

“And practice rhetoric in your common talk”: How Ralph Made Rhetors Of Us All

Matthew Davies
Mary Baldwin University

Shakespeare in the Light is a nifty collection title that refers both to a technical innovation and a sense of recovered perception. There is, at the very least, a double meaning in that phrase, although those meanings are less than transparent in a declaration dependent on the antithetical notion that Shakespeare is sometimes played in the dark. (And we can be confident that no one has ever seen that.¹) In reality, of course, Shakespeare has always been played in the light, whether under lights or by daylight. It is audiences that for the past one hundred and fifty years have been confined to a darkened auditorium, no longer participants but voyeurs to the act; and for the better part of thirty of those years Ralph Alan Cohen, self-titled “English professor gone rogue,” has worked doggedly to banish the darkness from the many auditoria to which his company has toured and from the Blackfriars Playhouse the American Shakespeare Center (ASC) calls home. At least within the theatrical milieu, universal lighting, one of the ASC’s Shakespeare staging conditions, is Cohen’s *cause célèbre*.

In Cohen’s other life – he has at least two – as a professor in the Shakespeare and Performance (S&P) graduate program at Mary Baldwin University, which is affiliated with the ASC, he pursues a less visible, but commensurately more audible, passion: rhetoric. Or, more precisely, the rhetorical figures of Style that, “constitute a vast technical vocabulary naming the ways that both ideas and language have been configured” (Burton). The artful arrangement of

¹ An “in the dark” performance of *Othello* performed by saxophone (Othello), oboe (Iago), and flute (Desdemona) that I experienced at London’s Battersea Arts Center in the mid-1990s is an exception that surely proves the rule.

words for the purpose of creating an effect on the audience is also exemplified in this book's title, which attracts the reader's attention by operating on various rhetorical levels: as an enthymeme, or false syllogism (Shakespeare with the lights off is a thing); as an ellipsis (what we're really talking about is Shakespeare's *audience* in the light); and as a Biblical allusion for acting correctly (itself a nifty pun, or paranomasia²), which implies that universal lighting fosters universal understanding.³ "Shakespeare in the Light" is a phrase that more than meets the eye, just as this collection celebrates a legacy that covers more than universal lighting, or at least expands its dimensions. As Paul Menzer, S&P program director and author of the first scholarly history of the ASC, puts it: "Universal lighting is not just about technology, it's about histrionic practice" (203). The histrionic practice of rhetoric – the application, reach, and evolution of Cohen's pedagogy – is the broad concern of this brief chapter.

In their first semester, S&P graduate students take two required Cohen classes: a "Shakespeare" survey, or "smorgasbord," which levels the playing field for the scholars and practitioners our Renaissance program attracts; and "The Language of Performance," which instructs students in the linguistic tools Shakespeare and his contemporaries used to convey meaning to the audience: metrics and rhyme, verse versus prose, oaths and dick jokes, status and second person, direct address and embedded stage directions, and rhetorical figuring. To borrow their own terminology – a rhetorical substitution they will readily identify as an anthimeria – graduates begin their studies by being thoroughly "Ralphed" in the ways of the ASC and its affiliated academic program by the man who founded them both. Rather than

² See Appendix for definitions of the rhetorical figures favored by Cohen in his Language of Performance class. Where necessary, I define additional figures within the text.

³ See, for instance, Isaiah 2:5, "O house of Jacob, come let us walk in the light of the Lord" (*The Bible*, KJV).

overly concerning myself with the specifics of Cohen's classroom teaching – not the paralipistic excuse it might seem, since as a colleague rather than student I am predictably underqualified to do so – I want to consider the application of his pedagogy as a theatrical tool, sourcing primarily the work of program alumni, assuredly Cohen's most treasured constituency. This chapter, then, is dedicated to these post-Ralphalites, a growing battalion of young theatremakers and educators who spread the word through their work that Shakespeare, at its root, is all about the word. Before turning to the work of Ralph's rhetors, I should first identify what characterizes their mentor's, and therefore their own, *modus operandi*.

