome, Italy	Director: Francesco Sala Dramaturgy: Michele di Martino	Redazione 2017, Il canto di Shakespeare 2017

¹² This production has been surfaced while performing research for another study of mine culminating in the article "Italian Soundscape in Performance: Voices, Accents and Local Sonorities of Shakespeare's History Plays in Italy (2000-2020)" (2022). It is unlikely that OP was used, but I have resolved to insert the production here in that it features Early modern music.

	9.15pm		Ensemble "Musica Antiqua Latina" (director: Giordano Antonelli; performer: Pamela Villoresi)	
"Bach and Sonnets"	June 6, 2018 6 pm	Ronnie Scott's Upstairs, 47 Frith Street, London, UK	Director: Wolfgang Mittelmaier Justine Viani reads Sonnet 116 in OP	Mittelmaier 2018
"Bach and Sonnets"	October 3, 2019 6 pm	Ronnie Scott's Upstairs, 47 Frith Street, London, UK	Director: Wolfgang Mittelmaier Oliver Hayes reads Sonnet 116 in OP Costumes: Janet Rodney French Vocalist: Fatine Boumaaz Social Media & PR: Rose Reade Programme: Veruschka Haas Assistant: Eliška Bouzková	Mittelmaier 2019
"Sumer is Is Icumen in" - the third time. A Journey through the History of the English Language" (life concert with masks)	July 3, 2020	Heilandskirche Leipzig, Germany	Director: Sylvia Reuter	Reuter 2022

<p>“Come again: Lute Songs of John Dowland and his Contemporaries”</p>	<p>November 15, 2021 7.30pm</p> <p>November 16, 2021 7.30pm</p>	<p>Bratteboro Music Center Friends Meeting at Cambridge, US</p>	<p>Agnes Coakley Cox, Sophie Michaux, Corey Dalton Hart, Adam Simon, voices; Nathaniel Cox, lute</p>	<p>Crystal 2019b</p>
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Table D.6.

4. Workshops, lectures, talks and exhibitions

Title	Time	Place	Speaker/s or Organiser/s	Source
Workshops with actors (for “Romeo and Juliet”)	2004	Shakespeare’s Globe, London, UK	David Crystal	Crystal 2005a
Masterclass (one-day long)	2007	Shakespeare Institute, Stratford, UK	Paul Meier Invited speaker: David Crystal	Meier 2018 (112)
Talks, presentations and workshops	September 12-22, 2010	University of Kansas, US	David Crystal	Staff TAGNS 2010
“Evolving English: One Language, Many Voices” (exhibition and recording)	November 12, 2010 – April 3, 2011	The British Library, London, UK		The British Library 2015, Press Office n.d., Crystal 2014, Paver 2011
“Shakespeare’s Original Pronunciation – Live!” (event)	May 4, 2012	The British Library, London, UK		Staff 2012
Live stream of OP seminar	June 1, 2013 9.45am – 1.00pm EDT	Stratford Festival, Canada	Tim Carroll and Paul Meier	Crystal 2019b
OP talk	August 15, 2013	Shakespeare Institute Summer School, Stratford upon Avon and (October) Cheltenham Literary Festival, UK	David and Ben Crystal	Crystal 2019b
OP Talk (including OP)	October 10, 2013	Cheltenham Literary Festival, UK	David and Ben Crystal	Crystal 2019b, Furness 2013, Staff 2013

Ben Crystal lecture regarding Original Pronunciation	2014	Blackfriars, Virginia, US	Ben Crystal	ASC 2014 Special thanks to Prof. Michael Saenger
A series introducing OP before “Macbeth in OP”	July 10 and 17, 2014	Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at Shakespeare’s Globe, UK	David and Ben Crystal, Passion in Practice 10 July: Original Pronunciation in Words; 17 July: Original Pronunciation in Song	Crystal 2019b (Globe Education 2014, 12)
Talk for “Pericles in OP”	January 29, 2015 6pm	Berwaldhallen, Stockholm, Sweden	Ben Crystal’s Shakespeare Ensemble	Crystal 2019b
Lecture for “Henry V in OP”	July 16, 2015 7pm	Shakespeare’s Globe in the Read Not Dead series, Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, UK	David Crystal and Ben Crystal’s Passion in Practice Shakespeare ensemble	Crystal 2019b
Talk (including OP)	February 7, 2016	Bishop’s Stortford, UK	Within the framework of Bishop’s Stortford College Festival of Literature David and Ben Crystal	Staff HARLST 2016, Staff HERTES 2015
Talk (including OP)	February 8, 2016	Hertford, UK	David and Ben Crystal	Benton 2016 ¹³

¹³ This and the previous event may coincide.

