Choreographing Language: Embodied Articulation in Original Pronunciation Shakespeare

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English

by

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Abstract

The interconnected nature of dialect and body shape and movement has been observed, but very little has been formally explored and documented. This thesis seeks to establish a theoretical framework for the link between sound articulation and kinetics (and kinetic perception) by weaving together extant movement and voice theory pioneered by Rudolf Laban, Arthur Lessac, Kristin Linklater, and Irmgard Bartenieff. It then describes exploratory field research into the body-language connection in the specific case of Shakespeare Original Pronunciation via movement-based dialect workshop. This thesis endeavors to begin to facilitate a better understanding of how a change in dialect potentially affects an actor’s impulses to move and shape themselves, and conversely how movement might be able to be utilized to make dialect work more accessible.
For George, Mary, Carl, and Margaret:

a humble offering.
Acknowledgements

This thesis is almost five years in the making, and as such has a host of humans responsible for its completion who require thanks:

James, for believing in me hard enough to challenge me to improbable things.

Ian, Lynda, and Adi, for your guidance, kindness, and fierce advocacy.

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Mama, Dad, Zach, Kurt—I think I’m finally as proud of me as you’ve always been.
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Introduction

In his 2004 memoire-slash-research-report *Pronouncing Shakespeare: The Globe Experiment*, David Crystal devotes a brief, almost afterthought of a passage to an intriguing observation from assistant director Tom Cornford regarding a physical change that his *Romeo & Juliet* actors experienced corresponding to the phonetic change into the Early Modern English dialect:

I was fascinated by the effect on the actors’ bodies. Capulet’s second line is a good example, where Montague ‘flourishes his blade in spite of me’. In [Original Pronunciation], *blade* sits lower and wider in the body than the [Received Pronunciation] version, and in sounding dangerous (the RP equivalent sounds very correct and polite) it makes the actor look and feel dangerous. … What OP has revealed to me is the extent to which Shakespeare’s language ‘bodies forth’ his characters. (144)

The Globe Theatre’s Master of Movement, Glynn Macdonald, notes something similar—movement becoming “more fluent” (104) during Original Pronunciation performances.

These observations are fascinating in their implications: that places of articulation in the vocal apparatus have influence on kinesiology in the rest of the corpus, that a change in accent thus impels (not *compels*, and this is important) a change in body shaping and movement, and that these changes directly affect an actor’s performance and thus how a character is both played and perceived. It is these assertions that I would like to explore more fully in this thesis, first by weaving extant movement theory and theatre practices into a framework for describing and potentially validating claims that are undeniably anecdotal, subjective, and ephemeral. To do so, I would like to bring Laban, Lessac, and Bartenieff theory into conversation with Kristin Linklater’s work with Shakespeare’s voice, then apply that synthesis to the Early Modern English
dialect as it has been reconstructed. I would then like to put that theory into practice, applying movement-based techniques to teaching Early Modern English in a theatre workshop setting, thus creating an opportunity to explore the idea of the change in dialect influencing a shift in kinesthetic impulse—and, in turn, the idea of movement as a tool for accessing sound.
Chapter One: A Theory Hash

Laban Movement Analysis as a Codified Lexicon

Rudolf Laban’s work is generally utilized by theatre and dance artists and scholars, as it performs the crucial labour of providing a standardized lexicon for describing movement and movement qualities. Laban Movement Analysis theory, or LMA, is convenient in its universal application, requiring neither specialized knowledge to understand nor a specialized field to be applied to. For the purposes of this discussion, I will utilize Laban’s “effort factors”, which he describes as the foundations of movement quality: space, weight, time, and flow. Each effort factor manifests in a corresponding polaric pair of “effort elements”, which are then combined in foursomes of their own to form “action efforts”—the ways that active movements are expressed (Newlove 112-140).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effort Factor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>direct - indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>strong - light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>sudden - sustained</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>bound - free</td>
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Tab. 1. Laban theory Effort Factors and their corresponding Element Pairs

<table>
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<th>Action Effort</th>
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<tr>
<td>direct – sustained – strong – bound</td>
<td>Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indirect – sudden – light – free</td>
<td>Flick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indirect – sustained – strong – bound</td>
<td>Wring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct – sudden – light – bound</td>
<td>Dab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indirect – sudden – strong – free</td>
<td>Slash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct – sustained – light – free</td>
<td>Glide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct – sudden – strong – bound</td>
<td>Thrust (or Punch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indirect – sustained – light – free</td>
<td>Float</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 2. Effort Element combinations and the Action Efforts they describe

LMA terminology provides a precise lexicon for the description of movement qualities, and because the Effort Element pairs more describe two ends of a spectrum than distinct camps, they are an excellent tool for describing *changes* in movement quality. Using Laban, our observation
from Glynn Macdonald might be described as a greater *freedom of flow* in movement in Original Pronunciation performance, and perhaps movements are more *sustained, strong, or direct* (this is something of a conjecture on my part—though I am not entirely sure what Macdonald means by a “fluency” of movement, these are the qualities that come to mind in her usage of that word, which in itself is illustrative of the need to utilize a standardized descriptive vocabulary here).

Now that a codified and easily-accessible lexicon is established, I turn to the tricky task of establishing the kinesthetic connection of the vocal apparatus to the rest of the body. It is easy enough to assert that language and movement are connected—body language is an integral aspect of communication, and gesticulation while speaking is by no means an uncommon occurrence. Linking *articulation* and full-body movement, however, is (as far as I am unaware) an as-of-yet unexplored idea, and I would like to do so by marrying Bartenieff Fundamentals with Lessac vocal technique.

