Chapter 7  
Early Modern English: 1500-1700  
18 August 2013

The Renaissance was an intellectual and cultural development initially inspired by the desire to
revive Greek and Latin culture, as indicated by its name, meaning 'rebirth'. The Renaissance also
fostered scientific and scholarly inquiry and a humanistic world view. It started at different times in
different parts of Europe; in England, it began a little before 1500. In socio-economic terms, this is a
time of migration to large cities as well as large-scale poverty, eviction, and banishment. The 17th
century also sees an expansion of English to other continents and large-scale slave trading from
Africa to the Americas. This will have major consequences for the language, as we will see in
chapter 9.

One characteristic of this period is that carpe diem ('celebrate the day') replaces the medieval
memento mori ('remember that you will die'). The Renaissance is a time of freedom of ideas; for
language that means freedom in creating and borrowing words. During the Renaissance, English
continues to become more analytic. By 1700, the Great Vowel Shift is more or less complete and
the spelling relatively uniform; 1700 is therefore considered the end of this period even though that
date, like 1500, is somewhat debatable.

In this chapter, we will examine the features of Early Modern English as well as some
significant 16th- and 17th-century developments. The organization of the chapter is similar to that of
the chapters on Old and Middle English. Section 1 discusses printing and literacy, and lists some
Early Modern English sources. Section 2 examines Early Modern English spelling and sounds, and
sections 3 and 4 chronicle language internal changes. Section 5 takes a look at the extensive
borrowings from Greek, Latin, and other languages, typical of this period. Section 6 catalogs efforts
to standardize spelling and compose dictionaries, and section 7 examines attitudes towards varieties
of Early Modern English. Authorship debates are addressed in section 8.

1 Printing, Literacy, and Texts

A number of events took place at the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th centuries that
make 1500 an appropriate date for the start of Early Modern English: in 1476 Caxton introduced the
printing press to England and made texts available to a wider group of people, and in 1492
Columbus reached the 'New World'. By 1500, the English language was such that native speakers of
Modern English generally need no translations to understand it. In this section, we first discuss the
process of hand printing at the end of the 15th century and define some important terms. Then we
discuss the state of literacy in this period and the number and types of books printed.

A **compositor** was the person selecting the letters and arranging them in a frame, making a
page. Once the frame was filled, ink was rolled over it and a sheet of paper pressed against the
letters. This produced a printed page that could be used for a pamphlet. For books, more than one
page was printed on a sheet of paper. If two pages were printed on one side and two on the other,
the sheet of paper was folded once, for a total of four pages of text. Usually a set of sheets, called a
**quire**, was folded, as shown in Figure 7.1, and bound together with other such sets.

**ADD from p. 156 of the earlier edition**

Figure 7.1: A quire of two sheets

To enable the compositor and binder to keep track of the order of the pages, a **signature** was added
to the bottom of the page: A1 marked the front page (recto) of the first quire, A1 reverse the second
page (verso), and so on, as shown in Figure 7.1. The second quire started with the signature B. The
quires were bound together in a **folio**. For the order of the pages to be correct, a sheet needed to
have A1 (or A) and the reverse of A4 printed on one side, and the reverse of A1 and the front of A4
on the other (Look at Appendix B and see what the signature on that page is).

Some folio volumes are fairly complex: William Shakespeare's 1623 First Folio (F1) of 36
plays contains 993 pages and a preface. Each quire is made up of three sheets, 12 pages each; this
means there must have been at least 83 quires, excluding the preface. The cost of an unbound
volume was one British pound and 1,000 copies were probably printed (Pollard 1909). Of these,
Henry and Emily Folger collected 79 in the early part of the 20th century and these are now kept in
the Folger Library in Washington, D.C. The First Folio must have been successful since a second
folio appeared in 1632, a third in 1663, and a fourth in 1685.

Before the First Folio was printed, quarto versions of several of the plays appeared. Q1 was
the first quarto edition, Q2 the second, and so on. *Hamlet* first appeared in a 1603 Q1, but there are
other versions: Q2, Q3, and Q4 (see the differences between them at http://ise.uvic.ca). The
relationship between the different quarto and folio editions has been studied extensively; see almost
any edition of Shakespeare for which version is the 'good' copy.

A **quarto** is in some ways more complicated. It involved printing four pages on one side of
a sheet and four on the other and folding the sheet twice. Figure 7.2 provides an example, taken
from Gaskell (1972: 89).
Try folding a sheet of paper twice and see where the page numbers go and where you would have to cut the page. An octavo contained eight pages on one side and eight on the other and was folded once more. Duodecimo editions had 12 pages on each side and sextodecimo editions 16.

Before (and even after) 1476, printed books were imported (from Italy, Germany, France, and the Low Countries). Early printers initially tried to attract those who had bought manuscripts: teachers, lawyers, physicians, people connected to the church, and wealthy readers interested in literature. Literacy, however, was already spreading rapidly in the Middle English period and increasingly cookbooks, almanacs, sheets of music, and how-to books were printed. We know this from contemporary estimates of literacy: Thomas More, for instance, estimates that 50% of the population may have been literate. Literacy must have increased a great deal since the king was (unsuccessfully) petitioned in the late 14th and again in the 16th century to make it illegal for 'common' people to learn to read (Knowles 1997: 73; Lawson & Silver 1973: 83). Despite strong opposition to literacy, which stems from the fact that an educated population was considered dangerous by those in power, literacy continued to spread. This made the selection of books printed more varied and the printing press made book ownership easier. In fewer than 200 years after the introduction of the printing press, between 1476 and 1640, 20,000 titles were printed in English (Baugh & Cable 2002: 201). Throughout Europe, 100,000 titles appeared during the first 100 years of printing (Hirsch 1967). The print run of a book might be 200 or a 100 times that. As for the types of books printed, the estimates are that 45% were theological in nature, 36% literary, 11% legal, and 8.5% scientific (Lenhart 1935). Caxton chose to print texts such as Chaucer and Malory (see Blake 1969) that he thought would appeal to an aristocratic public.

At this time, there were also numerous attempts to print an English version of the Bible. In 1229, the Synod of Toulouse had made it illegal for laymen to read the Bible; hence it was not permitted to translate it into languages such as French, German, and English. In the 1370s, John Wycliff started a reform movement in the church, and in 1382 a translation of the Bible was completed (but banned in England). This reform movement, also referred to as Lollard, is considered responsible for the Peasant Revolt of 1381. William Tyndale made another attempt at translating the Bible in 1525, but the book was banned again (with the help of Thomas More), and Tyndale was strangled and burned near Brussels in 1536.

After Henry VIII managed to lessen the power of the Pope in the 1530s, English Bibles were no longer considered dangerous. Miles Coverdale worked on a version of Tyndale's Bible that appeared in 1539 in over 20,000 copies. Queen Elizabeth I decreed that a copy of Coverdale's Great Bible be present in every church. The King James Version, or KJV, named after King James who
hired a group of people to work on it soon after he succeeded Elizabeth, appeared in 1611; it is said to have incorporated vast portions of Tyndale's *New Testament*. This version became 'official' and widespread after 1611 (http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/kjv.browse.html). The language of the King James Version is archaic, as we will see in section 3.

In addition to the KJV, which was composed by a number of people, and Shakespeare's steady output between 1590 and 1616, there are many other important works in the Early Modern English period. Thomas More lived in the early part of the English Renaissance and was known for his *Utopia* written in Latin in 1515 as well as some other dramatic and humanist works. In 1565, Montaigne was translated by Florio; the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were translated as well. Edmund Spenser published *The Fairie Queene* in 1596, and Christopher Marlowe wrote *Dr. Faustus* and *Tamburlaine* around the same time. Table 7.1 lists the names of some authors from this period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elizabeth I (1533-1603)</th>
<th>Edmund Spenser (1552-1599)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walter Ralegh (1552-1618)</td>
<td>Philip Sidney (1554-1586)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Lyly (1554-1606)</td>
<td>Thomas Kyd (1558-1594)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Bacon (1561-1626)</td>
<td>Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Shakespeare (1564-1616)</td>
<td>Thomas Dekker (1570-1632)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyril Tourneur (1570/80-1626)</td>
<td>Ben Jonson (1572-1637)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Donne (1572-1631)</td>
<td>John Fletcher (1579-1625)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Webster (1580-1625)</td>
<td>Thomas Middleton (1580-1627)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Massinger (1583-1639)</td>
<td>Francis Beaumont (1584-1616)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ford (1586-1640)</td>
<td>John Milton (1608-1674)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673)</td>
<td>John Bunyan (1628-1688)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Dryden (1631-1700)</td>
<td>Samuel Pepys (1633-1703)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aphra Behn (1640-1689)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1: Early Modern English authors, in chronological order

The Early Modern English period, and in particular the 17th century, also produced scientific and philosophical writings, but many of these were in Latin. For instance, William Gilbert (1540-1603) wrote in Latin about magnetism in *De Magnete* (1600); William Harvey (1578-1657) discovered in 1616 how blood circulates but published in Latin as did Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and Isaac Newton (1642-1727). There are a few works in English, however: in 1661, Robert Boyle (1627-1691) published *The Sceptical Chymist* as well as works on theology. Joseph Glanvill's (1636-1680) *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* of the same year is in English as is John Locke's 1690 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. There were also linguistic works such as *The ground-work of a new perfect language* (Francis Lodowyck 1652) and *Elements of Speech* (William Holder 1669). Some of these will be discussed in sections 5 and 6.
2 Early Modern English Spelling and Sounds

In this section, we will examine some Early Modern English texts. We will see that Early Modern English spelling displays more variation than Modern English, but is starting to look quite 'modern'. Sound changes continue to occur, as expected.

Figure 7.3 is a facsimile of an excerpt from Act II (Scene 1) of Richard II, taken from the First Folio (1623). The play is also available in earlier quarto versions, the earliest from 1597. In the F1, there is a u where Modern English has v: siluer. We notice some word-final -e, as in Moate, farre, ransome, and Farme, and a few other minor points such as the double -ll in royall, shamefull, and scandall. Also, [s] is spelled either as s or resembling an f, depending on its position in the word.

The transcript of the most well-known part is given in (1).