Cohen, who launched the ASC, then Shenandoah Shakespeare Express, along with former student and subsequent artistic director Jim Warren, in 1993, was by no means the instigator of the formalist resurgence in the theatre. Back in 1969, Royal Shakespeare Company voice and text coach Cicely Berry began collaborating with John Barton, who, working against the *zeitgeist* favoring naturalism, intimacy, and self-expression, "wanted the structure of the text to be clearly honoured - the specifics of rhythm, antithesis, metaphor, and word play." Facing a workforce untrained in textual analysis, Berry recalls that "new ways were needed to deal with this" (2008, 27). Yet her groundbreaking work at the RSC, and somewhat later Patsy Rodenburg's at the [Royal] National Theatre and Kristin Linklater's at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, struggled to escape the confines of their classical companies, leaving RSC founder Peter Hall to complain as late as 2003 that barely fifty actors and only a handful of directors working in Britain possessed the formal techniques for playing Shakespeare (13).⁴

⁴ A self-declared "iambic fundamentalist," Hall's claim might be taken with a pinch of salt, especially since Berry, Linklater, and Rodenburg published their approaches to voice and text in popular manuals.

Cohen, then, might be considered part of a second wave of millennial formalists who, frustrated by decades of highly conceptualized director's theatre, and energized by the "theatrical experiment" going on at the Globe on London's Bankside, determined to revive Shakespeare's stagecraft via his wordcraft.

In America, the current Elizabethan revival (as Menzer points out, they average one a century) seems particularly rigorous in its approach to excavating Shakespeare's texts for clues to performance, despite those texts being increasingly portrayed as unstable by the new bibliographers. We might offer various causes for this "new formalism": a push against the psychological realism of the Method, the dominant actor-training that keeps "the American theatre on a short leash and choker collar" (Kaiser xv); a cool way to master the speaking of Shakespeare without sounding like the Brits, nor aping their *sprezzatura* ("speak your lines clearly, don't bump into the furniture, mine's a pint, love") approach; and an intellectual commitment that reflects the close connection between classical theatre and academia in the States. Above all, formalism speaks to the conviction that Original Practices can recover the meaning and energy of early modern dramatic texts through the absence of contemporary conventions: directors, designers, long rehearsals, full scripts, and so on. But Cohen stands apart from even the most rigorous of his fellow formalists in his insistence that students learn, in their classical forms, the core figures of speech taught by the early modern grammarians and which the playwrights seemingly relied upon to convey information to their actors via cue scripts.

While contemporary text coaches and directors tend to write in sweeping terms of "structures, energy, imagery and sound" (Berry, 1987, 82-139), using only commonplace

rhetorical tropes – Barton even describes antithesis, Shakespeare’s most prevalent device, as “a bad word [...] obscure and learned” (67) – Cohen arms his cohort with an A[ccumulatio] to Z[eugma] of tropes (altered words) and schemes (altered word order), which he periodically upgrades: students currently load up on the “Best Yet FORTY FIGURES OF SPEECH,” which I include as an appendix. And he opposes the pacifying positions of even close allies. In *Shakespeare’s Wordcraft* (2007), the most comprehensive study of Shakespeare’s rhetorical figuring since Sister Miriam Joseph published her scholarly *Shakespeare’s Use of the Arts of Language* sixty years earlier,⁵ Kaiser cautions against using “impenetrable, [...] arcane Latin terms,” especially with a younger generation for whom the very word “rhetoric” signifies speech that is “empty, inflated, deceitful, insincere, artificial, and extravagant” (xviii-xix). Cohen counters by assigning his students the task of annotating forty of Kaiser’s examples, which he clusters as word patterns described in quotidian terms, or “common talk,” with each of the listed figures. Cohen challenges his students to embrace their fear of the arcane, to apply scholarship to practice, to create a verifiable process for identifying arguments and verbal strategies, and to develop a shorthand for working with collaborators. Judging by the almost messianic enthusiasm with which many of his students depart his final class, their cries of “epizeuxis!” echoing around the hills of Staunton, Virginia (as his forty figures echo throughout this chapter), Cohen’s classical approach, aimed at just the right audience, works. The question, which is only rhetorical in the sense that I shall attempt to answer it (an aporia), is what comes