**Bartenieff Fundamentals: Body, Breath, and Earth**

Developed by Imsgard Bartenieff (a student of Laban’s), Fundamentals are principle core tenets for a system of full-body movement awareness and integration. There are twelve basic fundamentals, but for the sake of this discussion I will focus on these three:

- Total Body Connectivity: The whole body is connected, all parts are in relationship. Change in one part changes the whole. Acknowledging relationships between parts of the body brings the possibility for both differentiation of the parts and integration of the whole.

- Breath Support: Breath brings life and movement. It is a physiological support for all life processes and, hence, all movement. Breath enlives.
- Grounding: The earth provides support, a ground for being and moving. Human beings move in relationship to the earth and gravity. (Hackney 39)

The principle of Total Body Connectivity is generally applied to the body below the chin. As chiropractors and massage therapists are well aware, change and shift in one part of the body have irrevocable consequences for the rest of the system, and dancers recognize that movements in the distal areas of the body are always initiated in the body’s core. If something as minor as a stubbed little toe can throw the entirety of gait and posture out of alignment, it is not so difficult to imagine that a change in shape in the vocal apparatus during articulation could at the very least inform a change in the rest of the body. No muscle group is completely isolated, and though a tiny muscle in the face or throat may not force a movement in another part of the body, it most certainly can impel one.

The principle of Breath Support reinforces the link between sound and movement: breath is instrumental for articulation, and Bartenieff asserts that kinesthetically it provides the “baseline of flow for Effort”, “is an inner Shaping experience…ever alternating, growing, and shrinking”, and “is the first experience of Space—the fullness of inner three-dimensional space is discovered in the breathing process” (Hackney 41). Thus, articulation as not only a physiological change in muscle groups, but also a change in the shaping of breath, must again inform change in the rest of the body.

The idea of Grounding can easily stray into the realm of the mystic, but Bartenieff maintains that it is the ability to sense “our weighted mass…and earth’s gravity” (41). Groundedness is an embodied relationship, a physical awareness of the Earth’s gravitational pull on the human body and the resulting oppositional push of both the body into the ground beneath it and the ground up into the human body. This becomes more important to the conversation in
the context of Early Modern English, which is often described as a “grounded” dialect, but bears mentioning here as it works in conjunction with Total Body Connectivity and Breath Support to describe articulation as not only a full-body experience, but one that potentially connects with groundedness as it theoretically affects the body’s positional relationship to the Earth and the sensation of gravity acting upon it.

**Lessac and Linklater: An Entreaty for Ephemeraj**

I have until this point strived to establish the possibility of a *physiological* connection between sound articulation and body movement based on the work of well-established movement theorists. Here I would like to make an argument for the validity of the *perceptive* connection, once again building on an extant theoretical foundation: Arthur Lessac’s pedagogical work with articulation supplemented by Kristin Linklater’s with sound perception.

Lessac’s work delves into sound vibrations and tones, and I am interested specifically in the idea of kinesensics, which is described as “a process by which we *feel* sound: the tactile, vibratory, and resonant sensations that occur when we vocalize” (Housley 135). Lessac envisions the body and voice working together as “a musical apparatus capable of great precision and versatility” (Campbell 154), and though his focus is on articulation as an access point to the emotional, I would like to examine this work as a validation of *impulse*. Lessac refers to three different energies: Consonant, Structural, and Tonal, but for the purposes of this thesis I will focus on just the Structural, though tone and vibration have also been points of interest in the Early Modern English dialect that could bear further looking into.

Structural energy focuses on vowel articulation and the kinesthetic experience of articulating. Lessac’s structural vowels are characterized by their ability to be “produced with generous space between the teeth but are differentiated by the size and shape of the lip opening”,
with the report that the openness of the vocal apparatus in articulating structural vowels often
elicits a strong emotional reaction in actors (Campbell 155). Kristin Linklater supplements this
idea by pointing out that “because of the direct and uninterrupted connection with the breath
source, vowels can be directly connected with emotion, but only if the breath source is as deep as
the diaphragm. The solar plexus is knit into the fiber of the diaphragm and is the primary
emotional receiving and transmitting nerve center” (15). Whether or not this is a physiologically
provable truth is beside the point: the perception is present and, more importantly, effective in
giving actors greater and more effective access to speech and character. A physical impulse
informed by perception is by no means an invalid one, as Linklater very emphatically states:

“THOUGHT/FEELING IMPULSE INSPIRES THE BREATH—BREATH CREATES
SOUND—SOUND MOVES THE BODY” (18).

