

Analysis of the Use of Copia in Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost

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Abstract: This essay puts more focus on the use of copia in analyzing different characters in Love's Labor's Lost to manifest the importance the rhetoric device used to present the purpose of the author and the revelation of that historical period. Through analyzing the different rhetoric devices used for the male and female characters in the play, the use of copia can make both the male and female characters more vivid and ignite greater associations with the roles and the relations during that historical period. Meanwhile, this can also provoke the thoughts of the readers with more resonance. The copia discussed in this essay render the ideas of traditional male dominating ideas and the revolutionary thoughts of female during that historical period. The use of amplification and other rhetoric devices make the conversations become enriched and worthwhile more investigations for the implied meanings.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research significance

The Love's Labor's Lost is a rarely seen comedy in Shakespeare's work and this work is not ended with marriage as the happy ending from the traditional conventions of the comedy. In this comedy, the author uses different figures of speech to reveal the flow of different social classes in the Renaissance period, political participation and relations between genders and power. In this way, these figures of speech can help to build some relations and reflect the political function of the Renaissance period and the social facts during that period of time. Thus, the use of copia is also a kind of evidence for the evidence of modern figures of speech and the conversations showing the connections of copia.

1.2 Research objective

Therefore, this essay tries to use different texts from Love's Labor's Lost to manifest the importance of using copia and the connections with copia in realizing the purpose of Shakespeare and the revelation of that historical period. The objective of this research is to analyze the use of copia in Love's Labor's Lost.

2. Literature review

2.1 Related studies on the concept of copia in expression

According to Erasmus (1978, p. 295), the term of copia mainly refers to the abundant style in content and expressions. There are two different aspects of the use of copia. For instance, the term of copia is about the transformation of different titles or words, sentence types, and various kinds of vocabularies, etc (Londré 2015).^[5] By using the approaches of copia, there can be more vivid description and illustrations about the reasons, results and specific processes for the use of copia. Hawhee (2016) also defined different categories of use of copia including synonyms, enallage, antonomasia, and hyperbole, etc. The richness in the use of copia can make the expressions clearer and more vivid.

Nguyen (2017) further mentioned that by variations of different sentences, these two aspects are also interacted with each other. In more situations, the use of copia in expression can be a powerful tool to show the variety of different sentences and in this way, it can also draw the attention of the audience or readers to figure out the significance of these lines. Cummings (2014) further investigated the functions of copia and he believed that the use of copia can be a major way to manifest the historical or cultural backgrounds with relations to the meaning with different intentions. Specifically, in a play, the repetition of the sentences of words can also express the intentions of the speaker and this can also make the reader or the audience to know the significance of the lines or even different characters in the story.

2.2 Related studies on the work of *Love's Labor's Lost*

Williams, C. S. (2017) mentioned that Shakespeare's works are frequently using the rhetoric devices as a way to elaborate the function of language in conveying the implied meaning of the speaker and the atmosphere of the scene. Clark (2022) put forward that the comedies portrayed by Shakespeare is often ended with the marriage between the male and female protagonists after they have conquered the difficulties and problems and the use of copia can be a tool to shape and define the subtle changes of both male and female characters in the plays. For instance, in the play of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, there would be a happy ending and the happy ending is also witnessing the marriages of three couples. However, in the same time for the creation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Love's Labor's Lost* is a rarely one which is not ended with the happy ending of marriage. After several language games, with the message of deceased king in France, these girls decided to leave eventually and they left the possibilities of these marriages (Magnusson, 2017). In face of this kind of ending, this is also a good and interesting example to analyze the use of copia in the texts and the significance or function of the use of the copia. Magnusson (2017) further mentioned that in the 16th and 17th century in the UK, the noble class were also experiencing the corresponding crisis in the identity after they received higher education or learned new ways of accumulating wealth and this is also the educational background for the work with the function of copia to manifest the purposes of different speakers in the play. Through their continuous efforts, they were capable of obtaining more conditions through nurtured efforts with superior identities (Alessandra, 2021).^[4] Among all these nurtured efforts or conditions, the figure of speech use can be one of the inseparable one for one to obtain the corresponding noble class and noble position.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Definition of Copia

Erasmus defined the concept of copia as “the abundant style in content and expression” (Yuan, 2013, p100).^[7] Besides, variety is so powerful in every sphere that there is absolutely nothing, however brilliant, which is not dimmed if not commended by variety. (Yuan, 2013, p104).^[8] To sum up, copia is a rhetorical term that indicates abundance and variety of language.

3.2 Components of copia

In De Copia, Copia is twofold. The two aspects are the richness of expression and the richness of subject matter^[2].