(1) **Shakespeare** - **Richard II**
This royall Throne of Kings, this sceptred Isle,
This earth of Maiesty, this seate of Mars,
This other Eden, demy paradise,
This Fortresse built by Nature for her selfe,
Against infection, and the hand of warre: 5
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone, set in the siluer sea,
Which serues it in the office of a wall,
Or as a Moate defensiue to a house,
Against the enuy of lesse happier Lands,
This blessed plot, this earth, this Realme, this England, 10
This Nurse, this teeming wombe of Royall Kings,
Fear'd by their breed, and famous for their birth,
Renowned for their deeds, as farre from home,
For Christian servise, and true Chialrie, 15
As is the sepulcher in stubborne {Iury}
Of the Worlds ransome, blessed {Maries} Sonne.
This Land of such deere soules, this deere - deere Land,
Deere for her reputation through the world,
Is now Leas'd out (I dye pronouncing it) 20
Like to a Tenement or pelting Farme.
England bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beates backe the enuious siedge
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
With Inky blottes, and rotten Parchment bonds. 25
That England, that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a shamefull conquest of it selfe.
Ah! would the scandall vanish with my life,
How happy then were my ensuing death? (II, i)

The passage in (1) happens not to have varied spellings of the same word, even though that is quite common in this period. For instance, in Richard II, dye (l. 20) is elsewhere also spelled die and farre (l. 14) far. The spelling in this excerpt, as is common for the time, has a u where Modern English has v.

In Early Modern English, capital letters are used more frequently than in Middle English, where they only occur at the beginning of the line, if at all. Shakespeare does capitalize nouns and sometimes adjectives. The punctuation in the F1 edition is relatively modern, but in many Early Modern English texts it is still stylistic rather than grammatical, a point we will come back to in section 3.

We have mentioned the Great Vowel Shift (GVS) before because we have to ‘undo’ it to arrive at the pronunciation of Old and Middle English. The sounds of Early Modern English have undergone the shift. For instance, isle in (1) is pronounced [ajl], with the vowel shifted, and in nature, the first vowel is pronounced [e], as expected after the GVS.

This shift, however, does not take place overnight and, even as late as 1600, some sounds have not completely raised. If you can, listen to a recording of the passage in (1) to hear some unshifted vowels. These provide evidence of a more refined version of the GVS than we have seen in Chapter 2, a shift that had one more stage to it, as represented in Figure 7.4.
The vowels yet to be shifted can be heard in words such as *seate* and *sea*, pronounced with an [e] where Modern English has [i]. The sound spelled *ea* is pronounced [ɛ] in Middle English, and it raises to [e] around 1600 and to [i] around 1700. This [e] pronunciation of *sea(te)* in (1) shows the GVS was not complete by Shakespeare's time. In Shakespeare's English, *see* and *sea* are therefore pronounced differently: the former has already shifted to [i], in accordance with the GVS, but the latter has not and is pronounced more like [e]. The [o] in *stone* and *moate* in (1) sounds different in Early Modern and Modern English as well; hence, as shown in Table 7.2, a more accurate representation of the shift would have four levels of vowel height.

We now know that the **GVS proceeds in stages.** The approximate dates of the changes are shown in Table 7.2, adapted from Lass (1999: 72, 85, 96). By 1700, the sounds system resembles that of Modern English, as shown in Figure 7.2, repeated from Chapter 2, but see Lass (1999) for a much more detailed review of the actual changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>1400</th>
<th>1500</th>
<th>1600</th>
<th>1700</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i (ice)</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ej</td>
<td>ɛj</td>
<td>aj</td>
<td>aj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ee (meet)</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ea (meat/great)</td>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td>ej</td>
<td>i/ɛj</td>
<td>i/ɛj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a (ace)</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a&gt;ɛ</td>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td>ej</td>
<td>ej</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ou (out)</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>aw</td>
<td>aw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oo (boot)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oa (boat)</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>ɔ</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>ow</td>
<td>ow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2: Dates of GVS changes

Some sound changes that were part of the GVS were arrested before being complete. Compare, for example, the words in (2) to those in (3); all would be expected to be pronounced with [i]. The more frequent Modern English pronunciation is indeed [i], as in (2), but there are a few [e] pronunciations, as (3) shows.

1. sea, neat, clean, fear, read, teach, leave, eat, weak, meaning, meat
2. steak, great, yea, break, Reagan, Yeats
The words in (2) have the expected pronunciation considering the GVS; the words in (3) have an earlier pronunciation, which for unknown reasons is retained up to the present.

Since [e] and [o] change last, the GVS must have started either with the high vowels or the low ones. If high vowels were the first to change (min [min] to [majn]), there would be a void in the middle of the vowel diagram, and the mid vowels would be pulled up (drag chain). If the low vowels were first (name [nam@] to [nem@]), they would push up the higher ones (push chain).

In chapter 2, I mentioned that we don’t know exactly what set this shift in motion. In 1978, Robert Stockwell started his article on the Great Vowel Shift (GVS) with the words “What?! The Vowel Shift Again?” In the time since 1978, the exact cause of the GVS has still not been determined. Once one vowel shifts, we know that speakers tend to repair that by having other vowels occupy that empty space. Fennell (2001: 159ff.) thinks a social reason can be given for the start of the shift. This view is based on Dobson (1957) who discusses the struggle between the [i] and [e] pronunciations in sea, great, meat, and break. The 'polite' pronunciation was the one with [e], similar to the words in (3); ultimately the less polite one won in the majority of cases, as (2) shows. Names often retain the old pronunciation: Reagan and Yeats have the old pronunciation, and Beatty is pronounced both ways. But the story is not finished. Gjertrud Stenbrenden (2012) concludes that the GVS started earlier than when the handbooks and textbooks claim, and that it overlaps with other vowel changes that previously had been presumed to have been finished by the time the GVS started. So, this shift is a much more continuous process than what has been assumed previously and we can therefore expect more work on this.

You might ask how we can determine the pronunciation now that the spelling is more or less fixed. There is rhyming evidence, e.g. raisin and reason rhyme. In his 1633 grammar, Charles Butler published a list of homophones (different words with the same pronunciation) and Richard Hodges provided more in 1643 (see Dobson 1957: 396 ff.). Kökeritz (1953: 400ff.) provided lists of words that rhyme. Apart from rhyming evidence, there are also many grammars. A grammar for Dutch learners of English, for instance, lists ea as pronounced [e] as late as 1646 (Dobson 1957: 379).

As for Early Modern English consonants, some of them are deleted, especially in consonant clusters. For instance, there are puns on knight and night in Shakespeare, an indication that the initial [k] is no longer pronounced. The word-initial [w] ceases to be pronounced, e.g. in wrist and write. Kökeritz (1953: 295) says "[f]rom a modern point of view the Elizabethan pronunciation of the consonants was slipshod, not to say vulgar." Shakespeare might have made fun of Kökeritz' view: in (4), extra consonants are put into words such as debt and calf to bring the spelling closer to Latin. This is referred to as etymological respelling. Love's Labor's Lost (hence LLL) first appeared in a quarto version in 1598, but is given here in the F1 edition.
Shakespeare - Love's Labor's Lost

He draweth out the thred of his verbositie, fi-ner then the staple of his argument. I abhor such pha-naticall phantasims, such insociable and poynit devise companions, such rackers of ortagrpheie, as to speake dout fine, when he should say doubt; det, when he shold pronounce debt; debt, not det: he clepeth a Calf, Caufe: halfe, haufe: neighbour {vocatur} nebour; neigh abreuiated ne: this is abhominable, which he would call abhomi-nable it insinuateth me of infamie: {ne inteligis domine}, to make franticke, lunaticke? (V, i, 25)

Wyld (1920: 286-7) provides an excellent summary of the changes involving consonants, a few of which will be given here. In Early Modern English—and as early as Middle English—r starts to disappear in certain environments; this later leads to much sociolinguistic investigation on prestige variants. The loss starts before s in words such as bass and ass (from earlier bærs and arse). The Cely Letters, where parcel is written as passel, provide examples from the 15th century. In these letters, r is written in unexpected places such as farther for father, indicating that it was no longer clear to writers when to use it. By 1770, r has disappeared after vowels in southern English but not in other areas; this gives rise to the well-known difference between rhotic (with r) and non-rhotic (no r in most positions) dialects (Lass 1987: 94-5).

The pronunciation of initial h- is also interesting. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the h- is lost in clusters, e.g. before liquids and nasals (as in hlaf to loaf and hnitu to nit 'louse egg') and later before glides in most dialects. The loss of h before vowels in many dialects, as in hand, may be due to French influence since words such as history do not have an [h] in French, from which they are borrowed. The absence of initial [h] is stigmatized after the 18th century, which causes a hypercorrected [h] in history, hospital, and hymnal. In some contexts, initial h is not pronounced, however: hour and heir. See also Lass (1987: 95-6) and Chapter 8.

In many varieties of present-day English, [θ] and [ð] are pronounced as [t] and [d], respectively. This must have been common in Early Modern English as well. As Barnet (1998: xx) points out, debt and death were pronounced similarly enough to be 'confused' in the pun in (5) from around 1600.

(5) A man can die but once. We owe God a death
(Shakespeare, 2 Henry 4 III, ii, 243).
Some changes in Early Modern English sounds are summarized in Table 7.3. These do not occur all the time in all varieties, however. They will continue to vary between old and new form across the Englishes, however, as we will see in the next two chapters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GVS nears completion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʒ] is introduced in French loans, e.g. rouge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss of [r] (first before -s), e.g. parcel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss of [k] (in initial cluster), e.g. knight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss of [h] (word-initially), e.g. in hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loss of [x], e.g. in taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some loss of [w] (in initial cluster), e.g. write</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[θ]/[ð] &gt; [t]/[d], e.g. in death</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3: Some sound changes in Early Modern English

From the 13th century on, the choice between *a* and *an* and the forms of the possessive (e.g. *my* or *mine*) depend on the word that follows. If that word starts with a vowel (or *h* in earlier English), the form ending in [n] is used: *an eager ayre* and *mine owne eyes* in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Otherwise, *a* or *my* is used: *a most auspitious starre* and *my Magick garment* in the *Tempest*. This system remains more or less in place until the 18th century for possessives and until the present for articles.

As a last point in this section, we will briefly consider the stress of words. As Lass (1999: 128-9) points out, the Germanic stress rules characteristic of Old and Middle English change in the Early Modern English period. Germanic stress is typically on the first syllable (certain prefixes excluded); due to the introduction of many multi-syllable French and Latin words that have the stress on the antepenultimate syllable this general rule changes and the stress is on a later syllable. Thus, words such as *academy*, *acceptable*, *corruptible*, and *abbreviation* would all have the stress on the first syllable according to the Germanic rule, unlike in Modern English; according to contemporary sources, in some words the stress remains on the first syllable until the 18th century. Kökeritz (1953: 332-9) devotes some time to the issue and cites some Shakespearean words with a stress different from that in Modern English: *antique* with the stress on the first syllable. Try pronouncing these words with the stress on the first syllable.