Original Pronunciation Shakespeare

How exactly does all of this apply to Original Pronunciation Shakespeare? Let us return
to Tom Cornford’s example from Romeo & Juliet. He focuses on the word “blade” in the context
of Capulet’s complaint that Montague “flourishes his blade in spite of me” (I.i.78) In Received
Pronunciation, the vowel in question is the diphthong /ɛu/, while the general OP reconstruction is
the simplified /ɛː/, rendering the word closer to the modern pronunciation of “bled” with the
articulation of the vowel drawn out. Rather than being lifted in the vocal apparatus by the second
sound of the diphthong, the higher vowel /u/, the sound stays with the lower /ɛː/. The lower point
of articulation causes the vowel—at least for this actor—to feel like it sits “lower and wider” in
the body, and as OP practitioners generally report an impulse to widen the stance and drop the
pelvic floor, I have no reason to believe this to be an isolated case. Indeed, this could very well
be an instinct informed, as Bartenieff’s work suggests, by the change in the minutiae of the
muscles operating the vocal apparatus and the shaping of the breath, perhaps made conscious by
the awkwardness of articulating an unfamiliar dialect. It could also be, as Lessac and Linklater
might suggest, a physical reaction to the actual vowel making the word “sound dangerous” and
thus making the actor “feel dangerous”—an issue of perception that nonetheless has a major
impact on how the actor chooses to embody the moment for his character and thus how the
character is in turn perceived by the audience. Tiptoeing into the realm of conjecture, the actor
might take his widened, grounded stance and idea of “danger” and instinctively opt for
movements that organically embody (in the Laban sense) more strength and directness. The
character of old Capulet suddenly leaves the realm of the “correct and polite” and has the ability
to be less of a foolish old man in his nightgown and more of a capable and passionate one, very
seriously caught in the heat of the moment. The change in sound thus has a direct effect on all
involved in the moment: actors, characters, and audience members.

This attempt to bring together movement theory and theatre vocal theory in order to
untangle (at least a very little) the real and palpable affects that Shakespeare as performed in the
Early Modern English dialect has on performer, play, and audience is by no means an assertion
that a change in articulation forces a change on the body. Rather, by pointing to physiological
changes as possible sources of impulse and illustrating the validity of instinct brought about by
the perception of sound, I hope to be able to set the groundwork for the structured experimental
and experiential work that can take embodied Original Pronunciation and Early Modern English
out of the realm of the anecdotal and perhaps into a more codified framework.
Chapter Two: The Workshop

Participants were first given a brief overview of Early Modern English. This included a description of the dialect’s geographical location and historical influences, as well as modern processes of reconstruction. They were informed that the modern reconstruction is at best an approximation, and that Early Modern London was a melting pot of regional accents; modern theatre practice of the dialect reflects this, as no actor produces the sounds quite the same. Participants were thus strongly encouraged to approach the workshop with a sense of play, exploration, and individual ownership. A longer version of this introduction to Early Modern English may be found in Appendix A.

Breathwork

Much of theatre and movement practice is grounded in breath, and as such it seemed essential to include codified, structured breathwork as a warm-up in order to engage the kind of proprioceptive awareness (awareness of the body and the space around it) that facilitates conscious observation of the body as it performs tasks. In the spirit of Barteneiff breath Fundamentals, the movement of breath through the lungs was used as a foundation for guided imagery of oxygen moving through the bloodstream out to each extremity, engaging conscious awareness of the full body. Breath was also targeted as being controlled from and rooted in the lower deep abdominal muscles, which is typical breath control training for theatre and movement.

Dialect Breakdown

After engaging with breath, participants were taken through a breakdown of significant sound features from reconstructed Early Modern English. Each sound feature was paired with a gesture designed to act as both a mnemonic device and a kinesthetic mirror to the action.
occurring in the vocal apparatus with each sound produced. What follows is a truncated version of the breakdown that can be found in Appendix B with the rest of the workshop materials, and a description of each gesture. Some sounds are noted as being slightly different in modern practice than reconstructed. This observation is based on various educational and instructional recordings made by David Crystal, Ben Crystal, and Paul Meier, as well as various studio recordings and various live performance videos. In practice, I attribute these changes to greater ease of articulation and perhaps influence from speakers’ native dialects; because most modern OP training has been done by the Crystals or Meier, it follows that these idiosyncrasies would be widespread. Because the accent is so variable and malleable in nature, I did not attempt to correct these deviations (I find them more comfortable myself), and provided them as options for some of the trickier vowels.

1. Rhotic accent; vowels followed by r are heavily /ɹ/-coloured—gesture was a “cat claw”, designed to evoke both the onomatopoeia of a feline growl and the curved feeling of the sides of the tongue bunching upwards to create the /ɹ/ sound

Fig. 1. “Cat claw”
2. Unstressed initial /h/ dropped—gesture was a chop or bounce with the hand, mimicking the feeling of bouncing from one word to the next without replacing an /h/ with a glottal stop or attack

Fig. 2. “Hand chop/bounce”

3. Aspirated /h/ in /wh/ words—gesture was a pressing of the hands together in front of the chest, mimicking a bellows pushing air out in the same way air is pushed through the vocal apparatus during aspiration

Fig. 3. “Hand bellows”

4. -TION and -SION fully pronounced as [sɪən]—gesture was a quick double-tap of the hand on the thigh to emulate the rhythm of what is usually pronounced as one syllable (-SHUN) becoming two
5. -TURE endings pronounced with /t/; closer to /tʌ/ than -CHER—gesture was a dab (or “boop”) in the air with one finger, mimicking the feeling of the tongue tapping the alveolar ridge for a /t/

6. MOUTH diphthong central onset to FOOT; becomes /ɔʊ/ (or, more often in modern practice, /ɔu/)—gesture was a “hand slide” in front of the chest, mimicking the liquid feeling of the vowel sliding backwards in the mouth as the lips purse
7. PRICE/CHOICE merge; central onset to KIT; closer to /ɒi/ (or, more often in modern practice, /əi/)—gesture was “finger guns”, a Western pop culture meme often accompanied by a vocalized “eyyyyy” that approximates the desired sounds.