The former one involves synonyms, enallage, antonomasia, periphrasis, metaphor, allegory, catachresis, onomatopoeia, metalepsis, metonymy, synecdoche, equivalence, paired expressions, interchange of correlated expressions, heightening, hyperbole, meiosis, arrangement, syntax or construction and change in sentence form. The latter one involves separation of things into the constituent parts, presentation of the process, rehearsal in detail the reasons, enumeration of results, and the vividness.

To help understand it more clear, below is a table for reference, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Components of Copia

The richness of expression	The richness of subject-matter
Synonym	Separating whole into parts
Enallage	Presenting process
Antonomasia	Rehearsal in detail the reasons
Periphrasis	Enumeration of results
Metaphor	Vividness
Allegory	
Catachresis	
Onomatopoeia	
Metalepsis	
Metonymy	
Synecdoche	
Equivalence	
Paired expression	
Interchange of correlated expression	
Heightening	
Hyperbole	
Meiosis	
Arrangement	
Syntax or Construction	
Change in sentence form	

3.3 Copia as a rhetoric device

The training for knowledge of figure of speech can also become important approaches for people to obtain the noble position and accepting the core lessons or courses based on training or lessons of

figure of speech is also the skill for one to gain access to some key areas or fields in the future, which also gives impetus to the upper class with more cultural capital (Pallister, 1992).^[6] Thus, in the work of *Love's Labor's Lost*, this is also a good revelation of contexts for the figure of speech or use of *copia* discussed in this essay. Meanwhile, the corresponding knowledge related to education of rhetoric also offered a unique set of reading and writing method for the cultivation of the common cultural elements as the basic features of Shakespeare's works and other works in the similar period of time.

The description and portrayal of these different characters in the novel also become a kind of hints to show different understanding for the humanity and humanity education. From a different perspective, the use of rhetoric itself can be viewed as a kind of class mark and a good mastery of *copia* and other rhetoric devices can show better cultured situations and gifts in different forms, figure of speech, shapes, objects, ideas, perspectives, reasons or considerations, etc. The figure of speech can also be divided into five categories including invention, plan of composition, skills in statement, memory and deduction, etc, all of which constructed the figure of speech (Garrido, 2001).^[3] These skills in figure of speech can also form the cultural capital presented in the interaction of different social classes in Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost*. For instance, when the Latin language "haud credo" was mistakenly understood as "auld grey doe", the criticism is also given to this kind of ignorance and this ignorant speech. Therefore, the comments are not decorated to frankly criticize the uneducated and less trained and ignorant knowledge or even absurd knowledge of the Latin language. Thus, this can demonstrate the middle and upper class in the society are adept to view the training or education of figure of speech can form a sharp contrast to reveal the ideas for different social classes.

3.4 Functions of *copia* in *Love's Labor's Lost*

In *Love's Labor's Lost*, through description of the interactions between the noble or middle class and the lower class, the multi layers and three-dimensional social class picture can be further constructed. Via description of these characters of people from different social classes, the literature on figure of speech such as the above mentioned use of amplification can be a good way to reveal the problematic situation and dilemma for education and use of rhetoric. Therefore, this perspective reveals that the use of figure of speech can be viewed as the way for the ruling class to gain the power to use language and the language can be viewed or equal to power. Through the correct use, it can be further decorated into a kind of pseudoscience which enables only a part of people can master the use and this kind of knowledge system is not open to the rest people. As for the noble class, good mastery of the rhetoric is a kind of presentation of the noble class and noble position while the mastery of the figure of speech can be a kind of asset for them to move to the upper class as the cultural capital (Burnett, 1993).^[3] In addition, the noble class also owns a sort of entrance to the art of rhetoric. Specifically speaking, the use of amplification is one of the most important one in the use of *copia* and it is also the important one to be used to decorate to improve or depreciate something. From this perspective, the amplification is closely related to the invention in the five skills for the figure of speech. A large passage or a lengthy use of the amplification can make the audience develop great resonance for the praise, or depreciation for the speech or conversations for different conversations in the story.

4. Analysis of Functions of *copia* in *Love's Labor's Lost*

4.1 Description of the rhetoric devices in *Love's Labor's Lost*

In the early stage of rhetoric studies, the characters in the works of Shakespeare also reveal

different degrees of evilness or ideas towards these social classes. The use of copia can be an approach to add more charm and flavor to comedies of Shakespeare because it is serving for the private rights and political participation. In the eyes of different philosophers, the use of rhetoric is also serving for different public rituals or other political participation, etc. The use of copia can be divided into several categories including the use of language comparison and contrast, symbolism, hyperbole, amplification for different private or even political purposes.