By the end of the Early Modern English period, English pronunciation is more recognizable to Modern English speakers than Old or Middle English because of the completion of the GVS. Even though the GVS is mostly complete by 1700, there are exceptions: Alexander Pope (1688-1744) rhymes *survey* and *sea* and *away* and *tea* (Bolton 1982: 248), which indicates that *sea* and *tea* still have an [e]. The pronunciation of Early Modern English is discussed in a lot more detail in Dobson (1957); Jespersen (1909); Kökeritz (1953); and Wyld (1920).

3 Early Modern English Morphology
Early Modern English is characterized by a further **loss of inflections** and an increase in the number of prepositions and auxiliaries (grammaticalization), as expected of a language becoming more analytic. The loss of inflections is artificially stopped by prescriptive grammarians, editors, and schoolteachers in the centuries that follow. If that had not happened, we might have lost the third person -s ending and the case endings on personal (I/me, she/her, etc.) and relative pronouns (who/whom). This has in fact happened in a number of modern varieties.

We will start the discussion of these changes by examining the **pronominal** paradigm in Table 7.4. Compared to Middle English (Table 6.6), the accusative has merged with the dative; one case, referred to as ACC(usative), is now used for all objects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(ye(e), thou)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>my/mine</td>
<td>your/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(thy/thine)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(thee)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4: Early Modern English pronouns

The situation with the second person pronouns is complex; in Table 7.4 the forms that are disappearing are in parentheses. Around 1600, English thou and you are both used in similar situations, but you 'wins out' since the plural nominative pronoun ye(e) also disappears. The use of pronouns in the KJV, where the older ye is adhered to, is archaic, as (6) shows.

(6) that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (KJV, Genesis 3)

The changes in second person pronouns are presented in simplified form in Table 7.5.
Table 7.5: Second person pronoun changes (FAM=familiar; POL=polite)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OE and early ME</th>
<th>late ME (1400)</th>
<th>EModE (1650)</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>NOM þu</td>
<td>FAM NOM thou</td>
<td>S NOM you</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACC/DAT þe(c)</td>
<td>ACC thee</td>
<td>ACC you (thee)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>NOM ge</td>
<td>POL NOM yee</td>
<td>P NOM you</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACC/DAT eow(ic)</td>
<td>ACC you</td>
<td>ACC you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The choice between Early Modern English *thou (thee)* and *yee (you)* is often discussed in the sociolinguistic literature (Brown & Levinson 1987). Even in Middle English, the system is never as rigid as the *tu-vous* distinction in French: *vous* 'you' is used in formal situations and is a marker of politeness. Speaking to friends, a French speaker would use *tu* 'thou'. In Early Modern English, sometimes these pronouns follow the older rules, as in the first two lines in (7), where Hamlet uses the respectful *you* and his mother the familiar *thou/thy*, but this system breaks down, possibly out of irritation, in the third line.

(7)  
Queen *Thou* hast thy Father much offended.  
Hamlet Mother, *you* haue my Father much offended.  
Queen Come, come, *you* answer with an idle tongue.  
Hamlet Go, go, *you* question with an idle tongue.

An interesting innovation is the neuter genitive *its*. In Old and Middle English, the genitive of *it* is *his* and this is still occasionally found in Early Modern English, as in (8), typical of the KJV.

(8) and the fruit tree yielding fruit after *his* kind (*KJV*, Genesis 1)

*Its* must have come into existence as an analogy to *yours, hers*, etc.; well into the 18th century, both *its* and *it's* are found.

Another development is the occurrence of reflexive pronouns. As mentioned earlier, in Old English, forms such as *himself* and *myself* do not exist. They gradually come into existence, but even at the time of the F1 edition of Shakespeare, simple pronouns are used, as (9) and (10) show; *my/thy* and *self* are always printed separately, as in (11) and (12), even though *himself* has become one unit already.

(9)  
I feel *me* much to blame (*2 Henry 4* II, iv, 390)
(10) I take not on *me* here as a Physician (*2 Henry 4* IV, i, 60)
(11) That thou prouok'st thy selfe to cast him vp (2 Henry 4 I, iii, 96)
(12) I dresse my selfe handsome (2 Henry 4 II, iv, 303)

See the beginning of Appendix B for several other reflexive forms.

Case is further disappearing (Algeo & Pyles 2004: 187-8). This is evident from the loss of second person plural ye(e) in favor of a general you, the loss of whom, and the inconsistent use of pronouns. Examples of the inconsistent use of pronouns are provided in (13) to (15), all from Shakespeare. Some of these forms are edited away in later editions (see section 7).

(13) all debts are cleerd between you and I (Merchant of Venice III, 2, 321)
(14) So sawcy with the hand of she heere (Anthony & Cleopatra III, 13, 98)
(15) you have seene Cassio and she together (Othello IV, 2, 3)

In addition to Shakespeare, Marlowe and Johnson also show a tendency towards leveling case distinctions.

As to verbal endings, the distinctive second person singular -st ending is lost due to the loss of the second person singular pronoun thou. The third person singular verbal ending changes from -th to -s in the course of the Early Modern English period. Authors vary greatly with respect to which verbal ending they use. In Thomas Elyot's The boke named the Gouernour (1531), there are no 'modern' forms, and in Mulcaster's Elementarie (1582), there are 152 instances of hath and 151 of doth, but no instances of has and does. In Spenser's Fairie Qveene (1596), there are a few instances of the new forms: doth appears 660 times and does 169 times (20%); there are 313 instances of hath and 37 of has (11%). Some examples from Shakespeare where the verb has second person singular -st and third person singular -th are shown in (16) and (17).

(16) What thou denyest to men (Timon IV, 3, 537)
(17) whereas the contrarie bringeth blisse (1 Henry 6 V, 5, 64)

Starting around 1600, most verbal endings are left out in writing; the third person verbal ending may no longer have been pronounced -th long before that. Forms in -th rhyme with forms in -s: in 1643, Richard Hodges mentions that bougths and boweth are the same. Shakespeare no longer uses third person -th endings on verbs, except for hath and doth, and even those disappear after 1600 (Taylor 1972; 1976). Lexical verbs, as in (18), mostly have the -s ending: there are 29 instances of appeares and two of appeareth in F1.
(18) it **appeares** no other thing to mee, then a foule and pestilent congregation of va-pours

*(Hamlet II, 2, 315)*

Figure 7.5 shows the percentage of the less archaic *does*, and its variant *do(e)'s*, in relation to the total number of third person singulars. Mulcaster (1582) and Queen Elizabeth (1590) only use *doth*, never *does*, but Spenser in *The Fairy Queen* (1596) and Donne (1618) do. Shakespeare's use of *does* is considerable in e.g. *Hamlet* (1600) and *Macbeth* (1610), and John Fletcher's *Bonduca* (1614) shows no instances of *doth* or *hath*. The data on Queen Elizabeth and John Donne are from Lass (1999: 163-4); the other data are from electronic texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mulc</th>
<th>QE</th>
<th>Sp</th>
<th>Ham</th>
<th>Tem</th>
<th>Bon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1580</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1590</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1610</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1620</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 7.5: Percentage of does/do's/doe's compared to all third person singulars (Mulc=Mulcaster; QE=Queen Elizabeth; Sp=Spenser; Ham=Hamlet; Tem=Tempest; Bon=Bonduca)*

As mentioned, the KJV is more conservative and continues to use *-th* endings on auxiliaries (*hath* and *doth*), as in (19), as well as on lexical verbs, as in (20).

(19) **King James Version - 1611**

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, *Yea, hath* God said, *Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?* And the woman said unto the serpent, *We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* *(KJV, Genesis 3)*

(20) *The hay appeareth and the tender grass sheweth* itself. *(KJV, Proverbs 27)*
Some writers are also conservative in this respect: in his essays and in *Paradise Lost* (written between the 1640s and the 1660s), Milton always uses *hath* over *has*. In his 1690 *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke still uses *hath* even though *has* prevails, and Robert Lowth still uses both *hath* and *has*, *loveth* and *loves* as late as 1762, when his grammar appears.

Another development related to Early Modern English verbs is that the Old and Middle English subjunctive endings are being replaced by modal auxiliaries and infinitival complements, as in (21).

(21) and wishing [for those hands to take off his melancholy bargain]. (1681 Dryden, from Visser 2248)

As Görlach (1991: 113) states, "[b]efore 1650 the frequency of the subjunctive varied from one author to the next." This is an indication that it is seen as a stylistic variant, rather than a part of the grammar.

Verbal agreement in Early Modern English is often 'wrong' by prescriptive standards. This lack of clarity on the part of the speaker/writer is in keeping with the move towards an analytic language and the disappearance of agreement (and case). In (22) and (23), *has* and *am* are 'wrong' and in (24) *thee* 'should' be *thou* and the verb 'should' be plural. As in Modern English, this means that in the grammar of the speaker, the case and agreement distinctions are no longer transparent, especially in coordinated phrases.

(22) let nothing fail of all that thou has spoken (Esther 6)
(23) Both death and I am one. (*As You Like It* I, 3, 99)
(24) Jack, how agrees the devil and thee about thy soul ... (*I Henry IV* I, ii, 115)

Comparatives and superlatives in Early Modern English can be doubled: *most unkindest, more richer*, and *worser*. A search for *more* followed by an adjective ending in -*er* in Shakespeare's First Folio produces 24 examples and *most* is followed 7 times by an adjective ending in -*est*.

(25) This was the most vnkindest cut of all. (*Julius Caesar* III, II, 181)
(26) for the more better assurance (*Midsummer Night's Dream* III, i, 21)
(27) the worsser welcome (*Othello* I, i, 94)

Note that the spelling of *than* is different, as (28) and (29) show: *better then* occurs 73 times in F1 whereas better than occurs only four times.
that loues thee **better then** he could. (*Richard 3* I, ii, 141)

**better then** him I am. (*As you like it* I, i, 43)

See Appendix B for an instance of *then* as well. The use of *more* and *most* at this time is characteristic of an analytic language. John Hart's (1569) *Orthographie* has the no longer usual *easilier* and *more brief*, showing there was a lot of variation.

Other noteworthy morphological distinctions concern adverbs and verbs. **Adverbs** do not consistently end in -ly yet, as (30) and (31) show, and the distinction between **strong** and **weak verbs** is different in Early Modern English. For instance, in (32), *holp* is a strong verb, and in (33) *shake* is a weak verb (Algeo & Pyles 2004: 189 ff.; Partridge 1973: 121 ff.).

(30) and haste thee **quick** away. (*Measure for Measure* IV, i, 7)

(31) A man may sit as **quiet** in hell, as in a sanctuary. (*Much Ado about Nothing* II, i, 266)

(32) And his great Loue ... hath **holp** him. (*Macbeth* I, vi, 23)

(33) They **shaked** their heads. (*KJV, Psalm* 109.25, from Partridge 1973: 126)

A language that loses inflections might have words that in different contexts can be verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, or prepositions. This is the case in Early Modern English: in (34), the nouns *grace* and *vnickle* are used as verbs, and in (35), the preposition *beneath* [bIneθ] is used as an adjective.

