



Review: Crystal, David. 2016. *The Oxford Dictionary of Original Shakespearean Pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 648 pp. ISBN: 978-0-19-966842-7.

This impressive and elaborated dictionary, which is the subject of the present review, has been compiled by David Crystal and is comprised of a total of 648 pages in a single volume. The publication of this dictionary by Oxford University Press (OUP) is the culmination of ten years of ongoing research during which time Crystal has written extensive publications on issues dealing with the language of Shakespeare (e.g. Crystal and Crystal 2002, 2005a,¹ and 2005b;² Crystal 2005a, 2008, and 2013). This compilation of material can be appreciated when reading the explanatory sections at the beginning of the book. Moreover, it is not the first time that Crystal has published a dictionary based on the language of the Bard of Avon, where another clear example is the recently published dictionary with illustrations compiled in collaboration with Ben Crystal (see Crystal and Crystal 2015).³ Hence, the present dictionary is framed within the ever-expanding literature concerning studies on the original pronunciation (OP) of (Shakespearean) English, whose findings have just started to come to light during the last few decades (see also other major works dealing with Elizabethan phonology such as Dobson (1957), Cercignani (1981), Barber (1997), Lass (1999), Crystal (2005b), Lass (2006), Nevalainen (2006), McMahon (2012), Baugh and Cable (2013), among many others). Now, Crystal has joined efforts to provide an Early Modern Shakespearean pronunciation reference tool for (a) professional actors and theatre companies (e.g. The Globe), (b) philological and/or linguistic researchers interested in the sound system of Early Modern English (eModE), and (c) the general curious reader. In sum, the present dictionary contains an invaluable measure of information for Shakespearean theatrical practices and linguistic research regarding OP, and is of great importance to both artistic and academic activities.⁴ Our endeavor is to describe the contents found within the different sections of the dictionary in question.

This lexicographical enterprise begins with a lengthy prologue in which the avid reader can find information on how the work is organized and distributed along the pages, and also on how this project was initiated and brought to fruition. The lexicon included within the dictionary is restricted to an electronic version of

¹ See also <http://www.shakespearewords.com/>.

² See also <http://www.shakespearemiscellany.com/>.

³ The latter work did not include phonological material.

⁴ See also Crystal's webpage for further information on OP practices <http://originalpronunciation.com/>.

the First Folio⁵ downloaded by Crystal himself in 2004. However, as mentioned by the author, the most laborious aspect of this work was to collect all of the data regarding rhymes and spelling alternations, which provide an invaluable resource for phonological reconstruction.⁶

As for the presentation of the lexicon in the dictionary, each entry is accompanied by information concerning up to six different elements, of which the first three are mandatory: (a) headword, (b) pronunciation, (c) spelling, (d) rhymes, and (e) ‘other elements’ (puns). Headwords (a) are indicated in boldface and are sometimes crucial for determining certain linguistic forms; e.g. the word spelled ‘cursed’ (disyllabic) is always an adjective in the texts belonging to the First Folio, whereas ‘curs’t’ (monosyllabic) is the past tense of the verb ‘to curse’. In addition, the part of speech is indicated in italics, all the inflectional forms are incorporated preceded by a tilde sign, spelling alternations⁷ by a raised dot (dam·sel / ~osel / ~osella *n*), and any further clarification is enclosed in square brackets (Dale [*name*]). When a word from a non-Folio play is included, to illustrate the rhyme of the word, it is indicated in italics next to the headword (*S* = *Sonnets*). Foreign words are indicated by the presence of the relevant abbreviation in italics immediately after the headword (e.g. à *Fr prep*), and the pronunciation of classical names and archaic words is also provided for the reader who is unfamiliar with these variances. On some occasions several words may be present in different forms in terms of spelling along the pages of the First Folio. In such cases, Crystal brings together all of the variants of that particular word (the headword is given in full), and adjacent to the headword is the label ‘abbr’ (about, *abbr* bout) –i.e. the word ‘about’ (headword in full form) may appear with the form ‘bout’ (abbreviated form of ‘about’) throughout the corpus of the study. Information regarding pronunciation⁸ (b) appears in the second section. The phonological model used as a point of departure is what is known as Received Pronunciation (RP), and all of the variations introduced in each entry are made according to the patterns stipulated by RP in comparison to OP. Thus, this dictionary only codifies the sound system of Shakespearean vocabulary and, in general, not that of eModE; the “transcriptions reflect the pronunciation of words only as they are used in the First Folio, and should not be taken to exclude the possibility of other