<p>“The Sound of the Folio: Shakespeare’s Original Pronunciation”</p> <p>A 90-minute presentation</p>	<p>September 16, 2016</p>	<p>University of Connecticut, US</p>		<p>Crystal 2019b</p>
<p>“Shakespeare on Toast” – Public Talk</p> <p>(including OP)</p>	<p>May 17, 2017</p> <p>6-7 pm</p>	<p>Isaac Theatre Royal, Christchurch, New Zealand</p>	<p>SGCNZ in association with Isaac Theatre Royal and The Court Theatre</p>	<p>Theatre review 2017</p>
<p>“Shakespeare’s Original Pronunciation – as he Heard It” – Public talk</p>	<p>May 17, 2017</p> <p>7.30-8-30 pm</p>	<p>Isaac Theatre Royal, Christchurch, New Zealand</p>	<p>SGCNZ in association with Isaac Theatre Royal and The Court Theatre</p>	<p>Theatre review 2017</p>
<p>“Sticks, Sonnets & Verse”- Theatre Industry Workshop</p> <p>(including OP)</p>	<p>May 22, 2017</p> <p>9.30-11.30am</p>	<p>Circa Theatre, Wellington, New Zealand</p>	<p>SGCNZ in association with Circa Theatre & TACT</p>	<p>Theatre review 2017</p>
<p>“Original Pronunciation Maori session” – Public Talk</p>	<p>May 23, 2017</p> <p>5-6pm</p>	<p>Circa Theatre, Wellington, New Zealand</p>	<p>SGCNZ in association with Circa Theatre, TACT, British Council</p> <p>Ben Crystal with Moana Ete</p>	<p>Theatre review 2017</p>
<p>“The History of the World in 100 Performances” including the Premiere of Hamlet and actors performing a scene in OP</p>	<p>May 22, 2017</p> <p>7.30 pm</p>	<p>Lincoln Center, New York, US</p>	<p>With Adam Gopnik, Stephen Greenblatt,</p> <p>Actors: Dan Banlieu and Claire Warden</p>	<p>Crystal 2019</p>

Talk at the University of Otago	June 2017	University of Otago, New Zealand	Ben Crystal	Jackoway n.d., UniNews 2017
<p>“Shakespeare on Toast” – Public Talk</p> <p>(including OP)</p> <p>Including Q&A for secondary students</p>	<p>June 7, 2017</p> <p>2-3pm</p>	University of Otago, College of Education Hall, New Zealand	University of Otago and SGCNZ	Theatre review 2017
<p>“Shakespeare’s Original Pronunciation”¹⁴</p> <p>Including Q&A for secondary students</p>	<p>June 7m 2017</p> <p>5-30-6.30pm</p>	University of Otago, College of Education Hall, New Zealand	University of Otago and SGCNZ	Theatre review 2017
<p>“Sticks, Sonnets & Verse” - Theatre Industry Workshop</p> <p>(including OP)</p>	<p>June 8, 2017</p> <p>7.30-9.30pm</p>	Performing Arts Centre at Albany Junior High School, New Zealand	SGCNZ in association with Albany Junior High School	Theatre review 2017
<p>“Shakespeare’s Original Pronunciation Maori & PI Session”</p>	<p>June 9, 2017</p> <p>1.30-2.30pm</p>	Wesley College, 801 State Highway 22, Paerata, Auckland, New Zealand	Ben Crystal with Taniela Prescott & SioneTuliakano	Theatre review 2017

¹⁴ Some articles - Jackoway n.d., UniNews 2017 - make reference to a talk at the University of Otago, which may correspond either to this event or the previous one, “Shakespeare on Toast”.

			For secondary schools and public	
Talk at the Parliament ¹⁵	Between June 1 and 5, 2017	Parliament, New Zealand		Staff FUSMED 2017
David Crystal's talks (including a discussion of OP)	August 20, 2017 9.30 am or 5 pm	Ucheldre Centre, Holyhead, Wales		Staff 2017
Happy Hour talk (including a discussion of OP)	June 7, 2018 6.30pm	The Rotary Centre for the Arts, Studio 100, Kelowna, Canada	New Vintage Theatre	Kelowna Capital News Staff 2018
Workshops	April, early June and October 2018	State University of Applied Sciences in Tarnów, Poland	Target: members of the English Studies Association and students of English at the State University in Tarnów	Akademia n.d.
An Evening with Ben Crystal	Friday, October 26, 2018 7pm Workshop for actors – Friday, October 26, 10am-1pm Student production on December 1, 2018 at Meow Wolf	El Museo Cultural, Santa Fe, US	Upstart Crows of Santa Fe and the ISC	Wild 2018

¹⁵ In the article Ben Crystal is portrayed as “specialist in OP” (Staff FUSMED 2017), so it is fair to assume that OP was, to some extent, discussed.