⁵ Intervening studies have tended to focus on individual figures or rhetoric in discrete plays, as in or George T. Wright’s “Hendiadys and *Hamlet*,” PMLA 96, no.2 (1981), 168-93 and Russ McDonald’s *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language* (Oxford University Press, 2001). Stefan Daniel Keller’s analysis of Shakespeare’s evolving rhetoric in *The Development of Shakespeare’s Rhetoric: A Study of Nine Plays* (Frank Verlag, 2009) is a published doctoral thesis that is not, as yet, widely available.

next? Since Mary Baldwin sits on elevated ground above the Playhouse and the S&P program's rehearsal rooms, literally and figuratively it might all be downhill from Cohen.

*

Nearest stop on the descent, and the most comprehensive testing ground and distribution center for Cohen's rhetorical pedagogy, is the ASC's Education Department, which, by the theatre's own assessment, constitutes "half of [its] mission" ("About ASC Education"). Administered by a staff of S&P program alumna, fervent rhetors all (anastrophe), the ASC's educational approach to introducing Shakespeare to young audiences focuses less on contemporary relevance – the policy of just about anyone over the age of thirty dealing with anyone under the age of twenty (antimetabole) – than on historical context. "It really comes down to teaching our teachers and students to think like Shakespeare's actors did when they approached the text," writes program director Sarah Enloe (S&P '08). "Look around you and see the wooden platform, the audience in the light, the clues in the text" ("How We Teach Teachers"). To help teachers and students navigate this time warp and to locate these "clues," Cass Morris (S&P '09), former Academic Resources Manager at the ASC, developed a taxonomy called ROADS, which clusters some fifty devices under five mnemonic headings: Repetition (figures that harmonize speech and synthesize ideas), Omission (figures that interrupt or encourage meaning), Addition (figures that elaborate), Direction (figures that reorder), and Substitution (figures that re-present). This system of recognizably English signposts on a foreign roadmap "cracks the code [and mixes my metaphor] by breaking down figures of speech and illuminating them as clues for character" ("Curing Shakesfear Series").

As this language of espionage implies, taxonomies, which turn the art of expression into a science and verbal patterns into teachable moments, are perilously alluring instruments. Even if all ROADS lead to Shakespeare, not everyone is good at reading a map whose legend, after all, is never fixed: cartographers always know a better route.⁶ Yet the ASC's ROADS scholars (blame the anagram-effect) are acutely aware of the tensions inherent in a polysemous discipline that studies "effective speaking and writing. And the art of persuasion. And many other things" (Burton). In workshops that appeal to both Literature and Theatre students, teaching artists and tour actors help participants to not only identify figures but to put them to work. Through close analysis and physical exercises, students learn to play the rhetoric: spinning the plates of antithetical clauses, sometimes in series, sometimes alternating, at the right velocity;⁷ distinguishing between an isocolon (list), an auxesis (build), or a symploce (ladder); sounding out the phonemic qualities of alliteration, assonance, and onomatopoeia that bind and breathe life into structures of thought. These are the kinds of oratorical skills, notes Anna Northam (S&P '07), that were promulgated by Greek rhetorician Cassius Longinus (c.213-273), who named figures with visually stimulating prompts in order to guide delivery and animate the speaker.⁸ The Chaser for asyndeton, which omits conjunctions from successive clauses, or The Leveler for polysyndeton, which adds them; the former requiring a hurried

⁶ Resistant, perhaps, to the pressurizing demands of a catchy anagram, Cohen adds the categories of Asking and Arrangements to his taxonomy, along with individual outliers; while Kaiser divides his actor handbook into nine chapters, adding Words, Transformations, Order and Disorder. Less concerned with producing a gazetteer than an encyclopedia, English professor Richard A. Lanham's *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (U of California Press, 1991) is even less handy, dividing his figures into fourteen types; while Sister Joseph hardly organizes her figures at all.