⁵ Here is a list of the abbreviations of the name of the plays used in the dictionary: *AC* (*Antony and Cleopatra*), *AW* (*All's Well That Ends Well*), *AY* (*As You Like It*), *CE* (*The Comedy of Errors*), *Cor* (*Coriolanus*), *Cym* (*Cymbeline*), *Ham* (*Hamlet*), *1H4* (*Henry IV Part 1*), *2H4* (*Henry IV Part 2*), *H5* (*Henry V*), *1H6* (*Henry VI Part 1*), *2H6* (*Henry VI Part 2*), *3H6* (*Henry VI Part 3*), *H8* (*Henry VIII*), *JC* (*Julius Caesar*), *KJ* (*King John*), *KL* (*King Lear*), *LC** (*A Lover's Complaint*), *LLL* (*Lover's Labour's Lost*), *Luc** (*The Rape of Lucrece*), *MA* (*Much Ado About Nothing*), *Mac* (*Macbeth*), *MM* (*Measure for Measure*), *MND* (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), *MV* (*The Merchant of Venice*), *MW* (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*), *Oth* (*Othello*), *Per** (*Pericles*), *PP** (*The Passionate Pilgrim*), *PT** (*The Phoenix and the Turtle*), *R2* (*Richard II*), *R3* (*Richard III*), *RJ* (*Romeo and Juliet*), *S** (*Sonnets*), *Tem* (*The Tempest*), *Tim* (*Timon of Athens*), *Tit* (*Titus Andronicus*), *TC* (*Troilus and Cressida*), *TG* (*The Two Gentlemen of Verona*). Those abbreviations with an asterisk reflect non-Folio texts that have been used for illustrative purposes.

⁶ The main sources for phonological reconstruction are the written records available in the history of English and, therefore, such kinds of alternations are crucial for making a choice.

⁷ The list of variants reflects only the forms that occur in the First Folio.

⁸ The phonetic transcriptions reflect the pronunciation only as they are used in the First Folio in comparison to contemporary RP. Also, this means that all of the accents, such as American English or Australian English, whose phonological system departs partially from the RP model will need to take these small nuances into account.