"Shakespeare Original Pronunciation and Accents: Dialects with David Alan Stern"	December 3, 2020	Online	Utah Shakes Starring David Alan Stern	Utah Shakes 2020
A key into the 17th century (OP and passages written by Roger Williams and Shakespeare)	Aug. 14, 2021 6 pm	Zoom, Online	Ben Crystal	The Reference Staff 2022, Johnston Sun Rise 2021

Table D.7.

8.Performances and events based on non-Shakespearean works (often coeval with Shakespeare's)

Title	Time	Place	Speaker/s or Organiser/s	Source
Virtual St Paul's Cross Project (including a sermon by John Donne recited in OP)	2011-2012		Performer: Ben Crystal Director: John Wall	Crystal 2019b
First Contact (exhibition)	September 23, 2012	Fisher Museum, Harvard Forest, 324 North Main Street, US		Crystal 2019b
The Life of Robin Hood (c. 1600)	October 3, 2012	Basilica of Belmont Abbey College, near Charlotte, North Carolina, US	Narrator: Dean Hoffman (professor and author) Performance by Carolina Pro Musica Based on a 1600s manuscript	Crystal 2019b
John Donne's An Epithalamion or Marriage Song on the Lady Elizabeth and Count Palatine Being Married on St. Valentine's Day, and A Nocturnal upon St. Lucy's Day (including contemporary music)	March 7, 2015 8pm	Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave, Toronto, Canada	Reading by Seth Leher Including songs by Campion, Downland and so on, performed by Hallie Fishel and John Edwards	Crystal 2019b
Marlowe's Dr Faustus in OP	May 22, 2016	Shakespeare's Globe, London, UK	Ben Crystal's Passion in Practice	Crystal 2019b

			Featuring a Q & A session	
Master Henslowe's Diary	May 26, 2016 7pm	Shakespeare's Globe, London, UK	Ben Crystal's Passion in Practice Featuring a Q & A session	Crystal 2019b
Love letters of Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn *	August 26-October 22, 2017	Maryland Renaissance Festival, US	Performers: Fred Nelson and Heather O'Shaughnessy Director: Mary Ann Jung; Artistic Director: Carolyn Spedden; OP Consultant: Valerie Dowdle	Crystal 2019b
"The Divine Infant's timeline"	December 18, 2019	University aula, Mickiewicza Street 8, Tarnów, Building C, room 017, Poland	English Philology Department Students' club at University of Applied Sciences in Tarnów, Poland Director: Grzegorz Nawrocki	Crystal 2019b, Akademia n.d.

Table D.8.

APPENDIX E

Beyond theatre - More data on appreciation

In an attempt to better comprehend and even gauge the general appreciation of OP, I performed an online analysis on 7 January 2022 through the website “Social searcher” (Social Searcher 2011-2013). By typing “Original Pronunciation Shakespeare”, it was possible for me to automatically determine the virtual reception of OP – the sentiment associated to said pronunciation – on the basis of the presence of and references to OP on social media. According to my small-scope study, the sentiment attributed to the reconstructed pronunciation is mostly positive being the ratio 4:1, as Fig. 1 shows.

