

## I. Intuition vs. Art

- Liberal arts approach to the art of oral interp.  
this course brings together rhetoric, dialectic and poetic.
- Excellence

## II. The Art of Oral Interpretation Defined

- Performing literature with equal emphasis upon the sound (oral dimension) of the literature, treating the text with integrity and connecting with the audience to create an event.

## III. Introductory

### A. Use of Voice

- volume
- pitch
- rate/ rhythm
- quality
- appropriate variety

(Need to capture the sense of the literature. Bacon speaks of “tensiveness” and presence. Presence is a combination of striking figures of speech, characterization, plot, rhythm, descriptions, etc. They combine to give the selection presence. So, treating the piece with respect to its presence is what I mean by treating it with integrity. )

### B. Use of Body

- Eye contact (angle of address-helps differentiate characters)
- Facial Expressions
- Posture (use of stands, stools, etc.)
- Gestures
- Movement
- Appropriate variety

### C. Modes of Discourse

- Rhetoric (See Mattingly and Grimes Chpt 2)
  - a. Speech
  - b. Essay
- Poetic
  - a. Lyric (emotional)
  - b. Narrative (story-past)
  - c. Dramatic (acted out-present)
- Literary Situations

a. closed-character speaks to another person. "When the situational aspects of a work are so tightly organized that they constitute an environment of their own, one which we as readers observe but do not partake of, the situation is closed. In the presentation of such a work to an audience, we must make sure that the audience stands in the position of observer throughout. (Dialogue) eg., when, in *The Walrus*, you begin to understand that the oysters are about to be eaten ... before they themselves understand it.

b. open-look to audience. When, on the other hand, some of the situational aspects are missing or suggested rather than explicitly stated, the situation is said to be open. In presenting such a work to an audience, we try to obtain its participation in the situation. (Narrative) eg., ee cummings "he said, she said"

#### D. Dramatistic Analysis

- Speakers: *Who* is speaking in the literature?
- Listeners: *To whom* are the speakers speaking?
- Subjects: *What* is being said?
- Time: *When* is it being said?
- Place: *Where* is it being said?
- Motivation: *Why* is it being said?
- Attitude: *How* is it being said?

#### E. Introductions to Performances

- To set the tone, introduce characters.
  - a. In a play, the program tells the audience about the setting, characters, etc. In an interpretation, you have to do it.

Why is the above important? Why are we learning all of this stuff? (To give us tools with which to correctly interpret the piece. If you take all of these aspects into account, then your analysis will be complete.) And there's more!

#### IV. Why study sonnets?

- The most familiar type of lyric poem
- It is a challenge to both poet and interpreter because of fixed form

##### A. FORM: 14 lines; predominantly iambic pentameter (5 feet per line).

###### 1. prescribed rhyme scheme:

Shakespearean: abab cdcd efef gg (three quatrains and a couplet)  
 Petrarchan: abba abba cdc cdc

###### 2. discuss the relationship between rhyme scheme, meaning and interpretation.

eg. The Shakespearean couplet clues the interpreter to bring the poem to a firm close.

## II. Metrics (Style = Rhythm+Imagery)

Meter is a form of rhythm derived from the regular recurrence of heavy and light accented syllables.

## A. Types of meter

1. Free Verse-no regular pattern. In a sense it is anti-meter.

Whitman, p. 1071.

2. Accentual Verse-may be differing number of syllables per line, but there are patterns of accent. see Hopkins, p. 814.

3. Syllabic verse-syllables match in corresponding lines in each stanza.

4. Accentual-Syllabic Verse-combines use of both accent and syllables. Most complex.

## A. Scansion (see notes)

1. define scanning: analyzing the rhythm of a line of verse.

2. illustrate it (we use the accent mark ['] and the breve [˘] to scan)

B. Types of feet Feet are the units of meter. A foot = two or three syllables with one accent. They are be combined in several ways:

1. **Iamb**- (˘') regular alternation of one light and one heavy syllable.

The sun/ is warm,/ the sky/ is clear.

2. **Trochee**- ('˘) when the accented syllable comes first, the foot is called a trochee and the meter is called trochaic.

Happy/ field or/ mossy /cavern

Choicer /than the /Mermaid/ Tavern.

3. **Anapest**- (˘˘') three syllable foot with two lights followed by one heavy accent.

'Twas the night/ before Christ/mas and all/ through the house

4. **Dactyl**- ('˘˘) reverse of anapest: heavy accent first.

Sisterly,/ brotherly,

Fatherly,/ motherly

5. **Spondee**- ('') two syllables, both with heavy accent.

break-down

6. **Pyrrhic**- (˘˘) two syllables, both with light accent.

## C. Mnemonic device:

Inez = Iamb

Tina = Trochee

Ann Marie = Anapest

Deborah = Dactyl

## C. Line lengths

Monometer = one foot in a line

Dimeter = two " "

Trimeter = three  
 Tetrameter = four  
 Pentameter = five  
 Hexameter = six  
 Heptameter = seven

Iambic pentameter is the most common because it sounds the most like how we speak.

A poem written entirely in iambic pentameter is written in blank verse.

### III. On Imagery

A. Imagery (Sensory Appeals, Literal Imagery) A word or group of words that evoke physical sensations.

1. Visual
2. Auditory            See "The Sheltered Garden"
3. Gustatory
4. Olfactory            Lee and Gura, chpts 9 & 10?
5. Tactual
6. Kinaesthetic (muscle tension)
7. Kinetic

B. Figurative Language (Figurative Imagery; appeals to imagination)

Compare things of different classes.