(34) **Grace** me no Grace, nor **Vnickle** me (*Richard 2* II, iii, 78)

(35) Whom this **beneath** world doth embrace and hugge (*Timon* I, i, 44)

The technical term for this process that converts one category into another without an affix is **conversion**.

### 4 Early Modern English Syntax

The transformation of English into an analytic language continues in the Early Modern English period. As mentioned earlier, in syntactic terms, this transformation leads to an increasingly fixed word order and the introduction of **grammatical words**. An example of a grammatical word being formed is the directional *to* becoming a dative case marker. In Middle English, the number of prepositions and determiners increases as prepositions replace cases. Starting in the Early Modern
English period, the grammatical words introduced are mainly auxiliaries. The trend towards more embedded sentences that started in Middle English also continues in Early Modern English.

The word order is fairly similar to that of Modern English, as shown in (36), addressed by Queen Elizabeth to her bishops.

(36) **Elizabeth I** - **1599**

Our realm and subjects have been long wanderers, walking astray, whilst they were under the tuition of Romish pastors, who advised them to own a wolf for their head (in lieu of a careful shepherd) whose inventions, heresies and schisms be so numerous, that the flock of Christ have fed on poisonous shrubs for want of wholesome pastures. And whereas you hit us and our subjects in the teeth that the Romish Church first planted the Catholic within our realm, the records and chronicles of our realm testify the contrary; and your own Romish idolatry maketh you liars. (from [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/elizabeth1.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/elizabeth1.html))

**Subjects** are only left out in a few cases. Would you add pronouns in (37) and (38)?

(37) Nor do we find him forward to be sounded, But with a crafty madness keeps aloof. 
(Shakespeare, *Hamlet* III, i, 8)

(38) This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd. (Milton, *Paradise Regained* I, 85)

There are still some dative subjects, mostly in archaic expressions such as *me thinks*.

Some Yes/No **questions** continue to be formed as in (39) and main verbs can still be used in forming questions, as (40) shows.

(39) **Whether** hadst thou rather be a Faulconbridge, ...

'Had you rather be a Faulconbridge?' (Shakespeare, *John* I, i, 134)

(40) Whither go you? (*Merry Wives of Windsor* II, ii, 10)

**Auxiliaries** are introduced or expanded, but neither simple auxiliaries nor sequences of auxiliaries are as elaborate as in Modern English. The expression of tense, mood, and aspect is perhaps still the most important difference between Early Modern and Modern English (Rissanen 1999; van Gelderen 2004). For instance, Modern English would have the progressives *am going* and *are saying* in (40) and (41) and a present perfect form with *have* in (42), as shown in the gloss.

(41) What say you, Scarlet and John? (*Merry Wives of Windsor* I, i, 155)

(42) *I saw him not these many yeares*

'I haven't seen him for many years.' (*Cymbeline* IV, ii, 66, from Hope 2003)
As in French, German, Italian, and Dutch, there is still a difference in Early Modern English between *have* and *be*: *I haue spoke* but *We are come to you* (both from MWW). *Have* is used with transitive verbs and *be* with certain intransitive verbs (e.g. of motion). This difference continues up to the 19th century, but ceases to be relevant in Modern English.

The end of the Middle English period is also when auxiliaries start to be **contracted**. The Cely letters, in (43), the Paston Letters, in (44), and the late 17th century John Bunyan, in (45), show very interesting reductions after modals, something that continues until Modern English, as in (46), a typical sentence from a university essay.

(43) *and so myght Y a done syn I come vnto Calles*
    'and so might I have done since I came to Calais' (George Cely 1478).

(44) *it xuld a be seyd*
    'It should have been said' (Paston Letters, I, #131, a1449).

(45) Chris. ... I thought you **would a come** in by violent hand or **a took** the Kingdom by storm.
    Mer. Alas, to be in my Case, who that so was, **could but a done** so? ...as I, that **would not a knocked** with all their might (Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress* ii, 203/191).

(46) That argument should of been made differently.

In questions and negative sentences, *do* is not obligatory. Shakespeare, for instance, uses both (47) and (48).

(47) **Do you not heare** him? (*Tempest*, Appendix B)

(48) A heauie heart **beares not** a humble tongue. (*LLL* V, ii, 747)

Since *do* is not (yet) obligatory, its use can help determine authorship. Partridge (1964: 148-9) argues that in the parts in Henry VIII attributed to Shakespeare *do* is used much more than in those attributed to John Fletcher. Partridge (1964: 152) also lists other defining characteristics of the two authors. Hope (1994), without mentioning Partridge, argues the same.

In Old and Middle English, negation can be expressed by one or two negatives. This is changing in Early Modern English where *not* or *nothing* typically appear alone in a clause. There are, however, a few cases where single negation is expressed using multiple negative words: *nothing neither*, as in (49).

(49) Nor go neither: ...and yet say **nothing neither**. (*Tempest* III, ii, 22)
The use of relatives varies by author and Hope (1994) uses this to differentiate between the works of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Johnson, and others. Foster (1989) also uses relatives when trying to expand the Shakespeare canon, as we will see in section 7. The main difference between Early Modern and Modern English is in the choice of relative pronouns. In (50), which is used for a person, and, in (51), who is used for a non-human. These are ungrammatical in Modern English, mainly due to prescriptive rules. In (52), that is used as a marker of a non-restrictive relative clause, something that is no longer 'permitted'.

(50) Shall I of surety bear a childe, which am old. (KJV, Genesis 18.13)
(51) I met a Lyon, Who glaz'd vpon me. (Julius Caesar I, iii, 20)
(52) Let {Fame}, that all hunt after in their liues. (LLL I, i, 6)

Hope also shows that there is, in this period, a clear preference for the relative that over who and which, but that the latter spread in more formal writings. Shakespeare starts using the formal forms more in later works.

Preposition stranding, which occurs when a preposition is left behind after its object moves in a question, as in (53), is common in Early Modern English. When the object takes the preposition along, as in (54), we have a case of pied piping.

(53) Who did you talk about?
(54) About who(m) did you talk?

Bullokar in his 1580 grammar comments on preposition stranding but does not condemn it. Early Modern English authors certainly use it: Fletcher in (55) and Shakespeare in (56); two centuries later, however, only pied piping is allowed by prescriptive grammarians (Coar 1796).

(55) the dull twins of cold spirits, They sit and smile at. (Bonduca III, i)
(56) the cottage and the bounds That the old {Carlot} once was Master of. (As You Like It III, v, 108)

Punctuation and capitalization in Old and Early Middle English are fairly rare. They become more common in Late Middle English, but remain somewhat arbitrary, as the first paragraph in (57) from The Sceptical Chymist shows.

(57) The Sceptical Chymist - 1661 - Robert Boyle
I am (sayes Carneades) so unwilling to deny Eleutheriu any thing, that though, before the rest of the Company I am resolv'd to make good the part I have undertaken of a Sceptick; yet I shall readily, since you will have it so, lay aside for a while the Person of an Adversary to the Peripateticks and Chymists; and before I acquaint you with my Objections, against their Opinions, acknowledge to you what may be (whether truly or not) tolerably enough added, in favour of a certain number of Principles of mixt Bodies, to that grans and known Argument from the Analysis of compound Bodies, which I may possibly hereafter be able to confute.

In the 17th century, syntactic punctuation is introduced, especially through the work of Ben Jonson. It is one of the changes modern editors make when editing Early Modern English texts for a present-day audience.

When the language gets a strict(er) word order, it is natural for writers to punctuate according to grammatical function, as in Modern English (58). In Modern English, the subject, verb, and object form a core and cannot be separated from each other as in the ungrammatical (59).

(58) Yesterday, she saw him, unfortunately.
(59) *He, saw her.

Note that Modern English can have a word or words surrounded by commas such as however in the core.

With all this knowledge about the language, let's look at an Early Modern English text from Appendix A, given here as (60).

(60) **Elizabeth I** - **Translation of Boethius**
What is it, therefore, O man, that hath throwne the down to wo and wayle? Thou hast seene, I beleue, som new vnwonted thing. Thou, yf thou thinkest that toward the fortune be changed, art deceaud. This was euer her manner, this was her nature. She hath euer kept toward the rather her own constancy in her mutabilitie. Such one was she, whan she beguild the, and did deceauve with allurementes of false felicitie. Thou hast vnderstode now, the doutfull face of the blynde Goddesse, which though she hyde her self to others, hath made her self to the manifest. Yf thou allow her vse her fashon, complayne not therof; yf thou hatest her treason, skorne her and cast her of, that so falsely beguilde the; for she that now is cause of thy woe, the self same ought be of thy quyett. She hath left the, whom no man can be sure that will not leave him.

The verbal forms include hath, hast, art, thinkest, and hatest, with third and second person singular endings. The second person singular pronouns thou, the (=thee), and thy are still present, and the reflexive her self is written as two separate words. The spelling, e.g. the use of the letters u and v, is
quite different from Modern English, and the etymological respelling of *doutfull* has not taken place yet.

In conclusion, Early Modern English continues to lose case and verbal inflection. There are very few prescriptive rules, but this changes in the centuries to come. The main developments in this period are summarized in Table 7.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Morphology:</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Case endings disappear further</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Pronouns change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Verbal agreement continues to disappear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Nouns are used as verbs and adjectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Syntax:</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e. Word order becomes fixed and subjects become obligatory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Auxiliaries are used more (=grammaticalization) and are contracted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. <em>Do</em> is becoming obligatory in questions and negatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Multiple negation is reduced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Punctuation is becoming syntactically motivated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.6: Characteristics of Early Modern English

Additional references on Early Modern English grammar are Abbott (1872), Barber (1997), Görlach (1991), Lass (1999), and Partridge (1969), and Rissanen (1999).

5 **The Early Modern English Lexicon**

In this section, we will explore the significant increase in vocabulary in the Early Modern English period. English acquires numerous words of Latin origin in this period as it did after the Norman Invasion of 1066. The tension between native and non-native vocabulary becomes important in the *inkhorn debate* (an ink-horn is a container for ink but the term comes to be used for 'a learned or bookish word'). This debate remains significant to this day although not to the same extent as in countries such as France and Iceland.