8. GOAT, NEAR, FACE, SQUARE, CURE all elongated, monophthongal vowels—gesture was an extended “beard stroke” as a reminder of vowel change replaced by vowel length.
9. No happy tensing (this diphthong is technically reconstructed as /əi/; however, most modern practice does tense the sound into /əi/)—gesture was thus a redux of “finger guns”

10. STRUT closed to /ɤ/ (or, more often in modern practice, /ʊ/)—gesture was a “pearl clutch” to evoke this as a primal sound of disgust

11. TRAP opened to /a/—gesture was both hands raised next to the face as if in surprise or shock, both to evoke this primal sound and to open up the front of the body to encourage a more open jaw
12. LOT/CLOTH/THOUGHT/PALM merge; same sound as American English western dialects—gesture was a release of the arms and shoulders down the body, mimicking the posture of a relaxed sigh and encouraging the length of this sound.

13. GOOSE split; some remaining rounded in /u/ and some unrounded to FOOT (generally a STRUT in modern practice, however), but both generally acceptable—gesture for /u/ was an “okay” sign in front of the body to evoke “ooh” as a sound of appreciation; gesture for /u/ or FOOT was a “gut punch” to evoke the sound of air being forcefully pushed from the body.
14. TRAP/BATH/START merge; rhyme /a/-—this was erroneously not merged with feature 11, and so its gesture was a redux of that feature’s “surprised hands”

15. NURSE open and heavily r-coloured to /ɐ-/—gesture was a curling of the pointer finger to mimic a pirate’s hook, evocative of both a stereotypical pirate “arrr” and the upward curling of the sides of the tongue to form rhoticism

16. FLEECE opened to FACE (technically /eː/, but more often in modern practice opened to /ɛː/)—gesture was a shrug to evoke the noncommittal “eh”
Moving Through Modern Text

In order to give the subconscious time to process the technical phonetic information while still reinforcing sound production, participants were then asked to walk through the workshop space while participating in a call-and-response in Early Modern English with a modern text. The text chosen was Emma Lazarus’s “The New Colossus”, selected due to its relative ubiquity in the American cultural consciousness and the range of Early Modern English sound features that it hits. The poem was fed to participants in small pieces, with breaks placed in an attempt to balance rhythm and the integrity of individual thoughts with the need for chunks of text to be small enough to easily remember. This exercise was repeated three times: first in Modern English (to acclimatize participants to the text), then in dialect, then again in dialect and with an emphasis on playing with time (speed of both movement and recitation), space (both locomotive movement and body shaping), and energy (both of movement and recitation). The hope here was to strengthen the conscious link between sound and movement while reinforcing sounds. This exercise also served to introduce the dialect in a structured, lyrical setting in preparation for applying the dialect to Shakespeare. Finally, I hoped that having reinforcement take place away from the breakdown worksheet and in motion would circumvent some of the academic
overthinking and perfectionism that sitting static with written materials can elicit. The poem as it was presented is documented in Appendix B with the rest of the workshop materials.

**Applying Dialect to Shakespeare**

In the final phase of the workshop, participants were presented with a physical copy of Juliet’s balcony scene from *Romeo & Juliet* (slightly edited—Romeo’s voyeuristic interjections removed in order to render the text performable by one human). The text was written in Modern English due to participants’ general unfamiliarity with the International Phonetic Alphabet and technical linguistics. They were given some time to work with the text individually, applying the phonetic features covered in the breakdown worksheet to a piece of period verse. As they worked, they were asked to think about their particular interpretation of the character of Juliet and how that interpretation affected the movement choices they were drawn to make. They were then asked to take into account how their physical observations of Original Pronunciation affected those choices, and what options became available that they might not initially gravitate toward. They were then paired with another participant for feedback, and then separated into groups of four, each individual having the opportunity to run through the text in rough performance with a small audience. Finally, the workshop reconvened for a debrief, Q&A, and exit survey.
Chapter Three: Results and Feedback

This workshop consisted of eight participants from varied backgrounds—actors, dancers, and academics. The youngest participant was 18; the oldest was 67. Almost all were California or Nevada natives, and most of those who elected to share their gender identity identified as cisgender. All were native English speakers, with no other household languages identified. This renders the participant pool pretty useless for any kind of real data collection or significant trend observation. What it does provide, however, is useful feedback for areas that warrant further exploration—and perhaps some that might not prove as fruitful as initially thought.

Breathwork is, I think, a crucial aspect of warming up both the voice and the body. Participants generally responded well to engaging awareness with the breath, and in the future I would perhaps play with targeting specific areas of the body from which to engage breathing and breath. I asked my workshop participants to think of their breath as being rooted in the lower deep abdominal muscles pushing and pulling air through the body like a bellows because that is generally where breath control is taught to be rooted in both theatre and dance education. It’s an interesting coincidence that Early Modern English is often described as being physically centred around the pelvis and pelvic floor, and I wonder how much that observation is affected by breath. An actor, being made consciously aware of training that is usually second nature by the discomfort of articulating unfamiliar sounds, could potentially mistake the engagement of focused breath control for a feeling of groundedness and pelvic-centredness. It could also be that engaging a lower resonance point in the vocal apparatus (perhaps creating space at the base of the throat) impels a physical drop in the body as a whole. The idea of breath and resonance having some unconscious effect—even if just a perceptive one—on the body is one that warrants further exploration, I think, and would be interesting to try to target during breathwork.
Pairing sounds with (semi-arbitrary) gestures in going through the dialect breakdown was successful with this group, and I recognize that there are many populations that these specific gestures would be much less helpful for. Gestures carry heavy cultural baggage, and some of mine could potentially bring with them unwanted associations that might corrupt the meaning that I am attempting to ascribe to them. In addition, some of my gestures rely on Western pop culture (“finger guns” especially) to translate, and I am conflicted as to whether I would want to rework those. Memes are by nature effective ways of communicating information, but they are also by nature specific to a certain population, so if I were to hold this workshop again I would need to take into account the likely distribution of participants and rework gestures to be more universal—even if this potentially reduces their efficacy. Perhaps abstracting gestures by incorporating Laban action efforts in order to better mimic the feeling of articulation would make this a more easily translatable pedagogical tool—the “Boop” gesture for [tæɾ] was designed as a Laban dab to mimic the tap of the tip of the tongue on the alveolar ridge, and seemed successful. This might also be a useful way to also begin to incorporate Laban lexicon into practice. I am convinced that the effectiveness of this technique makes it worth further exploration and refinement.