4.2 Analysis of the use of copia for contrasts

For instance, in *Love's Labor's Lost*, the language of the princess can form a sharp contrast with the expressions of male characters in the novel. These noble men are also deeply trapped into the superficial performance and the figure of speech is also becoming a kind of addiction for them.

These males are trying to use some poems, hyperbole and irony or satire to manifest the contrast. Even these males are trying to use some regular language to express their love, they are also obsessed with the use of rhetoric. No matter what kind of rhetoric devices they are using, they have already lost the ability to express their feelings directly and the sense of sincerity. Therefore, it can be seen that the creative use of rhetoric language is capable of leading to comedy effects and making different roles have more interaction and joy with the audience. The overlapping use of the rhythms can help the audience to gain a better understanding of the language games played by these males.

(1) The King: How well he's read, to reason against reading!

In this quotation, it can be viewed that the King and other people are also responding with the rhythms and the repetition of verbs to create the effects of irony and satire. Eventually, the figure of speech games also ended with the answer of Biron and the answer is also like a kind of riddle.

(2) Dumaine: Proceeded well, to stop all good proceeding.

When people are using the riddles to make conversations, they will also try to use the hidden language to decorate themselves. The meaning of the riddle is hard to guess and only the speaker is capable of giving the answer to the question.

(3) Longuville: He weeds the corn and still lets grow the weeding.

(4) Biron: The Spring is near when green geese are a breeding. (1.1. 94-97)

In face of the confused people, Biron also gave his own explanation and he also expressed that when people are at young age, they should not suppress their desires to pursue love and meanwhile, he also made some satire by showing that his company could be understood as the silly one to follow others. In this way, the use of riddle can be given the full play. In this situation, the language loses the original meaning and the rhythms of blindly pursuing the joy of poems make the readers aware that the effects of using figure of speech may make the significance or rationality go beyond to the opposite side.

The use of rhetoric in this play can be viewed as the laughingstock instead of some political story plots. With the advent of the political issues mentioned in the play, the problems caused by the figure of speech is also finally exposed. With the information or message that the King finally deceased, the princesses are not willing to play these language games. In this moment, the sentence types and the language meanings in these sentences are making these princesses sad about the final results. Finally, the wedding day has been finally postponed while these men also need one more year to finish the test. During this year, these men are supposed to go away in the suburban areas and get away from the enjoyment. If these men are still maintaining their original ideas, they can still talk about the marriage with these princesses. Biron also needs to serve and help the patients in one year both at nights and days. Thus, Biron made every effort to smile even though these people are facing some desperate diseases. From this, it can be summarized that the use of rhetoric is

unsure to achieve the fate of self-salvation.

The use of rhetoric in the story not only casts more doubts on the role of rhetoric being used to flow to the upper class as a kind of social ladder. In other cases, the unexpected ending which is lack of the happy ending also reveals that people in palace trying to fight for their own interests and rights. This kind of rhetoric service also holds more doubts for the political function and other functions of rhetoric in the society.

Similar as the rhetoric use for male characters in the play, the figure of speech is also a way to show the unique ideas of women to divide two spaces of family and political participation. Therefore, the figure of speech without any changes or restrictions can be viewed as a kind of disease for females. Women should not be controlled in the public or political life (Bergeron, 1978).^[1] Through accepting the rhetoric education and other figure of speech skills, women are supposed to learn some skills to become the family trainers and this would also bring more hindrances for them to learn more knowledge to guide their own life. The use of copia is also a way to show the sharp contrast between males and females during that time.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Major findings

The purpose of this essay is to make analysis of the use of copia in Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost*. There are different sentence types and patterns use for the females and males characters in the story. Specifically speaking, the females and males characters in *Love's Labor's Lost* were rarely seen because this is not a typical happy ending after both male and female protagonists after they have conquered the difficulties and problems. *Love's Labor's Lost* is a rarely one which is not ended with the happy ending of marriage.

After several language games, with the message of deceased king in France, these girls decided to leave eventually and they left the possibilities of these marriages. The language games played by men in the play is also a rich presentation of pursuit for men to view the rhetoric device to achieve the political purposes or other social purposes as a kind of social ladder. However, as for females, they lack the opportunities to achieve social recognition from the society to realize their dreams or achieve promotion in gaining their social positions.

What impressed me most is that the author avoid piling up a meaningless heap of words. When we writing article, we cannot repeat words. It is very important to prepare a copious apparatus or an abundant store of synonymy, enallage, antonomasia and so on.

5.2 Limitations

As for the limitations of this research, more considerations should be given for diverse kinds of amplifications and other rhetoric devices used in the lines of different characters. A more detailed comparison for the male and female characters can show a more evident contrast for the use of copia in manifesting the function of copia and the relations with the purpose of Shakespeare to view copia as a way to show the core values and visions shown in the play.

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