The English language as a medium for serious writing has had to reemerge (at least) twice in its history—once around 1300 when its use had to be justified over the use of French (see section 1 of Chapter 6) and once after 1500 when it was seen as an unsophisticated alternative to Latin. Middle English manuscripts frequently included apologies for using English rather than Latin (see (1) in Chapter 6). By the 1550s, however, English reemerges: while it was 'barbarous and unrefined' before, now it is 'elegant'. The pride of writers about using English becomes obvious from the words of Richard Mulcaster (1582), provided in (61).
I take this present period of our English tung to be the verie height thereof, bycause I find it so excellentlie well fined, both for the bodie of the tung it self, and for the customarie writing thereof, as either foren workmanship can giue it glosse, or as home wrought hanling can giue it grace.

Mulcaster still sees a need for Latin because of "the knowledge which is registered in" it and for communicating with "the learned of Europe," but he feels English should be developed as well.

Old and Middle English lack many of the terms that become important in the Renaissance; thus, English ends up borrowing many words from Latin and Greek. Sometimes, the words are borrowed for practical purposes, other times for pedantic ones. Some estimate that between 1500 and 1660 nearly 27,000 new words enter the language (Garner 1982: 151; Wermser 1976: 23), even though Baugh and Cable (2002: 233) put the number of loans at 10,000. Görlach (1991: 136) says that the period between 1530 and 1660 "exhibits the fastest growth of the vocabulary in the history of the English language."

Half of the neologisms are probably loans, such as the ones in (62a), and half are new words (sometimes made up from Latin or Greek models), such as in (62b).

(62) a. anachronism, disability, expectation, folio, delirium, atmosphere, pneumonia
b. episcopal, blatant, disaccustom, effectful, urban, urge

Creating a new word is called **coining** a word. John Cheke and Edmund Spenser create new words from old ones: Cheke coins *mooned* `lunatic’ and *foresayer* `prophet’ and Spenser *belt, elfin, dapper, glee, grovel, gloomy,* and *witless* (Baugh & Cable 2002: 230-1).

As seen in Chapter 5, most of the new words are nouns, but there are also verbs and adjectives. The three prepositions that come from Latin, *per, plus, and via*, appear for the first time relatively late, in 1528, 1668, and 1779, respectively. According to the OED, the coordinator *plus* is a very late addition, in 1968. Note that, of the three, only *per* is a preposition in Latin; *via* is a noun meaning 'road' and *plus* is a comparative form of the adjective 'much'. This shows that grammatical words such as prepositions and coordinators are not typically borrowed into English.

Latin is a highly inflected, synthetic, language. Its nouns are divided into five classes (or declensions) and can be marked for five or six cases in the singular and plural. Latin words therefore always have an ending: *visum, datum, forum,* and *medium* are singular nouns and *visa, data, fora,* and *media* their plural counterparts. English speakers, however, are not familiar with the Latin grammatical system, so when they borrow Latin words, they adapt them to fit the English grammatical system. Therefore, Latin noun and verb endings are ignored: *audio, audit, video,* and
*recipe* are verbs in Latin but become nouns in English. This is why we usually say that Latin had no influence on English grammar, only its vocabulary.

The OED's online Advanced Search allows us to find all the words that first appear in a particular year. *The Chronological English Dictionary* (CED) also provides lists of these, but it is based on an etymological dictionary shorter than the OED. Table 7.7 lists a few new words from the CED.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1505</td>
<td>bleat, bloomed, bogle, bounder, brat, brawned, bumbard, choice, chop, harbour, importance, mose, prisage, stud, timber-tree, toque, varnishing, verditer, younker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1605</td>
<td>abhorreny, acoustic, anagrammatical, assassination, bemonster, botch, chemistry, disknow, emancipate, flippant, hot-brain, masterpiece, long-necked, Norwegian, Roman Catholic, resent, syntax, unchild, whimsy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.7: All of the new words for the year 1505 and some for 1605

*The Chronological English Dictionary* lists 19 new words for 1505 and 349 for 1605. The OED online lists 51 and 770 new words for those years, respectively. As you know by now, that is probably a small portion of all the new words; also, the words listed as first appearing in a particular year may have existed for some time already. Not all of the new words survive into Modern English. Some of my favorite rejected words are listed in (63).

(63) *adminiculation* 'aid', *anacephalize* 'to summarize', *eximious* 'excellent', *illecebrous* 'alluring', *ingent* 'immense', and *honorificabilitudinitatibus*.

The last word in (63), from Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost* (V, 1, 44), was meant to make fun of the person uttering it; therefore, it is not surprising it did not survive.

After the 1530s, when the most significant increase in new vocabulary starts, there is a lot of criticism of the use of inkhorn terms, such as those in (63). Elyot introduced the terms *education* and *persist* and most speakers of present-day English would have a hard time doing without these words. John Cheke is a fierce opponent of new words and comes up with his own terms, *mooned* for *lunatic* and *foresayer* for *prophet*, as mentioned earlier. In 1557, he wrote what is given as (64) below.

(64) I am of this opinion that our own tung shold be written cleane and pure, unmixt and unmangeled with borrowing of other tunges, wherin if we take not heed by tijm, ever
borrowing and never payeng, she shall be fain to keep her house as bankrupt. (Baugh & Cable 2002: 217)

Which words in (65) do you think may be relatively new terms?

Several decades later, the concern over inkhorn terms has weakened, but it reemerges in the centuries to come under different guises such as Ogden's basic vocabulary mentioned in Chapter 5. You might think that the opposition to borrowing Latin and Greek vocabulary would lead to the adoption of regional and archaic terms, but that is not the case. Coote's (1596) The English Schoole-Master allows dialect words if there are no other alternatives. Bullokar's and Cawdrey's word lists include very few dialect words. The first lists of hard words to include dialect more systematically are John Ray's (1674) A Collection of English Words not Generally Used and Elisha Coles's (1676) An English Dictionary. The former includes around 1,000 regional words (Görlach 1999a: 502).

In connection with the inkhorn debate, there is also concern about using hybrids, English words with Latin or Greek prefixes and non-English words with English prefixes. The 16th and 17th centuries see the introduction of many new prefixes, some of which are given in (65a), that are used next to the English prefixes given in (65b).

(65) a. re-, trans-, anti-, macro-, micro-, meta, pro-, contra-, extra-, ultra-, vice-, ex-.  
b. out-, in-, up-, down-, under-, over

Some authors, such as Shakespeare, are not concerned about hybrids. Garner (1983: 231-33) counts 107 hybrids in Shakespeare: out-villain, fore-advise, under-honest, which have English prefixes and Latin words, and renew, ingrateful, and trans-shape, which have Latin prefixes and English words. The KJV, in comparison, has only 7 such hybrids, and they are 'old' hybrids, coined in the 13th and 14th centuries. Nevalainen (1999: 378-407) offers numerous examples of the origins and meaning of prefixes and suffixes: ante, pre, and fore (as in antedate, pre-exist, and foreshadow); anti, contra, and counter (as in anti-monarchy, contraband, and counterevidence); and -(i)an, arian, ese, ist, and -ite (as in Australian, sectarian, Chinese, linguist, and Mennonite).

Not all new words come from Latin and Greek. French continues to influence the vocabulary of English, as (66) shows, as do other Romance languages. Italian provides the words in (67) and most music terms. Spanish provides the words in (68), many of which are derived from native American languages which the Spanish (and Portuguese) came into contact with in their colonial past (and anchovy is from Basque via Spanish).

(66) amateur, avenue, ballet, bankrupt, bigot, brochure, camouflage, cheque/check, essay, etiquette, menu, shock, ticket
Wermser (1976) presents the data in Table 7.8 (adapted from Görlach 1991: 167). The numbers represent the percentages for the origins of the loanwords. They show that Latin and French sources are the most frequent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lat</th>
<th>Gk</th>
<th>Fr</th>
<th>It</th>
<th>Spa</th>
<th>Dut</th>
<th>Eur</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1510-1524</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1560-1574</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1610-1624</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1660-1674</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.8: Origin of Early Modern English loans

Shakespeare is celebrated for his **neologisms, puns, and malaprops**. For puns, see Eric Partridge's *Shakespeare's Bawdy* (originally published in 1947). Shakespeare is said to have introduced more words into the language than anyone else, but that might be due to the fact that he is the most studied English author; it is possible that a lesser known author introduced more new words. Shakespeare's vocabulary encompasses words used by noblemen, thieves, lawyers, and soldiers but mostly people from the cities: *fap* 'drunk' in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *bung(hole)* 'pocket' in *Hamlet*. A malaprop, a term not introduced until much later, involves the erroneous use of a long and difficult word. Shakespeare uses malaprops frequently with certain characters to indicate pomposity or lack of sense, as in (69) and (70) from Schlauch (1965: 226-7).

(69) you are thought heere to be the most senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch. ('sensible' is meant, *Much Ado* III, 3, 23)
(70) shee's as fartuous a ciuill modest wife. ('virtuous' is meant, *Merry Wives* II, 2, 100)

Vocabulary is an important marker of social class. Görlach (1999a: 524) quotes the clown in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, in (71), to illustrate the register differences between synonymous words such as *abandon* and *leaue the societie*.

(71) **Shakespeare** - **As You Like It**

He sir, that must marrie this woman: Therefore you Clowne, abandon: which is in the vulgar, leaue the societie: which in the boorish, is companie, of this fe-male: which in the
common, is woman: which to-gether, is, abandon the society of this Female, or Clowne thou perishest: or to thy better understanding, dyest; or (to wit) I kill thee, make thee away, translate thy life in-to death, thy libertie into bondage: I will deale in poy-son with thee, or in bastinado, or in steele: I will bandy with thee in faction, I will ore-run thee with policie: I will kill thee a hundred and fifty wayes, therefore trem-ble and depart. (V 1 47)

In addition to the introduction of many new words, there are also numerous changes in the meaning of existing words during the Early Modern English period. As we have seen, in Old and Middle English, meanings change, sometimes drastically. Between Early Modern and Modern English, such changes continue to take place. For instance, in Early Modern English, abuse means 'deceive', accident 'anything that happens', appeal 'accuse', competitor 'partner', conceit 'idea', cousin 'relative', tonight 'last night' (from the OED and Barnet's intro to The Tempest). Gentleman changes from 'a man of gentle birth' (OED 1a) to 'a man of superior position...or having the habits of life indicative of this' (OED 4a) to any male with good social skills (Fennell 2001: 162-165).

The Early Modern English period is one of great freedom, not only from grammatical constraints (as shown in sections 3 and 4), but also when it comes to the creation of words. As we will see in the next chapter, this freedom does not continue and grammar books and dictionaries become prescriptive tools meant to outlaw certain words. This development has its beginnings in the Early Modern English period.