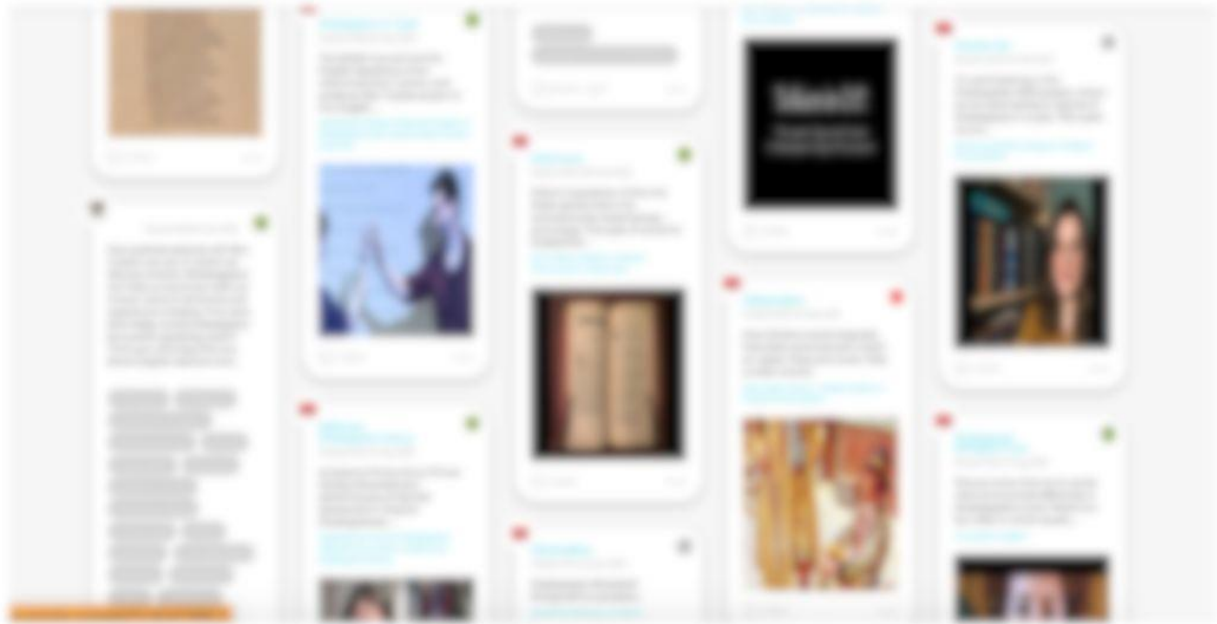


Sentiment analysis, Ratio. Fig. E.1.

Looking at the gathered data more closely, only few posts are taken from Instagram, none from Facebook or Twitter, and in all the other cases there are posts accompanying YouTube videos. It is my understanding that the content of such videos was not included in the automatic analysis, which is quite problematic: OP may have been decried in some clips, thereby impacting the final ratio.¹ Apart from the incompleteness of findings and their limited temporal range – not going beyond 2016 –, another flaw of the present investigation may correspond to the irrelevance of some of the results: not all the posts deal with

¹ There exist some videos quite critical of OP, condemning modern techniques of reconstructing Early Elizabethan pronunciation with no solid scientific evidence. Although they date back to a period subsequent to the year 2016, it cannot be ruled out that similar videos may have been included in the automatically-generated analysis.

Shakespeare's OP, but, as Fig. 2 reveals, some such as bibliomane and ABAlphaBeta are about Milton's and Charles Dickens's pronunciations.



Results – “Social Searcher”. Fig. E.2.

To conclude, although this sentiment analysis suggests that OP is positively received online, my current investigation, given its shortcomings, only constitutes a first and partial attempt at gauging the virtual appreciation of OP. Yet, it potentially paves the way for more thorough research.

APPENDIX F

Questionnaire



This survey is conducted by the PhD candidate Emiliana Russo and Sapienza University in Rome, Italy. We would like to ask you to help us by answering the following questions concerning the understandability and reception of Original Pronunciation. We will not be testing you - we are interested in your personal opinion. Please give your answers sincerely as only this will guarantee the success of our investigation. Your data will be treated confidentially and be stored in a password-protected folder, which will then be used for scholarly publications, or solely for other related educational purposes. You may withdraw from the investigation at any time. Thank you very much for your help.

Section A: To start with...

To begin with, we'll ask some very general information about you.

A1. Where are you from?

- United States: The Northeast ☐
- United States: The Midwest ☐
- United States: The South ☐
- United States: The West ☐
- Outside the US ☐

A2. Please indicate your level of proficiency in English:

- Native speaker ☐
- Non-native speaker: Proficient ☐
- Non-native speaker: Advanced ☐
- Non-native speaker: High intermediate ☐
- Other ☐

Other

Questions C2, D3 and E1 are based on Piaia's questions 2, 3 and 1, respectively (2018, 88).



A3. Which is your own variety of English (or your model, if you're a non-native speaker)?

British English	☐
American English	☐
Scottish English	☐
Irish English	☐
Australian English	☐
New Zealand English	☐
Other	☐

Section B: Section 1 - Shakespeare's plays
 We'd like to know about your experience of and relationship with Shakespeare's works.