Participants with a strong background in codified movement techniques generally found that walking while engaging in call and response in dialect helped very much to avoid overthinking and start the process of feeling the language as an embodied thing. This may be because being asked to complete tasks while sustaining locomotion was familiar and thus comfortable for these individuals, but it is something I would like to investigate further. I wonder how effective movement can be in circumventing the mind and engaging physical instinct and embodiment for an expedited learning process.
Working with the *Romeo & Juliet* text produced the most exciting observations. Participants generally agreed that something about the dialect helped the language of the text feel more real, human, and organic. Having access to sound through the body as a whole (rather than just focusing on the vocal apparatus) encouraged a physical approach to performance of the text despite discomfort with the sounds themselves. This, in turn, fostered a heightened sense of play in navigating the text in dialect. Participants generally found that they were drawn to a more emotion-forward playing of Juliet, highlighting her frustration with the arbitrariness of the language (their family names) that keeps her from being with Romeo, tinged also with the excitement of new love and the exhaustion of the end of a long night. Sound elision did not necessarily dictate that speech itself was faster, but multiple participants commented on what felt like a quicker progression of logical thought: Juliet felt sharper, wittier, and more playful.

Indeed, the most commonly-reported takeaway from the workshop was the sense of increased access to both Shakespeare as text and Shakespeare as theatre: the language became a gateway to understanding and embodying character, rather than an obstacle. This, more than anything, is something I would like to explore more: dialect and physicality of articulation as a vehicle for performance and actorial choice, rather than simply a component of building a believable character. There *does* seem to be a link here, and it would be interesting to see whether it is as clear-cut as articulation impelling movement in a way that is easily observable in a statistically significant trend, or if it is (as I suspect) more perceptual and affective in nature.

Two things I am dissatisfied with: lexicon and IPA. While putting together the workshop I debated including Laban Movement Analysis vocabulary as a way for participants to describe their experiences, but ultimately left it out as it felt like too much information for a three-hour one-off workshop. Perhaps in the future, if given the opportunity to work with more individuals
(or movement-trained individuals who have previous exposure to LMA) for a longer stretch of time, introducing a codified lexicon for describing actions and action impulses might prove fruitful. I also hesitated to provide Shakespeare text in any form of Early Modern English represented by IPA—again, knowing that most of my participants had little to no exposure to IPA, I did not want the visual chaos that IPA can be to overwhelm and become an obstacle rather than a tool. This is something that I think I can play with depending (again) upon population and duration of work. With time and familiarity, IPA can be a useful tool for recall—a visual reminder of sound change. Both LMA and IPA are pedagogical tools that I as an academic would very much like to incorporate, but I also recognize that they can be the opposite of useful outside an academic setting.
Conclusion

In compiling research on embodied language, two completely phonetics-and-theatre-unrelated texts stood out in their grasp of the wildly personal, uniquely human experience of acquiring and embodying language. In *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in the More-Than-Human World*, David Abram describes the acquisition of language (both signifier and signified, to use Saussure’s succinct terminology) as an intensely physical and affective process:

*We thus learn our native language not mentally but bodily.* We appropriate new words and phrases first through their affective tonality and texture, through the way they feel in the mouth or roll off the tongue, and it is this direct, felt significance—the *taste* of a word or phrase, the way it influences or modulates the body—that provides the fertile, polyvalent source for all the more refined and rarefied meanings which that term may come to have for us. (75)

In turn, Dr. Bessel van der Kolk writes extensively in *The Body Keeps the Score* on current educational systems engaging the cognitive aspects of the mind to the detriment of the bodily-emotional centres, leading to an incomplete educational model of the human experience. Though his work focuses on the embodiment of trauma, what can be applied here is universal: memory is an experience “encoded in the viscera” (88), inseparable from the physical and emotional. How does any of this apply? Perhaps the body as a pedagogical tool bears further study, and perhaps—especially in performance education—divorcing the acquisition of knowledge from emotion is impractical. The very initial, exploratory results of the work described in this thesis certainly seem to point in that direction, as the strongest affirmative results stemmed from a balance of emotional, academic, and kinesthetic work. This is, of course, the nature of teaching
dialect and movement for theatre, but it seems not so great a leap of logic to consider it a tool viable for a more general pedagogical toolbox. Attempting to definitively answer the question of whether or not Early Modern English impels some kind of observable pattern of bodily change in modern practitioners is well beyond the scope of this thesis; however, weaving together a theoretical framework and initiating exploratory fieldwork is a crucial first step to establishing a foundation for future research into the link between language, the body, and movement.
Appendix A: An Introduction to Early Modern English

Background and a Brief History of Reconstruction

Original Pronunciation, or OP, simply refers to the accent in which a historical work would have been performed in at the time of its writing. Though it is most commonly associated with the modern effort focusing on Shakespeare’s Early Modern English dialect, sections of Beowulf, the King James Bible, and works by Chaucer—among other historical English works—have also been explored in their respective Original Pronunciations. The permeation of Shakespeare’s works into the shared cultural consciousness of English speakers worldwide, however, has given the current Shakespearean Original Pronunciation movement an energy that reaches beyond academic exercise through public performance.

