

How Shakespeare's Dramas Help to Acquire Knowledge for the Students of all Level

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Abstract

This paper presents how Shakespeare through his writing always juxtaposes the philosophy of our own life. He is the best to portray human character which outdoes even the portrayal of Christopher Marlowe. He has written with a great charm of artistic beauty filled with moral vision. His supremacy lies in the fact that he can pierce very deeply the heart of so many passions accepting the respect of life. His writing combines so many unique phrases, exquisite metaphors and inverted sentences. So students of all levels must gain some knowledge from Shakespeare's writings.

Index terms—

1 Introduction

Shakespeare, the greatest of the Elizabethan writers, depicts each and every aspects of our common life. So, all the students of schools, colleges and universities should study Shakespeare's writing which help them to acquire knowledge. The students of schools, colleges or universities face so many problems in case of reading Shakespeare's writings. They face new vocabulary, sentences with new syntax and Shakespearean language has some deviation from general English as it is based on a form of linguistic insecurity. Shakespearean English is not belonged to aristocratic people as it is not so sophisticated like Modern English. Before reading Shakespeare, students should be acquainted with the age of Shakespeare. Shakespeare describes new concepts that were inspired by the ancients, the Elizabethan borrowed many words parts from others.

Shakespeare's writing has unrivalled powers of expression, the aptness and originality of phrases with so many exquisite similes and metaphors, the richness and sweetness of verse in a highest degree. On every occasion, there is the multitudinous flow of words and various types of images from common day-to-day life which are depicted and reflected in Shakespeare's plays. Whenever someone goes through Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, the *Forest of Arden* seems to him just like a real picture of rural life. Character like Duke presents the aristocratic class of our society. Every human quality like forgiveness and freedom are the keynotes of Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. The *Tempest* in its exquisitely complex structure incorporates two unallied natures of man-the power that leads one to embezzle the freedom of another and the utmost endeavour and craze for freeing oneself from the clutches of the power. Understandably, a thought which seems to run through

Author : e-mail: iammosumi22@yahoo.com the whole of *The Tempest* is the thought that true freedom of man consists in service and one who has the power to punish has also the power to forgive, since forgiveness is always divine -it is a morality of our life which provides nobility to each human being and we learn this virtue of nobility from Shakespeare's play. So, the students of all ages can learn even divine knowledge from Shakespeare's writing. Shakespeare, being a Renaissance dramatist tried to get into the heart of audience belonging to all classes -aristocratic people, middle class gentry, noble men with intellectual ability and the groundlings i.e., simple rustic day worker and labour class. So, comic element for pleasure and entertainment was supplied to rustic people in a single play by Shakespeare which no other dramatist of his time supplied. Shakespeare understood his audience better than any other playwright of his time did. He picked up words from nearly cross-sections of the society and used them in his writing. Jespersen has said that Shakespeare's vocabulary has exceeded 20,000 words. Shakespeare has freely applied the vocabulary of the uneducated riffraffs like Falstaff, Baldolf and Poins on one hand and of sophisticated refined people like Duke Orsino or Monsieur le Beau on the other hand and at the same

2 HE PLOUGHED HER, AND SHE CHOPP'D."(ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA)

time intelligent and vivacious heroines like Rosalind, Viola and Portia, villainous men like Iago and Don John and poetic misfit like Richard II, shrews like Katherine, bawds like Mrs. Quickly and Doll. Shakespeare juxtaposes so many characters who speak in various styles using different vocabulary -Shylock speaks even peculiar words befitting a Jew, and no other Shakespearean character refers to the Old Testament as Shylock does. If we go through Shakespearean tragedy Julius Caesar, we find two unallied styles of speech of Brutus and Mark Antony in the Forum Scene which is the example of Shakespeare's mastery in using language in as many ways as possible. Even one single character like Henry V speaks in two different ways-first when he speaks with the Falstaffian company and second in conversation with Lord Chief Justice. Besides Shakespeare presents us the philosophy of our own life because each perspective of our own life is juxtaposed by Shakespeare's writing. In *As You Like It*, the character of Audrey and Phebe represent the rusticity of shepherd's life. In *Macbeth*, the Porter scene gives comic relief not only to the aristocratic people but also to the people of lower class as Shakespeare has presented characters like Farmer, Tailor and Equivocator. In *King Lear* the love-relation between father and daughter is exhibited by the relation-ship of King Lear and his daughter Cordelia. In *Hamlet*, Hamlet's revenge upon his uncle Claudius proves that a person who commits crime always gets punishment. In *Macbeth*, Macbeth commits horrendous crime like murdering of Duncan and at the end of the drama, Fate returns him the same punishment just like his doing. In *Othello*, Shakespeare shows that how jealousy and misunderstanding can destroy one's happy married life. All these are education which we need to lead our own life. In Shakespearean heroes, we find error of judgment. E.g., -due to blindness of power King Lear could not understand what true love is? So he commits injustice to Cordelia. Macbeth being tempted by three witches and Lady Macbeth went to murder Duncan because he felt a sense of insecurity. In case of Hamlet, the process of too much thinking without action was his error of judgment. Othello's tendency of suspecting without judgment and racial bias were his hamartia.