B1. Q1a. Apart from this production, have you seen other performances in Original Pronunciation (= the pronunciation of Shakespeare's plays)?

Yes	☐
No	☐

B2. How many?

1-3	☐
4-6	☐
7-9	☐
10+	☐

B3. Q1b. Have you ever seen performances of Shakespeare's plays in Present-Day English (any current variety of English spoken in the English-speaking world)?

Yes	☐
No	☐

B4. How many?

1-3	☐
4-6	☐
7-9	☐
10+	☐



B5. Q1c. Have you ever read the play *King Lear*?

Yes, I have read it on my own ☐

Yes, I have studied it at school ☐

Yes, I have studied it at university ☐

No, I have not read it ☐

B6. Q1d. Have you ever studied Shakespeare's other works?

No ☐

Yes, at school ☐

Yes, on my own ☐

Yes, I took one or more courses at university ☐

Yes, I studied English literature at university ☐

B7. Q1e. To what extent do you feel close to Shakespeare on a personal level?

Not at all - 1	Little - 2	Somewhat - 3	Quite - 4	Very - 5	Extremely - 6
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section C: Section 2 - Understanding Original Pronunciation

At this point, we would be interested in your recent experience of Original Pronunciation.

C1. Q2a. To what extent did you understand what the characters were saying in the first half an hour of the performance?

Not at all - 1	Little - 2	Somewhat - 3	Quite - 4	Very well - 5	Extremely well - 6
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C2. Q2b. How understandable were the characters after the first hour of the show?

Not at all - 1	Little - 2	Somewhat - 3	Quite - 4	Very - 5	Extremely - 6
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C3. Q2c. How understandable were the characters by the end of the performance?

Not at all - 1	Little - 2	Somewhat - 3	Quite - 4	Very - 5	Extremely - 6
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



C4. Q2d. If one or more characters were not understandable at any point, this was probably due to...

Shakespeare's vocabulary and sentences ☐

Original pronunciation ☐

Acting and articulatory problems ☐

Other ☐

Other

Section D:

D1. Q2e. By the end of the performance, were you conscious/aware of the pronunciation?

Yes, all the time ☐

Yes, at times ☐

No ☐

D2. Q2f. While seeing the show, were you consulting the written play?

Yes, all the time ☐

Yes, at times ☐

No ☐

D3. How well do you think you would have understood the characters without reading the text?

Not at all - 1	Little - 2	Somewhat - 3	Quite - 4	Very much - 5	Perfectly - 6
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section E:

E1. Q2g. How did the pronunciation sound to you? Please rate it considering the adjectives at the opposite ends.

	Very	Quite	Little	Little	Quite	Very
pleasant unpleasant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
snobbish not snobbish	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



	Very	Quite	Little	Little	Quite	Very
rural urban	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
authentic inauthentic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
sincere insincere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
friendly cold	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
boring interesting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
sophisticated earthy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

E2. Q2h. In your opinion, Original pronunciation was

an impediment ☐

a minor obstacle ☐

a useless device ☐

a vehicle for new meanings ☐

a vehicle for rhymes and other effects ☐

an added value ☐

Other ☐

Other

Section F: Section 3 - Enjoying the performance

Having considered a specific aspect of the staging, Original pronunciation, we will now ask you about your overall impression of the performance.

F1. Q3a. Why did you go see this performance?

Curiosity about Original Pronunciation ☐

Interest in "King Lear" ☐

Interest in the productions at Baltimore Shakespeare Factory ☐



Other

☐

Other

F2. Q3b. How much did you enjoy this performance?

Not at all - 1	Little - 2	Somewhat - 3	Quite - 4	Very much - 5	Greatly - 6
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

F3. Q3c. What did you like the most about this performance?

F4. Q3d. And what did you like the least?

F5. Q3e. Would you go see other performances in Original Pronunciation?

No	Maybe	Yes	Absolutely
☐	☐	☐	☐

Section G: Section 4 - Basic information

Last but not least, we'll ask you some personal information. It will be treated confidentially and will only be used to better analyze the results of this research.

G1. Please type your age:



G2. Please select your gender:

- Female ☐
- Male ☐
- Non-binary ☐
- Other ☐

G3. Apart from English, how many languages do you speak fluently?