The first concerted effort to construct an Early Middle English pronunciation for Shakespeare began with the research of Helge Kökeritz at Yale University in the 1950s. His research was highly linguistically technical, and was marked by a comprehensive study of the First Folio and all Quarto texts—even the “bad ones”—for internal evidence, compared with the writings of 16th- and 17th-century orthoepists and various private documents from the same period for external evidence (Kökeritz 15). Kökeritz’s work formed a solid, detailed foundation for efforts to bring Original Pronunciation Shakespeare to the stage: the first full-scale attempt by John Barton with the Marlowe Society at Cambridge University was produced in 1952, almost concurrently with Kökeritz’s work. Barton’s Original Pronunciation Julius Caesar is reported to have been well-received, as was Kökeritz’s own production of The Merry Wives of Windsor two years later (Lodewyck 41). Despite this, however, Original Pronunciation in performance seems to have been largely left alone for the rest of the 20th Century.
Academic research on Original Pronunciation continued through the 1960s and 1970s, though focus was broadened beyond simply Shakespeare to encompass the phonetic changes that were occurring during the slow shift between Late Middle English and Early Modern English. E. J. Dobson’s research focused on the sounds and rhythms defined by period ortheopists rather than on the analysis of puns, rhymes, and spellings that marked much of Kökeritz’s research, holding that the writings of those seeking to deliberately describe the language were more reliable than the “accidental mis-spellings of imperfectly literate people” (197). Charles Barber’s work in the 1970s focused on all available textual artifacts of Early Modern English, though oddly his work dealing with Shakespeare eschewed the Quartos and primarily relied on the First Folio texts, “for convenience” (12). Barber also included grammatical and lexical studies in his survey, allowing for a better understanding of the phonetics of Early Modern English in the greater context of the language in everyday use.

The most recent movement to reconstruct an Original Pronunciation for Shakespeare began with David Crystal in 2004, working with the Globe Theatre to produce an “experimental” Original Pronunciation performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. Working from the framework provided by Kökeritz, Dobson, and Barber as well as more contemporary scholars, Crystal was able to create a script in Original Pronunciation in a pidgin version of the International Phonetic Alphabet that avoided total phonetic transcription. Highlighting only the sound differences between Early Modern English and today’s English aided in making the Original Pronunciation sounds accessible to the production’s actors, who were largely untrained in technical linguistics (Crystal, *Pronouncing* 19-39). The 2004 production of *Romeo and Juliet* enjoyed enough success to launch an ever-growing Original Pronunciation movement that has prompted productions internationally, not only of Shakespeare’s plays but other dramas from the Elizabethan period, as
well as a foray into the study and performance of Elizabethan vocal music in its Early Modern English pronunciation.

**Early Modern English Phonetics**

The term “Shakespeare’s pronunciation” as it is commonly used is a misnomer: the phonetic features that comprised the personal dialect of William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon and London are nigh impossible to reconstruct, as that singular voice has been silenced for over 300 years. As Helge Kökeritz points out, an investigation into the speech of this particular man would have to take into account not only the general elements of his speech—vowels, consonants, and stress—but the nuances such as pitch, resonance, intonation, and rhythm (3). As these are inherent characteristics that are difficult for modern generations to describe intelligibly even with the aid of modern audio and visual technology, the task of pinpointing exactly how one man three centuries ago would have spoken is unrealistic at best. Therefore, what is generally called “Shakespeare’s pronunciation” is more adequately described as a general approximation of Elizabethan pronunciation, carrying with it the complexities and nuances of thousands of individuals united by the same language.

It is also impossible to construct an exact phonetic sketch of how any of Shakespeare’s plays would have sounded when they were first being performed, dictated by the nature of the time and place they were performed in. English during the sixteenth century was undergoing a period of rapid transformation, one of the greatest influences being the phonetic change caused by the Great Vowel Shift, which, among other features, moved long vowels away from the “continental” sounds similar to those in Italian and liturgical Latin (Weiner). In addition, Elizabethan London was rapidly becoming the “melting pot” of diverse accents that it is today, growing from a population of about 50,000 people at the beginning of the century to about
200,000 by the end (Crystal, *Pronouncing* 25). Being a point of intersection for three major English dialect areas to begin with—Southern, South-Eastern (Kentish), and East Midlands—Shakespeare’s London would have had no distinct accent of its own, rendering it impossible to definitively outline phonetically. The idea of a prestige dialect akin to the Received Pronunciation associated with today’s English aristocracy (and, indeed, with modern British Shakespeare performance) was only just beginning to surface, and it, too, changed as rapidly as court politics. Regional accents were common as powerful men such as Francis Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh came into and out of power in court, and upon King James’s assumption of the throne in 1603, the court accent was Scottish for many years (26). The actors themselves came from different parts of the country, and it is unknown whether or not they would have found any reason to adopt any accent other than their own during performance, rendering Shakespeare’s stage very possibly as varied in accent as the city itself. Therefore, any attempts to phonetically transcribe Shakespeare’s works as they were performed can only be an approximation at best; however, there are some generalizations that can be made.