6 Attitudes towards a Standard

Until the 1650s, there is much debate on vocabulary and spelling, and English is technically without a standard, i.e. the language of one social or regional group that is typically taught in schools and used in official circles. The centuries that follow impose many restrictions on linguistic freedoms and the need for an Academy is debated (as we will see in Chapter 8). In this section, we will examine some spelling guides, dictionaries, grammars, and pronunciation guides of the time as well as some attitudes towards languages expressed in them.

As mentioned in earlier chapters, spelling conformity is one of the results of the introduction of the printing press in 1476. The need for spelling regularity is debated in the Early Modern English period. The attempts to establish a standard spelling are numerous: in the 1550s, Cheke suggests having long vowels in maad 'made' but no final -e (Dobson 1957: 44). It is interesting that Cheke does not suggest incorporating the 'damage' done by the GVS, as (72), where [aj] is written as ii (as well as i), shows.
For your opinion of my gud will unto you as you *writ*, you can not be deceiued: for submitting your doinges to mi judgement, I thanke you. (from Görlach 1991: 222)

Other well-known works of the period are John Hart's *Orthographie* (1569), which introduces several new letters, William Bullokar's *Booke at Large* (1580) and *Bref Grammar* (1586), and Richard Mulcaster's *Elementarie* (1582). Mulcaster's *Elementarie* is perhaps the most extensive but least phonetic. He ends his book with recommended spellings for over 8,000 common words. Many of these spellings are similar to those in Modern English, as Figure 7.6 shows for words such as *abandon, about, accept*. In these recommendations, there is no inclination to spell words such as *abate* and *abide*, whose pronunciations changed due to the GVS, more phonetically.

Notice differences between Early Modern and Modern English in endings such as the ones on *abbie* 'abbey' and *abilitie* 'ability' and the final letters of *actuall* and *aduerbiall*.

Word lists and dictionaries are natural standardizers for words and spelling patterns, but they appear relatively late. Therefore, they do not help standardize the spelling of Early Modern English. The first word lists/dictionaries to appear are of foreign and difficult words rather than common ones. These lists are different from Mulcaster's since they provide a definition. Compare, for instance, Figure 7.6 and Figure 7.7. The latter provides the first page of Edmund Coote's *The English Schoole-Master* (1596) (www.library.utoronto.ca/ute/ret/coote/ret2.html for the full text).

Many of Coote's words (at least on this page) do not appear in Mulcaster, and some of those that do have different spellings: *abhorre, achieue*.

Robert Cawdrey adds to Coote when, in 1604, he publishes a list, the first page of which is presented in Figure 7.8. Note the reliance on Coote; such a reliance on previous sources has been characteristic of dictionary (and grammars) ever since.
John Bullokar's *An English Expositor* (1616) and Henry Cockeram's *The English Dictionarie* (1623) follow. A chronological list of word list/dictionary compilers for the Early Modern English period appears in Table 7.9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of entries</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mulcaster</td>
<td>1582</td>
<td>8143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coote</td>
<td>1596</td>
<td>1357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cawdrey</td>
<td>1604</td>
<td>2511 (4886 by 1617)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullokar</td>
<td>1616</td>
<td>4156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cockeram</td>
<td>1623</td>
<td>9952</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.9: Some Early Modern English word lists (entry counts from [http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/english/emed/emedd.html](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/english/emed/emedd.html))

Cockeram's dictionary is in three parts, the first of which explains difficult words (ranging from *acersecomick* 'one whose hair was never cut' to *collocuplicate* 'to enrich' to *abandon, actress and abrupt*). The second part does the opposite and goes from simple to learned words, whereas the third provides encyclopedic information (see James Murray's *The Evolution of English Lexicography* from 1900: [www.blackmask.com/thatsay/books150c/evlex.htm](http://www.blackmask.com/thatsay/books150c/evlex.htm)).

This concern with words and word lists helps standardize spelling. Thus, by 1650, the spelling system is pretty much settled, as (73), from Pepys's Diary, shows.

(73) All the morning at home about business. At noon to the Temple, where I staid and looked over a book or two at Playford's, and then to the Theatre, where I saw a piece of 'The Silent Woman,' which pleased me. (from 25 May 1661, taken from www.pepysdiary.com/archive)

At this time, there are many popular spelling books such as Richard Hodges' *The English Primrose* (1644) and *Most Plain Directions for True-Writing* (1653). The spelling books and dictionaries demonstrate a concern with a standard, consistent spelling. Some differences exist between Early Modern and Modern English spelling—such as *generall* and *musick*, for example—but the basic system is in place, certainly by 1700.

From Middle English, we know that a certain pronunciation or word choice could mark a speaker as being from the North or the South. It is unclear how stigmatized those differences were. For some people in the Early Modern English period, correct pronunciation was a concern, however, as evident from the excerpt in (74).
(74) [for youth] that they speke none englisshe but that whiche is cleane polite perfectly and articulate pronouncte omittinge no lettre or sillable as folisshe women often times do of a wantonness (Elyot, *The Governour*).

However much Elyot and others worried about pronunciation, pronunciation guides did not become frequent until much later (Jones' famous *Pronouncing Dictionary* appears in 1917).

Grammars are not very prescriptive in the 16th century: they take usage into account and do not provide the arbitrary rules based on Latin grammar that we currently still have. For instance, in 1653, John Wallis wrote a grammar of English in Latin, written for foreigners, but he did not feel genders and cases should be introduced since there was "no basis in the language itself" (Kemp 1972: 105, 113). He also realized, as shown in (75) that English had become analytic.

(75) For this reason I decided to employ a completely new method, which has its basis not, as is customary, in the structure of the Latin language but in the characteristic structure of our own.... The whole syntax of the noun depends almost entirely on the use of prepositions, and the conjugation of verbs is easily managed with the help of auxiliaries, so that what usually causes a great deal of difficulty in other languages, gives us no trouble at all. (Kemp 1972: 111)

Thus, correct spelling and vocabulary seem more of a concern than correct grammar. Neither dictionaries nor grammars express grammatical value judgments. That changes. As we will discuss in the section on editions, 17th century editors start correcting grammar.

7 Regional and Register Varieties

In this section, we will first examine some examples of regional terms in written sources and then move on to different registers.

As mentioned, Middle English texts provide evidence of regional (or dialect) differences. In the Early Modern English period, the language is moving towards a standard, and differences in writing—though not in speech—become less obvious as a result. Thus, many of the features we identified in Middle English remain in the spoken language to this day and are transported to the colonies of Britain.

Görlach (1999a: 506) explains that Early Modern English writers, when they choose to use dialect, do so "due to a conscious decision to aim for a special effect." Spenser fits that description since he often uses archaismes and regionalisms to portray 'rustic' people, as in (76) and (77) from *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579). He provides glosses for 'rustic' words, as in (78).
Is not thilke th e mery moneth of May,  
When loue lads masken in fresh aray?  
How falles it then, we no merrier bene,  
Ylike as others, girt in gawdy greene?  

when the Welkin shone faire, Ycladde in clothing of seely sheepe

Many of the forms (thilke 'such', the plural masken, the prefix on ycladde) are older forms as are many of the words in the glosses.

Shakespeare uses dialect for special purposes as well, but not abundantly: tarre 'provoke' is from the region he is from (Warwickshire) and appears three times in F1. In (79), from the F1 version of King Lear (IV, vi, 235-49), a southwestern pronunciation is used to conceal Edgar's identity through words such as pezant 'peasant', vurther 'further', zo 'so', zir 'sir', and volke 'folk'.

Shakespeare - King Lear

Stew. Wherefore, bold Pezant,  
Dar'st thou support a publish'd Traitor? Hence,  
Least that th' infection of his fortune take  
Like hold on thee. Let go his arme.  
Edg. Chill not let go Zir,  
Without vurther 'casion.  
Stew. Let go Slaue, or thou dy'st.  
Edg. Good Gentleman goe your gate, and let poore volke passe: and 'chud ha' bin zwaggerd out of my life,  
'twould not ha' bin zo long as 'tis, by a vortnight. Nay,  
come not neere th' old man: keepe out che vor' ye, or Ile try whither your Costard, or my Ballow be the harder;  
chill be plaine with you.  
Stew. Out Dunghill.  
Edg. Chill picke your teeth Zir: come, no matter vor your foynes.

In Henry V, Welsh, Irish, and Scots are used (see Brook 1976: Chapter 9): in (80) (from III, ii, 109-52), the most noticeable Scots words are sall for shall and tway for two. The spelling of gud 'good' probably indicates the Scottish special [u].

Scot. It sall be vary gud, gud feith, gud Captens bath,  
and I sall quit you with gud leue, as I may pick occasion  
that sall I mary.
Irish. It is no time to discourse, so Chrish saue me:

...  
Scot. By the Mes, ere theise eyes of mine take them-selues
to slomber, ayle de gud seruice, or Ile ligge i’t'h'
grudn for it; ay, or goe to death: and Ile pay't as valo-rously
as I may, that sal I suerly do, that is the breff and
the long: mary, I wad full faine heard some question
tween you tway.
Welch. Captaine {Mackmorrice}, I thinke, looke you,
vnder your correction, there is not many of your Na-tion.
Irish. Of my Nation? What ish my Nation? Ish a
Villaine, and a Basterd, and a Knaue, and a Rascall. What
ish my Nation? Who talkes of my Nation?
Welch. Looke you, if you take the matter otherwise
then is meant, Captaine {Mackmorrice}, peraduenture I
shall thinke you doe not vse me with that affabilitie, as in
discretion you ought to vse me, looke you, being as good
a man as your selfe, both in the disciplines of Warre, and
in the deriuation of my Birth, and in other particula-rities.
Irish. I doe not know you so good a man as my selfe:
so Chrish saue me, I will cut off your Head.
Gower. Gentlemen both, you will mistake each other.
Scot. A, that's a foule fault.  
A Parley
Gower. The Towne sounds a Parley.
Welch. Captaine Mackmorrice, when there is more
better oportunitie to be required, looke you, I will be
so bold as to tell you, I know the disciplines of Warre:
and there is an end.

Register variations, which are usually reflected only in vocabulary, are used by certain occupations or on special occasions and called jargon. Specialized jargon dictionaries appear in the 17th century: John Smith's (1641) The Sea-Mans Grammar and Dictionary and Henry Manwaring's (1644) The Sea-mans Dictionary. These are special kinds of 'hard word' dictionaries and the latter is more of an encyclopedia. There is no social stigma attached to specialized vocabulary, or jargon, unlike the stigma attached to slang.