- 1 ☐
- 2 ☐
- 3 ☐
- 4 ☐
- 5 ☐
- 6+ ☐

G4. Please select your level of formal education (in progress or completed):

- High School Diploma ☐
- Certificate or diploma (sub-bachelor or vocational) ☐
- Associate Degree ☐
- Bachelor's Degree ☐
- Post-bachelor's Diploma/Certificate ☐
- Master's Degree ☐
- PhD ☐
- Other ☐

Other



G5. The survey is over. Please enter your email address for your chance to win the prize:

G6. If you wish to be interviewed and/or receive a summary of the findings of this research, please check the following boxes. We would be particularly grateful if you would consent to an interview, in that this might enable us to gain a better insight into the results of this questionnaire.

Thank you!

Interview (enter your email address if you have not done it yet)

☐

Comment

Summary of the findings (enter your email address if you have not done it yet)

☐

Comment

Thank you very much for your time and effort. Good luck with winning the prize!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Emiliana Russo at the following email address: emiliana.russo@uniroma1.it.

Grazie mille!

APPENDIX G

1.List of recovered rhymes for “Romeo”

CRYSTAL'S TRANSCRIPTION	PENGUIN EDITION	COMPLETE WORKS (Jowett et al.)
<i>feast-guest</i> (I. ii.20-21, p. 8)	I.ii. 20-21, p. 16	I.ii.18-19, p.373
<i>feast-best</i> (I.iii. 97-98, p. 11)	I.iii.97-98, p. 18	I.ii.100-101, p. 374
<i>Capulet-debt</i> ^{*1} (I.v.117.2 ² -118, p. 21)	I.v. 117.2-118, p. 32	I.v.116.2-117, p. 378
<i>married-bed</i> (I.v.134-135, p. 22)	I.v.134-135, p. 33-34	I.v.133.2-134, p. 378
<i>excellent-different</i> [*] (II.iii. 9-10, p. 31)	II.iii. 9-10, p. 44	II.ii.13-14, p. 380
<i>lies-qualities</i> (II.iii. 11-12, p. 31)	II.iii. 11-12, p. 44	II.ii.15-16, p. 381
<i>assure-distemperature</i> (II.iii.35-36, p. 31)	II.iii.35-36, p. 45	II.ii. 39-40, p. 381
<i>set-Capulet</i> (II.iii.53-54, p. 32)	II.iii.53-54, p. 46	II. ii.57-58, p. 381
<i>alone-one</i> (II.vi.36-37, p. 43)	II.vi.36-37, p. 58	II.v.36-37, p. 384
<i>Romeo- Mercutio</i> (III.i.144-145, p. 48)	III.i.144-145, p. 64	III.i.144-145, p. 386
<i>spent-banishment</i> (III.ii.130-131, p. 52)	III.ii. 130-131, p. 71	III.ii. 130-131, p. 387
<i>bed-maiden-widowed</i> (III.ii.134-135, p. 52)	III.ii.134-135, p. 71	III.ii.134-135, p. 387

¹ The symbol * stands for those rhymes in which there was an identity in terms of stress, nucleus (vowel) and coda (consonant).

² This is a half-line; 2 stands for the second half, rather than the first.

<i>come-tomb</i> (V.ii.28-29, p. 78)	V.ii.28-29, p. 109	V.ii.28-29, p. 397
<i>Set-Juliet</i> (V.iii. 301-302, p. 84)	V.iii.301-302, p. 121	V.iii.300-301, p. 400
<i>head-punished</i> (V.iii.306-308, p. 85)	V.iii.306-308, p. 121	V.iii. 305-307, p. 400
<i>woe-Romeo</i> (V.iii.309-310, p. 85)	V. iii. 309-310, p. 121	V. iii. 308-309, p. 400

Table G.1.

2.List of recovered rhymes for “Troilus”

CRYSTAL’S TRANSCRIPTION	COMPLETE WORKS ³ (Jowett et al.)
<i>thither-together</i> (I.i.152-153, p. 6)	I.i. 115-116, p. 746
<i>bear-appear</i> (I.ii.452-453 ⁴ , p. 16)	I.ii.290-291, p. 748
<i>prove-love</i> (I.iii.751-752, p. 25)	I.iii.284-285, p. 751
<i>assumes-plumes</i> (I.iii.852-853, p. 28)	I.iii.378-379, p. 752
<i>Diomed-head</i> (IV.ii-iv. ⁵ 2531-2532, p. 94)	IV. v. 136-137, p. 766
<i>hardiment-argument</i> (IV.v, 2580-2581, p. 96)	IV.vi.29-30, p. 767
<i>kiss-his</i> (IV.v.2605-2606, p. 98)	IV.vi.50-51, p. 767
<i>doth-tooth</i> (IV.v. 2868-2869, p. 107)	IV.vii.176-177, p. 770
<i>down-bone</i> (V. iv-x. ⁶ 3508-3509, p. 135)	V.ix.11-12, p. 776

Table G.2.