The long vowels that were experiencing such prominent changes at the time can be identified through specific lexical sets with distinctive sounds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Set</th>
<th>Distinctive EME Features</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>mouth</em></td>
<td>Centered onset beginning with schwa, resulting in [əʊ]</td>
<td><em>out, loud, noun, count, crowd, bough</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>price</em> and <em>choice</em></td>
<td>Centered onset beginning with schwa, resulting in [əɪ]</td>
<td><em>price, tribe, time, Friday, isle, eider, fight, Viola and choice, point, boil, toy, ahoy, royal</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Group</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goat, near, square, face, and cure</td>
<td>Monophthongal vowels, resulting in [go:t], [niː], [skwɛ:r], [feːs], and [kçuː]</td>
<td>goat, home, near, beer, square, bare, bear, face, stay, fatal, cure, tour, poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happy</td>
<td>Neutral onset on unstressed syllable, resulting in [əɪ]</td>
<td>happy, lovely, city, baby, money, Feste, valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strut</td>
<td>Close-mid, back, unrounded [y]</td>
<td>cup, rub, butter, love, monk, blood, hum, summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trap</td>
<td>More open and fronted than today’s [æ], resulting in [a]</td>
<td>trap, ham, scalp, arrow, battery, action, and also any, many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lot and thought</td>
<td>Unrounded [a] closer to American English than British Received Pronunciation</td>
<td>lot, stop, rob, profit, honest, swan, knowledge, want, watch and daughter, awkward, ought, call, stalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goose</td>
<td>Rounded [u] closer to British Received Pronunciation; though words like fool, conclude, tooth, and prove closer to unrounded [ʊ]</td>
<td>loop, mood, dupe, Juliet, funeral, duty, fruit, beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bath and start</td>
<td>Target [a]; also includes words like warm, war, quarter, and warn as well as daughter</td>
<td>staff, path, brass, blast, ask, master, basket and start, heart, barn, sergeant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nurse</td>
<td>Heavily r-coloured, open [vː]</td>
<td>usurp, turn, mercy, shirt, assert, earth, worst, scourge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fleece</td>
<td>Open vowel [eː]</td>
<td>see, field, be, people, breathe, complete, Caesar, Phoenix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 3. Paul Meier’s EME dialect breakdown
Another significant phonetic feature is the rhotic /r/, the heavily-coloured [ɹ] that very distinctly sets Early Modern English apart from the unvoiced /r/ found in the modern Received Pronunciation. In addition, Early Modern English diction was far more lax than in modern stage practices, with vowels commonly elided and words often appearing in their weakest forms. Any /h/ in an initial, unstressed position would have been dropped, though it is thought that a stressed initial /h/ may also have been dropped in varying degrees (Meier). The ambiguity of the unvoiced /h/ stems from its contention in upper-class Elizabethan circles, as orthoepists such as Thomas Elyot insisted that “clean speech” without the omission of any sound or syllable was proper for the well-bred, while textual evidence suggests that /h/-dropping was a commonplace practice (Crystal, *Pronouncing* 66-68). An /h/ in the consonant cluster /wh/ would have been aspirated, however, excepting in words that are today pronounced without the /w/, such as who, whom, and whole. Finally, word endings such as –tion and –sion would have been more fully sounded, closer to [sɪən] than the modern [ʃən] (Meier 9-10).

This has been as brief and concise an overview of the reconstructive history and sound features of Early Modern English as I can approximate. More detailed accounts illustrating examples of spelling, puns, and orthoepic treatises drawn on to create the framework for the modern iteration of the dialect can be found in the works mentioned in this appendix. For the sake of efficiency and this thesis’s focus on the question of modern practice rather than interrogating reconstruction, they are not included here.
Appendix B: Workshop Materials

Consent Information Script

We are conducting a research study to learn more about how language and the body interact.

If you volunteer to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in a Shakespeare Original Pronunciation dialect group workshop focused on using movement as a gateway to accessing dialect.

Your participation should take about three hours.

This study is considered to be minimal risk of harm. This means the risks of your participation in the research are similar in type or intensity to what you encounter during your daily activities.

Benefits of doing research are not definite; but we hope to learn how to better integrate language embodiment into dialect work, and conversely how to better use language to inform physical choices. There are no direct benefits to you in this study activity, except that you will learn a new skill at no financial cost to you.

The researchers and the University of Nevada, Reno will treat your identity and the information collected about you with professional standards of confidentiality and protect it to the extent allowed by law. You will not be personally identified in any reports or publications that may result from this study. The US Department of Health and Human Services, the University of Nevada, Reno Research Integrity Office, and the Institutional Review Board may look at your study records.

Required Language
You may ask questions of the researcher at any time by calling Sarah Johnson at (775)657-0937 or by sending an email to sjohnson.smiles@gmail.com.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop at any time. Declining to participate or stopping your participation will not have any negative effects on you.

You may ask about your rights as a research participant. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this research, you may report them (anonymously if you so choose) by calling the University of Nevada, Reno Research Integrity Office at 775.327.2368.
ORIGINAL PRONUNCIATION SHAKESPEARE (EARLY MODERN ENGLISH)

Our modern understanding of Early Modern English phonetics is by no means that of a codified dialect. It is an amalgamation of linguistic reconstruction, textual analysis, and educated guessstimate—add into this the fact that Early Modern London was, as that city is now, a linguistic melting pot and we have a reconstruction that must be fluid. This gives us as actors an immense amount of wiggle room and space to play, remembering always that language is dynamic, malleable, and personal—even dialects from the 16th Century!