Slang and cant are often seen as styles, but the terms are complex and used differently by different linguists. Some slang words of this period are doxy 'vagrant woman', prig 'thief', and the name Nym, used by Shakespeare, which refers to the Old English niman 'to take' and might be a pun. After the breakdown of feudalism and the rise of the middle classes, poverty is on the rise, resulting in vagrancy and a fear of the poor. This may be related to the increased interest in slang. Coleman (2004) provides a history of dictionaries of slang and cant. The earliest is a glossary of 114 terms in Thomas Harman's (1567) Caveat or Warening for Commen Cursetors. Longer lists soon
follow: Robert Greene's 1592 and Richard Head's in 1673; the latter produces two lists, one from cant to English and the other from English to cant. As Coleman (2004: 75) points out, the latter is more popular, indicating the appeal of cant words for the general reader.

Thus, regional and register varieties are relevant in this period, as in all others.

8 Editorial and Authorship Issues

In this section, we will look at two topics that have attracted much interest: editorial issues and ways of determining authorship.

When examining the language of a period, we depend on authentic sources and editions, not editions 'cleaned up' by editors. When available, facsimiles of manuscripts or reliable electronic or other editions should be used. Since changes in pronunciation and meaning make even certain Early Modern English meanings obscure, editors occasionally add notes, as in the Arden and Signet Classic editions.

It is useful to keep in mind how many of the texts were produced. A playwright might write a play (with or without someone else's help) and try to sell it to a company. The company might not want the play published. Often, pirated copies or copies made for one particular actor, and containing mainly the lines relevant to that role, were distributed (http://etext.virginia.edu/bsuva/promptbook). All this is relevant when choosing an edition. Some copies were hand-written by the author: for example, the Q2 edition of Hamlet (1604) is supposedly based on Shakespeare's own manuscript (note, however, that there are no existing manuscripts written by Shakespeare).

Early editors and publishers attempt to 'clean up' the grammar, content, style, and vocabulary of Shakespeare and other authors. Black and Shaaber (1966) chronicle some of the changes between the First (1623) and Second Folio (1632). Examples are given in (81) to (83).

(81)  a. Who I made Lord of me (F1)
     b. Whom I made Lord of me (F2, Comedy of Errors V, i, 137)

(82)  a. To who, my Lord? (F1)
     b. To whom my Lord? (F2, 3 Henry 6 II, ii, 112)

(83)  a. Contempt and beggary hangs vpon thy backe! (F1)
     b. Contempt and beggary hang on thy backe! (F2, Romeo & Juliet V, i, 71)

The first century of the Modern English period sees many editions and alterations of Shakespeare's texts. In some cases, when a compositor obviously misread something, for example, the changes are
justified. However, Alexander Pope's (1723-5) edition, for instance, leaves out many original passages and Lewis Theobald's (1726) *Shakespeare Restored* tries to rectify some of the many editorial errors committed by Pope. However, William Warburton's (1747) edition is again based on Pope. Samuel Johnson too is involved with a 1765 edition. Electronic copies of the folios and quartos can be found at [http://ise.uvic.ca/Library/facsimile/bookplay](http://ise.uvic.ca/Library/facsimile/bookplay) and those of subsequent editions at [www.unibas.ch/shine/linksearlyeditors.htm](http://www.unibas.ch/shine/linksearlyeditors.htm).

As far as authorship debates are concerned, we will address some of the methods for establishing authorship and show how this was done for some Early Modern English writers. While some researchers try to enlarge the canon (Foster 1989 and Wells & Taylor 1986), others show that some of the work is collaborative, thus reducing the canon (Vickers 2002). The most common **methods of determining authorship** are studying (a) utterance length, (b) grammatical words, (c) special/uncommon words, (d) Latinate words, (e) contractions, and (f) syntactic patterns. We will study examples of each of these methods.

In a classic study, Mosteller and Wallace (1964) applied a number of methods, mainly (a) to (c), to a few disputed *Federalist Papers* to determine whether Hamilton or Madison was the author. First, they looked at works that are undeniably Hamilton's or Madison's and determined the average sentence length. Unfortunately, Hamilton and Madison have similar styles with 34.55 and 34.59 words per sentence, respectively. This sentence length is characteristic of what we now call the 'convoluted style' of the 18th century. Then, they looked at the frequency of the article *the* and of short words; this did not produce conclusive results either. Finally, they found that Hamilton uses *while* and Madison *whilst* and that the percentage of grammatical words such as *by, from, and to* helps determine the author. This example shows that there is no one cut-and-dried method and each situation requires a unique set of criteria.

Wells and Taylor (1986) rely on (b) by using the standard deviation of ten **grammatical words** (*but, by, for, no, not, so, that, the, to*, and *with*) in the core Shakespeare canon. The canon is defined in advance and the typical numbers of grammatical words are then calculated. Unfortunately, there are so many issues with the presentation and calculation of their data (Merriam 1989; Smith 1991), that they are of little use. Some of their results are interesting but surprising. Thus *King Lear* does not belong to the core since 3 out of 10 grammatical words fall outside the range. My checking of the same grammatical words in Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* shows that 9 out of 10 grammatical words fall within the range and is therefore very similar in this respect to Shakespeare.

Pierce (1909) examined the collaboration of John Webster and Thomas Dekker by calculating the percentage of **Latinate words** in their vocabularies. Later, he did the same for Dekker and John Ford and showed that Dekker uses Latinate vocabulary sparingly compared to the other two writers. Shakespeare's vocabulary was examined statistically in the 1930s and 40s by
Albert Hart and later by Eliot Slater. Slater (1988) reviewed a lot of Hart's work on common and rare words and built on it, trying to link the anonymous play *The Reign of King Edward III* to Shakespeare. Vickers (2002: 78) also used the frequency of Latinate words to show that Shakespeare is not the author of the 1612 *A Funerall Elegye*. His table, comparing the *Elegye* to three Shakespearean plays, is reproduced here as Table 7.10. The first column provides the number of lines examined, the second lists the total number of Latinisms, and the third calculates the average number of Latinisms per line. The fourth column lists the total number of long words, typical for Latinate words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of lines</th>
<th>Latinisms</th>
<th>Latinisms per line</th>
<th>4-5 syllable word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elegye</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cymbeline</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter's Tale</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tempest</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.10: Latinate and polysyllabic words in different works (adapted from Vickers 2002: 78).

As this table shows, the *Elegye* uses many more Latinate words than the three plays commonly attributed to Shakespeare; according to Vickers, this rules out Shakespeare as the author of the *Elegye*.

Having looked at the length and vocabulary (points (a) to (d) above), we now turn to contractions. Partridge (1964: 150) shows that after 1600 contractions such as 'em, for them, become common: "Jonson, being a strict grammarian," wrote 'hem' because that form is like the Old English, but someone like Fletcher uses the contracted form abundantly, as shown in (84).

(84) Hear how I salute 'em. (*Bonduca* III, 1)

Shakespeare, on the other hand, does not use contractions much, as Table 7.11, which compares Fletcher's *Bonduca* and *Woman's Prize* with Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*, shows.
Table 7.11: Contraction in two plays by Fletcher and three by Shakespeare (based on Partridge 1964: 151).

Table 7.11 shows that *Bonduca* and *Woman's Prize* have a higher percentage of contracted forms.

Fletcher is Shakespeare's supposed collaborator in *Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Henry VIII*; therefore, it is interesting to compare the percentages of contractions in these two plays with the percentages in Table 7.11.

Table 7.12: Contraction showing possible collaboration

The number of contractions in these plays is between the number characteristic of Fletcher and that characteristic of Shakespeare and might indicate collaborative work. Partridge (1964: 152) specifies which parts might have been written by whom on the basis of many other linguistic forms.

There are also many syntactic 'fingerprints' in texts. The use of *who* for non-humans has been mentioned. The use of relative pronouns in general has been used to make claims about authorship. The frequency of the analytic comparative and superlative *more* and *most* relative to the synthetic ones ending in *-er* and *-est* or the environment in which *a* and *an* appear can also be examined. As briefly mentioned in section 4, the use of *do* in negatives and questions helps distinguish between the works of Shakespeare and those of Fletcher (see Hope 1994). The use of *has* and *hath* was discussed as a way to distinguish pre-1600 from post-1600 texts; they could be used for authorship as well, if a particular author, e.g. Milton or Jonson, is fond of them. For more on this, go to [http://shakespeareauthorship.com](http://shakespeareauthorship.com).

Finally, we will examine the role of compositors in spelling practices. It has been argued that the role of the original author is minimal and that spelling differences reveal nothing. We will show that this is not the case and that spelling on occasion is indicative of an author or period (and
sometimes of the compositor). Hinman (1963) shows that some compositors can be distinguished by their spelling. The use of broken letters unique to the box of a compositor is external evidence indicating which compositor worked on which page and a compositor's preference for particular spellings is internal evidence.

In section 4, *has* and *hath* were used to distinguish texts chronologically: *hath* is prevalent before 1600 and *has* after 1600. Table 7.13 shows that different compositors show variation within their own work with respect to *ha's*, *has*, and *hath*. This probably means that the variation was in the original manuscript they were working from. Table 7.13 lists some verbal forms for each compositor of Shakespeare's F1 *Hamlet*.

| Compositor B (e.g. nn4v-nn5v; oo5v): | *ha's*, *has*, and *hath* |
| Compositor I (e.g. nn6-nn6v; oo1v-oo2): | *ha's*, and *hath* |
| Compositor E (e.g. pp5-pp5v): | *ha's*, *has*, and *hath*. |

Table 7.13: Compositors and the spelling of *has* in *Hamlet*

The pages each compositor is responsible for are indicated by signatures in brackets. Table 7.13 shows that *has* is used by compositors B and E (even though it occurs only twice in the play). *Ha's* is more frequent (there are 13 instances), and it is used by compositors B, I, and E. *Hath* is used frequently by all three compositors. Since all compositors use similar forms, the original author's choice was most likely kept by the compositor.

Authorship debates are fun and are frequently discussed in the media. In many cases, careful study can help determine authorship, but we need to be prudent.

9 Conclusion

In this chapter, we examined some characteristics of Early Modern English. By now, it should be clear that, syntactically, this stage is remarkably modern. If we do not understand some of the texts, the reasons may be stylistic and semantic.

There are a few differences between the sounds of Early Modern and Modern English such as the pronunciation of the vowels in *moat*, *seat*, and *beneath*. Our knowledge about this comes from rhymes and contemporary grammars. The morphology and grammar still show a number of differences, and vocabulary use is a lot more innovative than in other periods. The introduction of dictionaries during this time period encourages more uniformity, however.
The texts in the Appendices are chosen to reflect different genres (plays, prose, and letters), gender, and times (16th to late 17th century) and they are in chronological order.

Exercises

1. Compare Queen's Elizabeth's version of *Boethius* in Appendix A to the earlier rendition by Chaucer or to the Modern English one. List some of her Early Modern English features in spelling, morphology, syntax, and the lexicon.