³ In this case no Penguin edition was consulted but the Folio’s, so I only reported the Complete Works’ lines.

⁴ Although the scene is indicated, the

⁵ Crystal put all these scenes together without making any distinction.

⁶ In this case, too, Crystal does not distinguish scenes.

3. Passage from *Troilus and Cressida*

PATROCLUS: But that's no argument for kissing now,⁷

For thus popped *Paris* in his hardiment,

And parted thus, you and your argument.⁸

ULYSSES: Oh deadly gall and theme of all our scorns,

For which we lose our heads to gild his horns.

PATROCLUS: The first was *Menelaus'* kiss, this mine,

Patroclus kisses you.

MENELAUS: Oh this is trim.

PATROCLUS: *Paris* and I kiss evermore for him.

MENELAUS: I'll have my kiss sir! Lady by your leave.

CRESSIDA: In kissing do you render or receive.

MENELAUS: Both take and give.

CRESSIDA: I'll make my match to live,

The kiss you take is better than you give:

Therefore no kiss.

MENELAUS: I'll give you boot, I'll give you three for one.

CRESSIDA: You are an odd man give even or give none.

MENELAUS: An odd man lady, every man is odd.

CRESSIDA: No *Paris* is not, for you know 'tis true,

That you are odd and he is even with you.

MENELAUS: You fillip me o' the head.

CRESSIDA: No, I'll be sworn.

ULYSSES: It were no match, your nail against his horn:

May I sweet lady beg a kiss of you.

CRESSIDA: You may.

ULYSSES: I do desire it.

CRESSIDA: Why, beg then.

ULYSSES: Why then for *Venus* sake give me a kiss,

When *Helen* is a maid again and his

CRESSIDA: I am your debtor, claim it when 'tis due.

ULYSSES: Never's my day, and then a kiss of you.⁹

DIOMEDES: Lady a word, I'll bring you to your father.

⁷ I have followed the modern-spelling version included in Crystal's transcription (Crystal 2022), which is based on *Shakespeare's Words*.

⁸ Although Crystal maintains the derivation of the transcription from the Folio (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019g), the line ending by *argument* is from the Quarto (Internet Shakespeare Editions 2019h), as my comparison of the two sources reveals.

⁹ "Nevers" is repeated in the Folio but not in the Quarto, whose reading seems to have been prioritised in this case.

APPENDIX H

1. Interview with Patrick Spottiswoode (18 August 2022)

1. Were you involved in the first experiments with OP – “Romeo and Juliet” (2004) and “Troilus and Cressida” (2005) – at Shakespeare’s Globe?

-If so, what can you remember about your experience behind the scenes?

-If so, do you remember why the Globe decide to stage each of them?

I was not directly involved but I had invited David Crystal to contribute to Globe Education programmes and courses before 2004 so “effected” an introduction to the theatre department.

As you will know, the R and J company experimented with OP for a couple of performances within the run of the production. One or two of the actors in the company were not keen to continue with the experiment, finding the shift from OP to non OP on different days difficult/confusing.

However, the experiment sparked an interest in exploring the idea further. My memory is a bit hazy but the R and J was rehearsed first as a non OP production and once rehearsed, OP was introduced

T and C was rehearsed as an OP production from the start.

2. Did you see the above-mentioned performances while they were on?

- If so, what was your reaction in each case?

- If so, can you remember any general or specific reactions on the part of audience members?

Yes, I saw both. The Romeo and Juliet was fascinating and I was only sorry that the company didn’t attempt more performances in OP. I remember wondering if the audience would follow the story in OP and, it seemed that most did. David talks about this (and the accessibility of the sounds of OP) in his book.

T and C was not a success. The company had a very limited rehearsal period. It is also a much less well-known play for audiences and actors. And it was one of the early experiments with an all-women company. This was a difficult cocktail. I sensed that the audience was confused and that both production and experiment were hampered. Perhaps this is why the theatre department lost confidence in the experiment

3. After several years since the first experiments with OP ("Romeo and Juliet", 2004; "Troilus and Cressida", 2005), Shakespeare's Globe organized some events and performances resorting to said pronunciation. Was the Education department in charge of all of them? And why did the Education department, of which you were director at the time, resolve to explore OP?¹⁰

Globe Education was established in 1989 and had been running programmes of events/talks/courses and workshops before the theatre opened in 1997. Unlike most education departments in theatres, it has an autonomy in terms of programming.