pronunciations in other contexts” (xvii). Nonetheless, the author includes information regarding difficult sounds such as that presented in words like ‘fast’, which can be pronounced with either a long or short vowel. When there is no difference between OP and modern pronunciation, an equal sign (=) is used. Alternative pronunciations are separated with a comma (e.g. under the headword *dance*: *dans*, *dɔːns*) and, as in the case of headwords, the pronunciation of inflected forms is abbreviated (e.g. under the headword *daint·y* / *~ier*: *dɛːntəɪ* / *-əɪ*). As many Shakespearean characters (including the name of the character in question) may show a particular/regional way of pronouncing certain words (idiosyncratic pronunciation) a line of reference is provided, such as under the headword *abominable*: *əˈbɒmɪnəbəl* (default pronunciation) and *Holofernes LLL 5.1.24* *ab,hɔ-* (idiosyncratic pronunciation). In some cases, the letter *m* indicates that the metre has to be considered before taking any decision regarding the OP (e.g. under the headword *abilit·y* / *~ies*: *m əˈbɪlɪtəɪ*, *-lt-* / *-z*). The section concerning spelling (c) is introduced under *sp*. Capitalization has only been retained in the cases of proper names; however, two aspects from the original corpus have been considered: (1) words broken at the end of a line are indicated by a hyphen (e.g. *assi-stance*) and (2) missing letters are set inside square brackets (e.g. *assista[n]ce*). The superscript numbers next to each form indicate the number of times that particular form occurs in the corpus. This type of counting is more difficult than it may seem due to the number of problems that can arise, particularly those that occur when two editions of the First Folio are contrasted. Modern editions of the plays contained within the Folio sometimes include emended forms (corrected forms) of words that editors have considered to be errors. These cases are indicated by *emend of* (e.g. under the heading *Sackerson*: *sp MW 1.1.275 emend of Sackerson*¹). Sometimes an additional spelling of a certain word is provided with the pertinent line of reference (e.g. under the headword *beetle*: *sp beetles*¹, *Q2 Ham 1.4.71* *bettles*). Finally, those words considered as compound words appearing in the First Folio⁹ are included throughout the dictionary with the secondary element in square brackets (e.g. under the headword *dried*, *dride-[peare]*, and under the headword *pear*, *[dride]-peare*). Every spelling is compared with the forms attested in *The Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* from that period. The section devoted to the information concerning rhymes (d) is not always included and is presented by *rh*. In a number of cases different words are contained within this section in order to show words that rhyme with the headword being considered (e.g. under the headword *dangerous*: *rh us Tim 3.5.75*). Within the section of ‘other elements’ (e), information regarding wordplay is incorporated after the word *pun*. As is obvious, this type of information is very helpful in deciding how a particular word should be pronounced (e.g. under the headword *dam*: *pun MV 3.1.28 damn*). The following example [1] is what a whole entry would look like:

- [1] *dam* / *~‘s* *n*
 =, *Evans MW 1.1.139 tam* / *-z*
 *sp dam*²¹, *damme*⁶, *Evans tam*¹ / *dams*²

⁹ The Folio typesetters used hyphen to indicate compound words.

rh am *MND* 5.1.220
 pun *MV* 3.1.28 damn

After providing a meticulous presentation of the notation of the entries within the dictionary, Crystal affords us with a number of headings regarding different theoretical aspects that he took into consideration when compiling this work (e.g. ‘The nature of evidence’, ‘The history of OP studies’ or ‘Sociolinguistic factors’). In this section Crystal describes, for instance, the in-depth nature of the data that he had to deal with and firmly argues that, based on historical and textual records, there was huge linguistic diversity in Shakespearean times as well as in the whole eModE period, which was mostly due to the mobility of people from different parts of the country to Central London. This ‘collapse of accents’ is directly reflected in spelling. Moreover, some sociolinguistic considerations are also kept in mind when analyzing some of the characters’ pronunciation. In eModE there was not a clearly defined prestigious accent, and therefore, the only way to determine social class, profession or a sense of belonging was through the use of other language strata, such as grammar and vocabulary. For instance, in the Folio, Crystal comes across cases like ‘a hundred’ and ‘an hundred’ where h-dropping is evident, and this alternation may be caused by an extra-linguistic factor or circumstance (i.e. something external to the linguistic system of the particular language). In this section of the dictionary a review of the nineteenth century literature regarding the study of OP is also presented (e.g. Alexander Ellis or Wilhelm Viëtor, among various others). In many cases the great number of different pronunciations of certain words (g-dropping in the verbal suffix *-ing*, for example) allows the actor to choose from a wide range of possible alternatives so as to perform their own interpretation of the character. There are also differences regarding the length of a play acted out using modern pronunciation or OP. For example, *Romeo and Juliet* using OP is ten minutes shorter than its modernized counterpart. Although Crystal has addressed the issue of ‘rhymes’ when considering the different elements that we may encounter in an entry, he emphasizes the value of this resource in determining certain phonological values. It is obvious that a reconstruction is easier when two values of the same rhyme coincide in more than one case (in most of the cases words that do not rhyme in modern English rhyme in OP). There are a total of 2,842 rhyme pairings in the poems and 3,927 rhyme pairings in the plays. Two further cases of rhyme are also considered when determining the phonological value of a word: eye-rhyme lines and half-rhymes. It is important to remember that spelling provides a crucial clue in approaching the phonetic realization of certain sounds. Sometimes different spellings of the same word coexist in the same line. Phonaesthetic effects are also studied by Crystal and its most striking characteristic is that OP modifies the relationship of those passages presenting assonance or alliteration, in which the sonnets constitute a clear example of this phenomenon (i.e. nearly two thirds of the Shakespeare’s sonnets have rhyme in OP but not in Present-day English [PdE], as mentioned above).