⁷ In the outer antithetical clauses of this phrase, "spinning plates" has to be sounded (hit) strongly enough to sustain through to "right velocity," while the sequenced inner clauses, "sometimes in series, sometimes alternating," require less voicing: or a / b /c / b / c / a.

⁸ Northam argues that visually-identifiable rhetorical patterns carry the same kinds of information in a script as the "prose/verse alternations" noted by Tiffany Stern in *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford, 2000), 131.

speech, the latter a more deliberative one. Elocution, and more particularly the phrasing of arguments that in Shakespeare are always arranged “coherently and methodically [...] to be maximally clear,” is a skill, argues Barry Edelstein, that “every Shakespearean actor must learn to emulate” (72-73). Perhaps the hardest lesson our graduates absorb is that effective phrasing – simply making sense – is 90% (if you’ll forgive the hyperbole) of an actor’s job.

Of course, actors aren’t orators, unless they’re performing one, any more than Shakespeare’s dramas are formal disputations. Today’s actors, few of whom adhere to an older “park and bark” school of acting, are chiefly concerned with character. Finding ways to apply oratorical rhetoric as dramatic action, therefore, is crucial to Cohen’s project to reintroduce rhetoric as a working practice in the theatre. It is in the realm of dramatic rhetoric that Ralph’s rhetors, both in the educational and theatrical arenas, are exploring radical approaches to performing Shakespeare’s texts. In seeking clues to performance students are encouraged to consider two kinds of textual evidence: what the character is doing with rhetoric and what the author suggests about the character when she’s doing it. The notion of rhetoric as character-driven is not innovative. Back in the 1950s, during the waning days of character criticism, M.M. Mahood portrayed the mature Shakespeare, having sloughed off his Senecan *sententiae* and poetic embellishments, applying rhetoric only when it was “dramatically useful for the character to use rhetoric” (20). But partitioning that “usefulness” into conscious and unconscious utterance opens up the possibility of “marrying the two traditions” of acting (Barton 16) – heightened speech and naturalism (psychological realism) – or, at least, of securing their engagement.

Applied consciously, dramatic rhetoric presupposes that Shakespeare's words are tactical speech acts delivered to achieve desired objectives. "It's worth remembering the obvious," writes Giles Block, text coach at the Globe. "We speak in order to bring about a change" (16). It's worth remembering this acting axiom because it's so easy to forget when performing iconic Shakespeare passages or being told to "stop acting and let the words do the work," an inane direction bound to infuriate the conscientious actor, even when it's occasionally true.⁹ Treating rhetoric as strategic, rather than ornamental, rescripts the Method approach's presiding question, "What do I want now?" as "Why these words now?"

(epistrophe): the two traditions in a nutshell (metaphor). Gaunt's threatening prophesy (cataplexis) of a pill[ag]ed England,¹⁰ built on the backs of anaphora – "*This* royal throne of kings, *this* scepter'd isle" (*Richard II*, 2.1.40-68) – or the Bloody Captain's poetic relation for King Duncan of the defeat of "merciless Macdonald" by Macbeth – "Doubtless it stood (hyperbaton), / As two spent swimmers that do cling together / And choke their art (simile)" (1.2.7-9) – are calls-to-arms by dying men who have no time to speechify. Their carefully crafted words are directed at their audiences rather than *the* audience, their rhetoric a persuasion to do rather than to feel. Since hyperbaton is a figure of Arrangement and simile of Substitution, the Captain's opening lines also alert us to the blurring of rhetorical borders. ROADS converge as figures co-operate to create multidirectional speech tactics that come, like metaphors, "not singles spies, but in battalions" (*Hamlet*, 4.5.74).