ORAL POSTURE

- Setting:
  - Jaw and cheeks: high and tight
  - Lips: relaxed, lip corners forward and slightly rounded
  - Soft Palate: slightly dropped
  - Tongue: slightly bunched against the molars
- Resonant Zone: Back of the mouth/soft palate
- Tone: Warm, resonant, liquid

CHARACTERISTIC SOUNDS

1. Rhotic accent; vowels followed by r are heavily /r/-coloured
   a. [letər]
   b. letter, nurse, start, hard, square, near, cure
   c. “Northern doctors write smart letters.”

2. Unstressed initial /h/ dropped
   a. A feature that lends fluidity to the dialect; these should rarely (if ever) be glottal attacks
   b. This feature more than most is extremely variable and individual
   c. “Henry hands hot dogs to happy hounds.”
3. Aspirated /h/ in /wh/ words
   a. when, where, who, what, why
   b. Firmly differentiate between voiceless /wh/ and voiced /w/
   c. “Who wears white whenever it’s Wednesday?”

4. -TION and -SION endings fully pronounced
   a. closer to [sɹən] than -SHUN
   b. invention, convention, mission, mansion
   c. “His mission to the mansion was no invention of convention.”

5. -TURE endings pronounced with /t/
   a. closer to [tɹə] than -CHER
   b. nature, stature, creature, future
   c. “The creature’s stature was no feature of nature.”

6. MOUTH diphthong central onset to FOOT
   a. [məʊθ]
   b. out, loud, count, crowd, bough
   c. “The loud count found a brown cow on the downs.”

7. PRICE/CHOICE merge; central onset to KIT
   a. [pɹeɪs]
   b. price, time, eider, Viola, choice, point, toy, royal
   c. “Viola pointed at the royal toy nine times.”

8. GOAT, NEAR, FACE, SQUARE, CURE all monophthongal vowels
   a. [goːt], [niː], [feːs], [skwεːr], [kɛjuː]
   b. home, beer, fatal, bear, poor
   c. “The poor bear dove face-first into his beer.”

9. No happY tensing
   a. [hæpə]
   b. happy, marry, nary, Harry, tarry
   c. “Harry found a lovely city in the valley.”

10. STRUT closed
    a. [strʌt]
    b. rub, cup, monk, butter, blood
    c. “Monkeys love butter in the summer.”

11. TRAP opened to /a/
    a. [træp]
    b. ham, arrow, scrap, and also any, many
    c. “Patrick slammed arrows into many hams.”
12. LOT/CLOTH/THOUGHT/PALM merge; same sound as American English western dialects
   a. [lɔt]
   b. stop, swan, knowledge, daughter*, awkward, ought
c. “Paul’s daughter ought to stop potting water.”

13. GOOSE split; some rounded to RP, some significant words unrounded to FOOT
   a. [gʌs]
      i. loop, mood, dupe, Juliet, duty, fruit
      ii. “Juliet’s duty is to accrue Fruit Loops.”
   b. [fʌl]
      i. fool, prove, conclude, tooth
      ii. “The fool removed his beautiful tooth.”

14. TRAP/BATH/START merge;
    rhyme /a/
    a. [baθ]
    b. staff, path, basket, start, heart, sergeant and also
      warm, war, quarter, daughter*
    c. “The sergeant started down the path with a warm basket.”

15. NURSE open and heavily r-coloured
    a. [nʌ-s]
    b. usurp, turn, mercy, earth, shirt
    c. “The nurse cursed the worst shirt on the earth.”

16. FLEECE opened to FACE
    a. [fleːs]
    b. see, field, breathe, me, people
    c. “Peter feels complete with me.”

**PROSODY (MUSICALITY)**

Because this dialect is reconstructed, there is no sure way to really know the kinds of rhythms and intonations Early Modern English featured. This dialect is generally described as very fluid, musical, and earthy, with a distinct fall-rise and informal feel, but keep in mind that it’s a dialect that is reconstructed for stage and for actors. This leaves so much room for play, experimentation, and individual ownership. Be bold!
The New Colossus
Emma Lazarus

Not like the brazen giant/of Greek fame
With conquering limbs/astride from land to land
Here at our sea-washed/sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman/with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning,/and her name
Mother of Exiles./From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome:/her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor/that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands,/your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips./“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddles masses/yeaerning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse/of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless,/tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp/beside the golden door!”
Romeo & Juliet: The Balcony Scene

O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name;

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,

And I’ll no longer be a Capulet.

...

‘This but they name that is my enemy;

Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.

What’s Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,

Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part

Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!

What’s in a name? that which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet;

So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call’d,

Retain that sear perfection which he owes

Without that title. Romeo, doff they name,

And for that name which is no part of thee

Take all myself.
OP Workshop Exit Survey

Age:

Gender identity (please leave blank if uncomfortable disclosing):

Hometown (City, State):

Current city of residence and duration of residency:

Other household languages besides English:

Formal vocal training? Y/N

If yes, please describe:

What for you, personally, is the most difficult aspect of dialect-learning?
What for you, personally, is the most difficult aspect of working with Shakespeare? Why?

What part of this workshop made the dialect MOST accessible to you? Why?

What was the LEAST helpful part of this workshop? Why?
Do you think this workshop will affect your future approach to dialect work? Why or why not?

Do you think this workshop will affect your future approach to Shakespeare? Why or why not?
Bibliography