So, yes, Globe Education initiated and curated the follow up explorations in OP.

I was interested to see that we only ran OP experiments from 2014 to 2016. My recollection is that we continued working with David and then Ben on different projects/programmes from 2005. I am pretty sure that David gave talks to students and teachers on courses at the Globe. Did you look through the Globe Education programmes from 2005-2014? I know we launched David's book about the R and J experiment as a public event.

Why did we seek to explore OP? One part of my mission for Globe Ed was to excite curiosity and interest in the plays/playhouses of the early modern period. Three examples: Read Not Dead - this began in 1995 to stage performances with scripts of the c. 400 plays that have survived in print, written between 1567 and 1642; the Edward's Boys - a collaboration with Perry Mills and his all-boys company from the Edward VI grammar school (Shakespeare's school!) that focus on plays written for the boys companies; Original Pronunciation - with David and Ben Crystal.

I was disappointed when the theatre experiment in the Globe was not continued after T&C and felt that Globe Education could and should support the Crystal experiment. There are, of course, major financial pressures on a theatre department staging full OP productions. The theatre department was also experimenting with other aspects of Original Practices - single sex productions (male and female); period clothing; period music; plays with or without intervals etc etc.

Globe Education's seasons were organised around particular themes/issues. Henslowe's Diary and Dr Faustus were chosen for such a season that included an exhibition of documents and books from Dulwich College (founded by Edward Alleyn) which owns the Henslowe papers. (this covers your question 5)

¹⁰ Based on my readings, the Education department was at least responsible for the 'Read Not Dead' series.

I know, at first, I was resistant to staging Henry V and Macbeth in our RnD seasons. I founded Read not Dead to ensure that the Globe (especially when it became known as Shakespeare's Globe) did not become too Shakespeare-centric.

But there were pragmatic reasons for staging both Macbeth and Henry V: I knew that they would attract audiences BECAUSE they were by Shakespeare (!); the T&C "failure" was due in part because audiences weren't too familiar with the play. An unknown play by one of Shakespeare's contemporaries would have been very difficult both for actors (who rehearse the play in a day) and for audiences.

4. Staged readings of *Macbeth* and *Henry V* were held in 2014 and 2015, respectively. To your knowledge, why were readings preferred to full-length productions such as "*Romeo and Juliet*" and "*Troilus and Cressida*"?

There was an even more basic pragmatic reason for staged readings as opposed to full productions: budget!! It would have been prohibitively expensive to mount a full production of the plays in OP. It is why the RnD model is practical as well as exciting. Actors arrive on a Sunday morning and rehearse the play in half a day before presenting it on a stage in front of an audience: hence the scripts. Ben's company had the added obstacle of playing in OP so he "was allowed" to work with his actors on OP before the day of the performance.

5. Why were Henslowe's *Diary* and *Dr Faustus* delved into rather than other Shakespearean texts?*

POSTSCRIPT

One of the great joys of OP is discovering puns/plays on words or metrical differences that modern/received pronunciation have hidden from hearing. The research/groundwork that David Crystal undertakes to support the productions is extraordinary. But there is an inevitability that OP productions are seen as "exotic" and offer revelations/footnotes of antiquarian value. I said above that part of Globe Education's mission was to excite "curiosity". I don't know if you have the word "curio" or the equivalent in Italian. The word comes from "curiosity" but suggests something a little bizarre, an "oddity". For me the OP productions are successful as occasional "curios" while the research behind them will have a lasting impact.

REDACTED

3. Interview with Jane Grogan (27 June 2023)

1. How many performances did you see of "Romeo and Juliet in OP"? Did you enjoy one more than the other/s? If so, why?

Just one performance - I was interested in the concept and in how different it might be to see a play in OP. But I am no language expert, so it was a little like being a tourist in another, very familiar country!

2. On a scale from 1 (not understandable at all) to 6 (extremely understandable), how understandable was/were the performance/s to you?

Maybe around 4-5? I don't remember it posing a significant challenge, although I did know the play quite well.

3. Do you have any other comment on the pronunciation and/or the production?

I enjoyed the experience, and wish I could have seen more plays in OP. It didn't strike me as hugely difficult for audiences, but rather added an element of historic authenticity for an audience who were already (presumably) strongly invested in that concept.

APPENDIX I

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