⁹ Barton points to choric speeches in which "language is more important than character," although he concedes that even here his actors might challenge him (71).

¹⁰ Lord Ross complains that "The commons have been pill'd with grievous taxes, / And quite lost their hearts" (*R2*, 2.1.247-48).

If we allow that direct address casts the offstage audience as partner to an inner dialogue, then soliloquies are no more oratorical than set-pieces, their speakers persuading themselves of doubtful positions or dubious acts as they seek to win us/themselves over. That Iago employs the question-and-answer strategy of anhypophora to interrogate his manipulation of Cassio in the soliloquy beginning, "And what's he then that says I play the villain?" (*Othello*, 2.3.310-36), raises the startling possibility that this throwback villain from the Morality play needs to persuade himself of the rightness of his wrongness. "Might" is a critical word here, for the purpose of dramatic rhetoric is not to crack codes but to create choices. When Mercutio responds to Benvolio's, "What, art thou hurt?" with "Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry 'tis enough" (*Romeo and Juliet*, 3.1.88-89), we might read the double epizeuxa as an intentional understatement (litotes) or as self-delusion prior to a discovery followed by characteristic gallows humor. We might consider the first phrase not an epizeuxis at all but a play on one word having two meanings (antanaclasis), with Mercutio expressing first pain and then agreement, or, conversely, agreement and then pain. Mercutio might, then, deploy these rhetorical tactics to reassure Romeo, or to rebuke him. The informed choice is always the actor's, but a specific choice must always be made (enallage). The questions dramatic rhetoric ask are never rhetorical.

Oratory is a predominantly monological affair and rhetoric manuals tend to focus on speeches. But drama is dominated by dialogues during which choice is collaborative, not only the actor's but the actors' (polyptoton). In exchanges that explode the formulaic anadiplosis of Senecan stichomythia, when the last words of one speaker are picked up by the first words of the respondent, Ralph's rhetors develop exercises that explore the seemingly improvisational

nature of Shakespearean structured dialogue. Charlene Smith (S&P '14) of Brave Spirits Theatre Company recalls exporting one such exercise to explore the disturbingly erotic exchange between Richard of Gloucester and Lady Anne in *Richard III*.¹¹ Concretizing Benedick's metaphoric "paper bullets of the brain" (*Much Ado*, 2.3.213), literally embodying the rhetoric, Smith's actors threw scrunched up paper balls at one another whenever they traded rhetorical figures. During this "verbal Olympics," actors ran out of ammunition early, returning spent barbs with a delivery that altered ("tossing or pelting") when throwing one ball per line or four. Tactical shifts also emerged in moments of rhetorical calm, as when Richard suggests they "leave this keen encounter of our wits" (1.2.115), or when he silences Anne by launching into a monologue: medieval mansplaining. Embodied rhetoric physicalizes the abstract, making syntax sweat.

Dramatic rhetoric is paradoxical – artful language that behaves organically. It can be generative, to the point of infectious, as Wallace notes of Gertrude's increasing use of hyperbaton, her disordered syntax interpretable as poetic distancing, mental deterioration, or the absorption of a dominating Claudius' politic obtuseness. It can be discretionary, to the point of prejudice. Muse of Fire founder Jemma Alix Levy (S&P '12) describes an actor's discovery of a misogynistic, rather than foolish, Polonius, the adroit "prattling" by which he controls by misdirection – articulated in the endless figures of parenthesis and pleonasm – delivered only where relevant, to the statesmen Claudius and Laertes, and not Gertrude or Ophelia. "By looking at the rhetoric Polonius uses," notes Levy, "we found a new way into his character. And