1. Metaphor- indirectly stated comparison.
2. Simile- directly stated comparison.
3. Personification- ascribing human attributes to things that don't usually have them.
4. Apostrophe- addressing an imaginary or absent figure (cant' answer you back).
5. Irony- The line means the opposite of what it says. "Barbie Doll" p. 639.
6. Dramatic irony is different. The reverse happens of what you'd expect. *Oedipus Rex*.
6. Paradox- an apparent contradiction

\*\*cover the list\*\*

C. Symbols (Symbolic Imagery) Symbols stand for themselves first of all; they can be taken literally. Metaphor cannot be taken literally.

1. Conventional or traditional- solicit some.
2. Nonce- A symbol that is invented by a particular author for a work or series of works.

D. Sounds--The sounds often do reinforce the meaning.

1. Alliteration- The consonant sounds are repeated in close succession at the beginning of words in stress positions. Peter Piper picked a peck of Pickled Peppers.

2. Assonance- repetition of vowel sounds in stress positions.

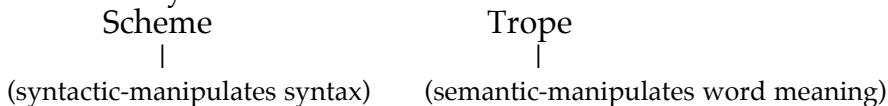
3. Consonance- consonant sounds repeated in loose or random form.  
(Less regular than alliteration.) See D.H. Lawrence, "Snakes."
4. Onomatopoeia- word sounds like the meaning.
5. etc.

These can be divided into schemes and tropes.

Scheme = some deviation from the ordinary arrangement of words.

Trope = some deviation from the normal signification of a word.

another way to understand this is:



so, which ones are which? Go back down the list, have them guess.

#### IV. Narrative Prose

##### A. Plot

1. These can best be understood in terms of time:
  - a. Actual time: The time it takes to do something.
  - b. Story time: The time it takes to read it.
2. Scene, Summary & Description help one establish plot.
3. Scene = Dialogue in a story where story time is equal to actual time.  
Helps establish characters and relationships among characters.
4. Summary = Story time is less than actual time. "Ten years later" It may be used at the beginning of the story to sketch in important events leading up to the story, at the end to sketch the aftermath, from time to time within the narration to speed the action. It is not done in dialogue and can be done by a narrator or a character. The time element distinguishes between summarization, per se, and summary in literature.
5. Description = Story time greater than actual time. Eg., it takes longer to read the physical description than to actually glance at the person. Amplifies characterization, or tensiveness, establishes nuances of the plot.

6. For each of the above, what's the link to interpretation?

B. Characters (Levels of Characterization) The interpreter must know each character on as many levels as possible.

1. Biological--gender
2. Physical--appearance, presence
3. Social--maturity
4. Dispositional--what sort of temperament?
5. Motivational--what are his or her biases, preferences, etc.
6. Deliberative--thoughts of the character.

The interpreter must avoid excessive vocal and physical characterization because they can detract from the material and result in caricature rather than

characterization. But sometimes that's what the author wants. This really gets at some of the tactical differences between acting and interpretation.

6

7. Angles of address--differentiate between characters. Bacon speaks of "stage illusion"--creating a sense of movement. When there's only one of you doing several characters, you need to use different strategies. See Bacon's list at the end of chapter five; "10 things to remember." Helpful checklist.

C. Point of View (Narrators) The major controlling factor in any narrative is point of view. The action has to come to us through words, but through whose words?

1. Def. the physical and psychological position and degree of involvement the narrator takes in the events he is relating.

- a. Two aspects of point of view:
  - i. the person (first or third)
  - ii. attitude (active, passive)

2. Types of point of view:  
(Brooks and Warren diagram)

	Internal analysis of events	External observation of events
Narrator as a character in story	1. Main character tells own story	2. Minor character tells main character's story
Narrator not a character in story	4. Omniscient author tells story, entering thoughts and feelings	3. Author tells story as external observer

D. Setting

1. Geographical location, era (or period), climate, locale (rural, urban)
2. Physical/Psychological aspects.

E. Dialogue

1. Direct--set off by quotation marks.
2. Indirect--paraphrase.
3. Dialogue is there for a purpose. Too many people read it passively and with little imagination. Much is revealed in dialogue; look for it.

F. Thought (Meaning, Theme)

V. Drama

A. Plot

1. Scenes
2. Acts

B. Characters

1. Round--Complex
2. Flat--Simple; one-dimensional

### C. Distinguishing Acting from Interpretation.

#### 1. Characterization.

a. Acting is based entirely on internal action. According to “the method” you’ve got to experience everything as your character.

b. O.I. is external. You attempt to capture the action and relationships between a number of characters.

#### 2. Audience participation.

a. In acting everything is spelled out through make-up, scenery, costume. Passive involvement.

b. O.I. actively engages the audience’s imagination. The interpreter must appeal to the imagination and senses so the scene is vivid. Not easy to do.

The maxim “Great Art conceals Art” is an important guideline for successfully interpreting drama. Why? The moment the audience sees that you’re using technique to achieve effects, the effects are lost. The moment your listeners begin to focus on you, the scene vanishes from their mind; your presence predominates rather than the life of the drama.

I like reader’s theatre because it requires more active imagination on the part of the audience to create a literary event. Analogous to the difference between reading a book and watching the movie. Only somewhere in between.

Lee and Gura, Chpt. 8 is a good handbook for interpreting drama. Use it that way.

Cover performance and paper requirements.