2. Comment on some of the orthography, punctuation, and spelling of the text in B. Also notice the signature.

3. How did the words in (a) to (c) change in pronunciation during the Early Modern English period? What sound change occurred in (d)?
   a. knave
   b. wrong
   c. bright
   d. burst > bust

4. What do the phrases below indicate about the grammar of Early Modern English?
   b. I am my selfe indifferent honest (from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*).

5. Find several Modern English words that have one of the prefixes *mal-*, *mis-*, and *pseudo-* and try to formulate a rule for their use. What is the origin of these prefixes?

6. There seems to be a relationship between *sure* and *secure*; *construe* and *construct*; *poor* and *pauper*; and *ray* and *radius*. What might be the reason there are such pairs?
7. Take one of the Early Modern English texts of Appendix D or E and comment on its morphology (e.g. pronominal forms or verbal endings), syntax (e.g. word order and auxiliaries), lexicon, and orthography, spelling, or punctuation.

8. Use the OED and see who first used *premeditated, assassination, obscene, and catastrophe*.

9. The rulers and major political events of this period are: Henry VIII (1509-47), Edward IV (1547-53), Mary I (1553-58), Elizabeth I (1558-1603), James I (1603-25), Charles I (1625-49), Cromwell (1653-1658), Charles II (1660-85), James II (1685-88), and Mary & William (1688-1702). Pick a year during one of these reigns and check what new words appear. Make use of the Advanced Search option in the electronic OED or the CED. Do the new words give you a clue about the political climate of the reign?

10. Comment on the text in Appendix C in terms of spelling and the inclusion of regionalisms.

11. Which of the six authorship criteria discussed in section 7 do you think might be most reliable? Outline a plan for a possible authorship study.
Appendix A

Elizabeth’s Translation of Boethius compared to others

Elizabeth I was born in 1533, became Queen of England in 1558, and died in 1603. She promoted the arts, sciences, and humanities. Below is her translation of a part of Boethius whose Consolation of Philosophy has been translated many times: by Alfred in Old English, Chaucer in Middle English, and Elizabeth in Early Modern English. See www.luminarium.org/renlit for Elizabeth’s full text and http://ecat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/boethius/boethius.html for the Latin version and a Modern English translation, and http://www.yorku.ca/inpar/Boethius_Fox.pdf for another translation. The versions below are given in chronological order.

Old English - Alfred
Eala Mod, hwæt bewearp þe on ðas care 7 on þas gnornunga? Wenst þu þ hit hwæt niwes sie oþþe hwæþwugu ungewunelices þ þe on becumen is, swelcæ òþrum monnum ær þæt ilce ne eglede? Gif þu þonne wenst þ hit on þe gelong sie þ ða woruldsælða on ðæt s市场经济 ðæt þu hi hæfdest, þa ilcan þe wæren on stilnesse gif þu hi na ne underfenge. ða ilcan þe habbað nu heora agnes ðonces forlæten, nales ðines, ða ðe næfre nanne mon buton sorge ne forlætað. (Sedgefield ed 1899: 15-6)

Middle English - Chaucer
What eyleth the, man? What is it that hath cast the into moornynge and into wepynge? I trow that thou hast seyn some newe thyng and unkouth. Thou wenest that Fortune be chaunged ayens the; but thou wenest wrong (yif thou that wene): alwey tho ben hir maneres. Sche hath rather kept, as to theward, hir propre stablenesse in the chaungynge of hirself. Ryght swiche was sche whan sche flateryd the and desseyved the with unleful lykinges of false welefulnesse. Thou hast now knowen, the doutfull face of the blynde Goddesse, which though she hyde her self to others, hath made her self to the manifest. Yif thou approvest here (and thykest that sche is good), use hir maneris and pleyne the nat; and yif thou agrisest hir false trecherie, despise and cast awey hir that pleyeth so harmfully. For sche, that is now cause of so mochel sorwe to the, sholde ben cause to the of pees and of joye. Sche hath forsaken the, forsothe, the whiche that never man mai ben siker that sche ne schal forsaken hym. (from Benson 1987, 408, Boece book II, prose 1)

Early Modern English - Elizabeth I
What is it, therefore, O man, that hath throwne the down to wo and wayle? Thou hast seene, I beleue, som new vnwonted thing. Thou, yf thou thinkest that toward the fortune be changed, art deceaund. This was euer her manner, this was her nature. She hath euer kept toward the rather her own constancy in her mutabilitie. Such one was she, whan she beguild the, and did deceaue with allurementes of false felicitie. Thou hast vnderstode now, the doughtfull face of the blynde Goddesse, which though she hyde her self to others, hath made her self to the manifest. Yf thou allow her vse
her fashion, complayne not therof; yf thou hatest her treason, skorne her and cast her of, that so falsely beguilde the; for she that now is cause of thy woe, the self same ought be of thy quyett. She hath left the, whom no man can be sure that will not leave him.
Appendix B
Shakespeare's *The Tempest*

The First Folio edition is the first edition that contains many plays, see section 1 above too. *The Tempest* is the first play in the First Folio edition (see the signature) even though it is a later play (namely 1610) than *Hamlet* (1600), for example.
Appendix C
Alexander Hume on Orthography
Alexander Hume's *Of the Orthographie and Congruitie of the Britan Tongue* is not dated but was composed after 1617; there is an EETS edition by Henry Wheatley in 1865.
Appendix D
Dorothy Osborne's Letters
Dorothy Osborne (1627-1695) and William Temple come from gentle but impoverished families. When they fall in love, their families are not happy. Her letters to him before their marriage are published as *The Love Letters of Dorothy Osborne* (edited by Edward Parry in 1901) and available at [http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/osborne/letters/letters.html](http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/osborne/letters/letters.html).

SIR, -There is nothing moves my charity like gratitude; and when a beggar's thankful for a small relief, I always repent it was not more. But seriously, this place will not afford much towards the enlarging of a letter, and I am grown so dull with living in't (for I am not willing to confess that I was always so) as to need all helps. Yet you shall see I will endeavour to satisfy you, upon condition you will tell me why you quarrelled so at your last letter. I cannot guess at it, unless it were that you repented you told me so much of your story, which I am not apt to believe neither, because it would not become our friendship, a great part of it consisting (as I have been taught) in a mutual confidence. And to let you see that I believe it so, I will give you an account of myself, and begin my story, as you did yours, from our parting at Goring House.

I came down hither not half so well pleased as I went up, with an engagement upon me that I had little hope of ever shaking off, for I had made use of all the liberty my friends would allow me to preserve my own, and 'twould not do; he was so weary of his, that he would part with't upon any terms. As my last refuge I got my brother to go down with him to see his house, who, when he came back, made the relation I wished. He said the seat was as ill as so good a country would permit, and the house so ruined for want of living in't, as it would ask a good proportion of time and money to make it fit for a woman to confine herself to. This (though it were not much) I was willing to take hold of, and made it considerable enough to break the engagement. I had no quarrel to his person or his fortune, but was in love with neither, and much out of love with a thing called marriage; and have since thanked God I was so, for 'tis not long since one of my brothers writ me word of him that he was killed in a duel, though since I hear that 'twas the other that was killed, and he is fled upon 't, which does not mend the matter much. Both made me glad I had 'scaped him, and sorry for his misfortune, which in earnest was the least return his many civilities to me could deserve.

Presently, after this was at an end, my mother died, and I was left at liberty to mourn her loss awhile. At length my aunt (with whom I was when you last saw me) commanded me to wait on her at London; and when I came, she told me how much I was in her care, how well she loved me for my mother's sake, and something for my own, and drew out a long set speech which ended in a good motion (as she called it); and truly I saw no harm in't, for by what I had heard of the gentleman I guessed he expected a better fortune than mine. And it proved so. Yet he protested he liked me so well, that he was very angry my father would not be persuaded to give a £1,000 more with me; and I him so ill, that I vowed if I had £1,000 less I should have thought it too much for him. And so we parted. Since, he has made a story with a new mistress that is worth your knowing, but too long for a letter. I'll keep it for you.

After this, some friends that had observed a gravity in my face which might become an elderly man's wife (as they term'd it) and a mother-in-law, proposed a widower to me, that had four daughters, all old enough to be my sisters; but he had a great estate, was as fine a gentleman as
ever England bred, and the very pattern of wisdom. I that knew how much I wanted it, thought this
the safest place for me to engage in, and was mightily pleased to think I had met with one at last
that had wit enough for himself and me too. But shall I tell you what I thought when I knew him
(you will say nothing on't): 'twas the vainest, impertinent, self-conceited learned coxcomb that ever
yet I saw; to say more were to spoil his marriage, which I hear he is towards with a daughter of my
Lord of Coleraine's; but for his sake I shall take heed of a fine gentleman as long as I live.

Before I had quite ended with him, coming to town about that and some other occasions of my
own, I fell in Sir Thomas's way; and what humour took him I cannot imagine, but he made very
formal addresses to me, and engaged his mother and my brother to appear in't. This bred a story
pleasanter than any I have told you yet, but so long a one that I must reserve it till we meet, or
make it a letter of itself. Only by this you may see 'twas not for nothing he commended me, though
to speak seriously, it was because it was to you. Otherwise I might have missed of his praises for
we have hardly been cousins since the breaking up of that business.

The next thing I desired to be rid on was a scurvy spleen that I had ever been subject to, and to that
purpose was advised to drink the waters. There I spent the latter end of the summer, and at my
coming home found that a gentleman (who has some estate in this country) had been treating with
my brother, and it yet goes on fair and softly. I do not know him so well as to give you much of his
character: 'tis a modest, melancholy, reserved man, whose head is so taken up with little
philosophical studies, that I admire how I found a room there. 'Twas sure by chance; and unless he
is pleased with that part of my humour which other people think worst, 'tis very possible the next
new experiment may crowd me out again. Thus you have all my late adventures, and almost as
much as this paper will hold. The rest shall be employed in telling you how sorry I am you have
got such a cold. I am the more sensible of your trouble by my own, for I have newly got one
myself. But I will send you that which used to cure me. 'Tis like the rest of my medicines: if it do
no good, 'twill be sure to do no harm, and 'twill be no great trouble to you to eat a little on't now
and then; for the taste, as it is not excellent, so 'tis not very ill. One thing more I must tell you,
which is that you are not to take it ill that I mistook your age by my computation of your journey
through this country; for I was persuaded 't'other day that I could not be less than thirty years old by
one that believed it himself, because he was sure it was a great while since he had heard of such a
one in the world

As your humble servant
Appendix E
Isaac Newton on Optics
Isaac Newton (1642-1727) wrote the following letter in 1671. This facsimile was taken from Cohen's 1958 edition of *Papers and Letters on Natural Philosophy*. 