¹¹ Personal correspondence, April 10, 2018. Charlene Smith directed *Richard III* in 2012 for Washington D.C. theatre company Brave Spirits, of which she is co-founder and producing artistic director.

that's what Ralph taught me to do: to use rhetoric to open up new possibilities in Shakespeare's plays."¹² But what dramatic rhetoric cannot be is oratorical, especially when you're playing the orator. In *Julius Caesar*, Mark Antony has no time to plan his speech, notes Katherine Mayberry (S&P '07) of Pigeon Creek Shakespeare: "If he hears himself say 'Brutus was an honorable man' the first time and gets the idea to hammer it home, discovering each repetition just before he makes it, his oratorical brilliance and ability to sway the mob is all the more striking."¹³ Ralph's rhetors, whether actor-educators or alumni practitioners, stage dramatic rhetoric not as fixed, formulaic, or proscriptive, but as unstable, extemporaneous, and vital – and always purposeful.

If organic rhetoric sounds paradoxical, unconscious rhetoric seems anathema. Yet, in myriad more or less authorized ways, dramatic rhetoric plays on the effects of involuntary utterance. Unconscious rhetoric provides information to which the actor, rather than the character, is privy. Speech habits, mannerisms, or verbal ticks expose personality traits, social status, and geographical dialects, all of which operate in Fluellen's densely figured vernacular: "Fortune is painted blind (personification). [...] She is turning, and inconstant, and mutability, and variation (isocolon, catechresis); and her foot, look you (phrasal repetition, or plocé), is fixed upon a spherical stone (alliteration), which rolls, and rolls, and rolls" (diacope) (*Henry V*, 3.6.28-31). Fluellen might be a Welsh windbag but he's an educated windbag who uses personification and hyperbole in a language that, the catachresis implies, is not his first. If Fluellen's idiom blends intentional and unconscious tropes, unstable rhetoric strays beyond the

¹² Personal correspondence, March 31, 2018. Jemma Levy, artistic director of Evanston-based theatre company Muse of Fire, directed *Hamlet* in 2015.

¹³ Personal correspondence, April 4, 2018. Katherine Mayberry is executive director of Michigan-based theatre company Pigeon Creek Shakespeare.

control of the speaker, its figures vulnerable to hijack. Patrick Harris (S&P '16) locates such an example in *The Merchant of Venice*. Dismissing Shylock's repayment of a pound of flesh with an epiplexis, "What's that good for?", Antonio's lackey Salerio is clearly not angling for an answer. But he gets one: "To bait fish withal" (3.1.43-45). Harris terms this kind of aggressive re-figuring by a more capable rhetor (in this case a shared anthyphora) the Rhetorical Answer.

Subconscious rhetoric is the most contentious and rarest – to some, illusory (epanorthosis) – species of dramatic figuring since latency is by its nature subjective and subtext generally anachronistic to Shakespeareans. Whatever one's position on authorial intention and its fallacies, or on early modern notions of selfhood, modern actors make moment-to-moment choices based on how they read their characters' wants. Can we expect today's actor, accustomed to psychological realism, to *not* read Isabella's rejection of sexuality in language charged with sadomasochistic metaphor – "Th'impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies, / And strip myself to death" ([catachresis] *Measure for Measure*, 2.4.101-2) – as masking hidden erotic desires (euphemismus)? In our post-Freudian world, can Hermia's dream ever again be just about a snake (erotema, pysma)? Rather than undermining Shakespeare's language, subconscious rhetoric has the potential to charge it, in Ezra Pound's phrase, with "meaning to the utmost possible degree" (28).¹⁴ While Stanislavskian subtext and the character backstories it supports are largely extra-textual, unconscious rhetoric allows the postmodern actor to negotiate the instability of character, in language and persona, from within the form

¹⁴ I was introduced to Pound's definition of great literature by Dr. George Franko (S&P '19), a classics professor at Hollins University, whose S&P research considers the charged operation of classical myth in Shakespeare's works.

rather than beyond it. However unstable their figures, Shakespeare's characters remain firmly lexical.