All entries are transcribed using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) broad/full phonemic transcription. In [2]-[4] the symbols incorporated along the

pages of the work are indicated and show how they approximate to modern pronunciation:¹⁰

[2] SHORT VOWELS

/ɪ/ as in Present-day English (PdE) *still*

/e/ as in PdE *when*

/a/ as in PdE *lamb*

/ʌ/ as in PdE *up*

/ʊ/ as in PdE *wood*

/ɒ/ as in PdE *log*

/ɑ/ as in PdE *what*

/ə/ as in PdE *attempt*

[3] LONG VOWELS¹¹ AND DIPHTHONGS

/i:/ as in PdE *see*

/e:/ as in PdE *way*

/ɛ:/ as in PdE *word* (before /ɪ/)

/ɑ:/ as in PdE *wall* or *all*

/ɔ:/ as in PdE *talk*

/o:/ as in PdE *go*

/u:/ as in PdE *tomb*

/əɪ/ as in PdE *like*

/əʊ/ as in PdE *bough*

[4] CONSONANTS¹²

/ɹ/ as in PdE 'r' after vowels (*car*) and its quality is not yet clear

/ʌ/ as in PdE *who* (also represented in some works as /hw/)

Two different types of word stress are provided: primary stress (ˈ) and secondary stress (ˌ), affecting the syllable after which they are attached. A final remark is added considering the pronunciation of Latin and French words which are included in the dictionary. For the pronunciation of French words, the *Harrap's Concise French and English Dictionary* (1978) has been followed (the following sounds are taken into account: /i/ (*vie*), /i:/ (*dire*), /e/ (*donner*), /ɛ/ (*ciel*), /ɛ:/ (*cher*), /a/ (*bras*), /a:/ (*langage*), /ɑ:/ (*bataille*), /ɔ/ (*comme*), /ɔ:/ (*encore*), /o/ (*au*), /o:/ (*gros*), /u/ (*couper*), /u:/ (*amour*), /y/ (*perdu*), /ø/ (*feu*), /œ/ (*heureux*), /œ:/ (*honneur*), /ə/ (*cheval*), /ɛ̃/ (*rien*), /ɑ̃/ (*quand*), /ɑ̃:/ (*apprendre*), /ɔ̃/ (*garçon*), /ɔ̃:/ (*monde*), /œ̃/ (*un*) and /ũ/ (*sont*).

All in all, this lexicographical enterprise will be of great benefit not only in diachronic linguistic studies but also in the field of Shakespearean research and the

¹⁰ For a more detailed presentation of the description of the vowels and consonants shown above, see pp. xlii-xlvii of the prologue.

¹¹ Note that some of these long vowels show the cause and effect of the Great Vowel Shift. For a more complete description of this phonological change see Stockwell (1975), Lass (1976, 1992 and 1988), Stockwell and Minkova (1988a, 1988b, 1990, 1997 and 1999), Krug (2012) and Flermoen Stenbrenden (2016), among various others.

¹² Only those sounds which bear any kind of difficulty with relation to its modern equivalent are presented here. Other consonantal sounds which are omitted from the list are the exact same as those in PdE.

theatre sector. Crystal's work definitely surpasses all of the expectations that one could have of a *magnum opus* such as this one, which can definitely be considered as a must-have reference book for all of those interested in the language of Shakespeare. This dictionary is unquestionably another masterpiece by this British linguist.

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