The characters represented by Shakespeare seem to us just like real characters of our own real life. When tragic situation befalls on the protagonist of the Shakespearean heroes, we can identify ourselves with them. The tragic hero like Hamlet or Othello moves us to pity since he is not an evil man, his misfortune is greater than he deserves; but he moves us also to fear because we recognize similar possibilities of error in our own lesser and fallible selves. So our identification of ourselves with the great heroes provides us a kind of pleasure through the purgation of our emotions of pity and fear. So Shakespeare has the power to present our every day society. So Shakespeare fills us with too much knowledge which other writers of Elizabethan age cannot fill.

Each and every kind of expression even vulgarism is depicted by him in prose and verse: a) "What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day?"

Unless hours were caps of sack, and clocks were tongues of bawds, and the blessed sun himself a hot wench in flamed-coloured taffeta?"(Henry IV, Part I) b) In verse the obscenity is also prominent: "Royal Wench!" "She made great Caesar laid his sword to bed."

2 He ploughed her, and she chopp'd."(Antony and Cleopatra)

He used the inversion of word order, as in many cases like-i) "Knew you not Pompey?" (Julius Caesar) (Instead of "Did you not know Pompey?") i. "I know thee not, old man" (2 Henry IV). (Instead of "I do not know the, old man") ii. "They love not poison that do poison need."

(Richard II)

Students even can increase rhetorical knowledge from Shakespeare's writing. Inversion i.e., changing of grammatical order is noticeable in Shakespeare's writing. i. "A thought which quartered hath one part wisdom, And even three parts coward." (Hamlet) E.g., In *Macbeth*, we find the use of image when he says-"I have no spur. To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself And falls on the other."

Here the word 'spur' is an image of horse riding and the phrase 'Vaulting ambition' reveals that overenthusiastic rider falling on the other side of the horse. It suggests that if any person tries to acquire this type of ambition s/he obviously will fall down. In *Richard III*, the phrase "cropped the golden prime of sweet prince" suggests the death of young and handsome Prince Edward compared to a full grown harvest untimely cut off. In *Othello*, by the phrase 'You are eaten up with passion', passion is compared to a poisonous worm.

Shakespeare has used innumerable unusual phrases. i. "full of sound and fury" (*Macbeth*). ii. "Wooden O" (*Henry V*-meaning the open stage). iii. "All that glitters is not gold" (*Merchant of Venice*). iv. "Frailty thy name is woman" (*Hamlet*) v. "More sinned against than sinning" (*King Lear*) vi. "So sweet was ne'er so fatal" (*Othello*) vii. "Finds tongues in stones, books in running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything." (*As You Like It*). viii. "More honoured in the breach than the observance." (*Hamlet*).

Some sentences used by Shakespeare are used today as proverbs.

i. "So sweet was ne'er so fatal." (*Othello*) ii. "not a falling man." (*Henry VIII*). iii. "smile and smile and be a villain." (*Hamlet*) iv. "The better part of valour is discretion" (1 *Henry IV*)

Many such phrases have given birth to a number of parallel phrases from 19th century onwards. i. "out-frown false Fortune's frown." (*King Lear*). ii. "the pink of curtesie" (In *Romeo and Juliet*, meaning "the very perfection of").

Shakespeare has used English syntax to his advantage-so much so, that his contemporaries like Greene and Marlowe could not even dream of doing such. A student of every age can acquire knowledge from Shakespeare's writing. ii. Two adjectives are joined together which is against the grammatical rule: iii. Happy-valiant (*Macbeth*) iv. Nouns are used as adjectives: "sword and buckler Prince of Wales." (1 *Henry IV*) v.

108 Adjectives are used as verbs: "Should safe my going." (Antony and Cleopatra). vi. Nouns are used as verbs: "I
 109 am un-kinged by Bolingbroke." (Richard II) vii. Pronouns are used as nouns: "the cruellest she" (Twelfth Night)
 110 "the fair, the chaste and unexpressive she" (As You Like It).

111 So from his writing we can gain each and every kind of knowledge like knowledge of grammar and knowledge
 112 of language.

113 So Shakespeare fills us with too much knowledge which other writers of Elizabethan age cannot fill. Shakespeare
 114 through his writings reflects our daily life and society. Shakespeare's characters like Macbeth, Hamlet, King Lear
 115 and Othello-all are different from each other but they are very equal to common people and not stereotype.

116 3 Works Cited

- i. "Nor no more shoes than feet". (Taming of the Shrew)
 - ii. "There is neither slander ? nor no railing in a known discreet man". (Othello)
 - iii. "No squire in debt, nor no poor knight". (King Lear).
 - iv. Shakespeare leaves out no definite articles like: "creeping like a snail" (Instead of "a snail") in As You Like It.
 - v. Double comparatives like "more larger", double superlatives like "most kindest." Reiteration of words is a steady source of Voluminatic effect in Shakespeare, such as i. "Shakespeare has used so many XIV metaphors which is even today considered as the possessions of English Is- language-such as
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Ver-
sion
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- i. 'My way of life is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf' (Macbeth)
 - ii. 'Lowliness is young ambition's ladder'. (Julius Caesar)
- In Shakespeare's unusual syntax, unusual compound words occupy an important place.
- i. Adjectives are used as adverbs in such compound words as:
 Shallow-changing woman (Richard III)
 Broad -spreading leave. (Richard II)
 Earnest -gaping sight. (II Henry VI).

[Note: courtship]

Figure 1:

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