*

As the many contributors to this chapter attest, Ralph's rhetors are a cohort on the march, their influential work ensuring that rhetoric has gone anywhere but downhill from Cohen. But where rhetoric goes next remains an open, or unrhetorical, question, for it still faces an uphill battle among theatre practitioners resistant to scholarly incursions into the rehearsal room. Even at the ASC, where the primacy of the word is institutionalized and actors cast for their articulacy, rhetoric is treated cautiously. While actors are required to rigorously paraphrase their parts for syntax (in effect, rhetorical patterning) as well as meaning, they are not asked to identify characteristic figures despite having access to an online rhetoric handbook. Directors are offered even less proscription in a manual that advocates for a careful review of actor paraphrases for meaning, meter, and pronunciation but that fails to mention rhetoric at all.¹⁵ While Cohen has begun to introduce major tropes during table work in support of actor packets identifying playable figures for individual characters, guest directors are left to their own (likely unrhetorical) devices. As the ASC's processes evolve, Ralph's rhetors in ASC Education or interning from the S&P program seem ideally placed to develop materials and workshops that demonstrate the practical applications of dramatic rhetoric for actors who, pragmatic by instinct, generally prefer a well-stocked toolkit to a well-thumbed manifesto.

¹⁵ Budding director Marshall Garret (S&P '16) positions the director as rhetor-in-chief, since, "the one responsible for mining a script for useful information for the actors, must be the one to do the rhetorical analysis" (40).

If a toolkit could talk, it would talk in tongues. The issue of whether we should communicate rhetorical ideas in arcane or contemporary terms becomes something of a false dichotomy once we acknowledge that even the most ideologically-driven rehearsal room is, in reality, a polyglot environment, a cacophony of experiences, approaches, and disciplines. “Heaven, for Ralph” may indeed be “a rehearsal room full of actors fluent in rhetoric,” as Lia Wallace suggests, but back on earth a lack of uniform familiarity leaves classical rhetoric walking a fine line between idiom and jargon, expedience and exclusion. Yet Scott Kaiser’s solution to replace the esoteric with the commonplace, while eminently sensible, risks blunting a tool that is sharpened by its extraordinarily fine-grained definitions: in translation, the tool loses precision.

The kind of bilingual approach I pursue in my practice and teaching places the two traditions in conversation, as exemplified by this concluding example of dramatic rhetoric from *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, which I directed for the ASC in 2017. During rehearsals, I alerted the actor playing Berowne, Renee Thornton Jr., to a discovery made by graduate Ryan Odenbrett (S&P ’17) that his character uses ephonesis – an exclamation expressing emotion, favored by tragic figures – more than any other in a Shakespeare comedy. Responding to Thornton’s blank look, I added, mangling a line of Rosaline’s to make my point: “You’ve got a face full of Os.”¹⁶ This clarification provoked the appropriate physiognomical response as well as important questions as to why a sardonic personality such as Berowne’s recycles a figure of pathos designed to elicit emotion, how such use might be strategic, and whether its recurrence betrays subconscious

¹⁶ Mangled but not misplaced. Rosaline’s comment, “O, that your face were not so full of O’s!” (5.2.45), demeans Catherine’s complexion, although the epanalepsis clearly links her skin condition and her personality.

impulses: a conversation at once oratorical, tactical, and psychological, and a personification of the contemporary classical actor at work. The rhetorical figure identifies a linguistic pattern; the linguistic pattern rendered in “common talk” emerges as a pattern of behavior; the pattern of behavior becomes a playable action; the playable action ensures rhetoric takes its right and proper place (hendiadys) in the rehearsal room; and with this gradatio repeating the main terms of my argument (epanados) this chapter completes Ralph’s Best Yet Forty Figures of Speech. Or, at least – (aposiopesis). It does now.