

CROSS-LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE TOPIC OF RELIGION AND TRADITIONAL MORAL VALUES IN SHAKESPEARE'S *HAMLET* AND SUMAROKOV'S *GAMLET*: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY

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This paper offers original insights into the structural and lexical analysis of the two plays –Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1685) and Sumarokov's *Gamlet* (1787)– in a specific linguistic domain. The main aim is to reveal the dimensions of lexical variation linked to the cross-linguistic representation of the topic of religion and traditional moral values. A particular focus is on the most frequently occurring content words related to the aforementioned topic. The investigation is based on corpus-based techniques and systemic qualitative examination of the empirical data. In general, the key findings testify to considerable divergences between the structures of the plays per distinct acts and both texts' essential contents with regard to their conceptual framework of religion and traditional moral values.

Keywords: corpus-based, cross-linguistic, religion, moral values, *Hamlet*

1. Introduction

The present research addresses a fundamental question concerning the nature of linguistic and literary originality and creativity and how corpus data and a variety of different computational techniques can be used in assessing specific authors' texts in this regard. It should not only benefit research on lexical variation but also be of interest more generally to scholars of translation and comparative literature, deepening our understanding of translation and literary processes.

This article provides a wealth of useful empirical data and in-depth quantitative and qualitative analyses and comparison of the internal structural and thematic organisation of the two contrastive plays, that is, the *Fourth Folio Edition of The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark* (1685) by Shakespeare and the English translation of *Gamlet* (1787) by Sumarokov, translated from Russian by Richard Fortune in 1970. The analysed texts are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Texts used in the cross-linguistic analysis

Genre	Author	Title	Abbreviation
Drama	Shakespeare	<i>The Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark</i> (1685), the <i>Fourth Folio Edition</i>	SH
	Sumarokov	<i>Gamlet</i> (1787), in Russian (for reference)	SG-R
		<i>Hamlet</i> (1970), translated into English by Richard Fortune	SG

For ease of reference, the *Fourth Folio Edition* of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1685) is referred to as *Hamlet* or SH. The Russian text is referred to as SG-R, whereas the English translation of the Russian text is referred to as *Gamlet* or SG. However, one should bear in mind that in this research SG-R and SG are used indistinctively, although the general parameters of lexical variation are analysed between SH and SG and not between SH and SG-R.

In fact, the focus is on the formal aspects of the plays that could be easily located, extracted, computerized and quantified. The research question asks whether, and to what extent, the distribution patterns of the most frequently occurring content words related to the topic of religion and traditional moral values are similar and/or different in *Hamlet* versus *Gamlet*. The comparison is carried out per act: intra-play and inter-plays. The main aim is to reveal the dimensions of lexical variation associated with the cross-linguistic representation of the topic of religion and traditional moral values.

This paper is organised in four sections. Section 1 provides some general information about the texts used for the analysis, the area of research and the research question posed. Section 2 deals with the chosen variables, the quantitative and analytical tools which are applied to the analysis. Section 3 specifies and discusses the examined data and the results obtained. Finally, section 4 summarises the key findings and draws the conclusions based on the results obtained and the aims fulfilled.

2. Patterns of the content words associated with religion and traditional moral values and procedure of the quantitative analysis

The content word variables are used to identify probable (dis)similarities in the content of the two plays under investigation, that is, the topic of religion and traditional moral values. In order to produce a reliable analysis, some linguistic features such as lexical classes are selected (Quirk and Greenbaum 1988-1989). Within lexical classes, only open-class items such as verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs are identified. Open-class items are referred to as content words. This kind of analysis is produced through the selection of the most frequently occurring content words and their classification into the semantic area of religion and traditional moral values per act: intra-play and inter-plays.

The groups of co-occurring linguistic features are revealed by applying a set of computational and analytical tools for cross-linguistic analysis of empirical data. To this end, the content word procedure, which is in a way similar to the key word procedure, is made use of (Scott 1997). Furthermore, WinCLAWS and the Wordlist programmes are applied to the analysis. The importance of the content word is calculated with the help of the chi-square test. To clarify the points of divergence and provide more precise cross-linguistic comparison of the extracted data, these data are normalised by means of data standardisation: z-score (Cantos Gómez 2010).

3. Analysis of the distribution patterns of the content words associated with religion and traditional moral values

The steps of this investigation are presented in sub-sections 3.1-3.6. With respect to Tables 2, 3 and 5, it should be noted that these are extracts of the larger tables that are available online (Keshabyan Ivanova 2010). Moreover, the numbers in the last line show the total data corresponding to the latter tables.

3.1. Exploring the topic of religion and traditional moral values per act I inter-plays

The data in Table 2 display that the patterns of the content words referring to religion and traditional moral values are distributed distinctly in SH versus SG. As a result, the total quantitative difference between the frequencies of occurrence of the content words that coincide inter-plays equals minus thirty-four, which implies that these content words occur more times in SG than in SH. At the same time, the content words that are employed only in SG intensify the qualitative dissimilarity per Act I.

In fact, this kind of asymmetry, resultant in negative figures, and the extensive quantitative, which equals 122 times against twenty-six times in SH, and wide-ranging qualitative use of the content words linked to religion and traditional moral values in SG possibly highlight that in Act I:

- Religion, with its traditional moral angle, is of crucial interest to Sumarokov who deals with a range of sub-topics such as evil and salvation of the sinners' souls through great deeds and suffering, whereas this topic is of little significance to Shakespeare.

Word	SH	SG	(SH-SG)	(SH-SG)
	Frequency of occurrence per act	Frequency of occurrence per act	Differences between all content words	Differences between the content words that coincide
God	5	18	-13	-13
Sin/Sins	1	10	-9	-9
Evil	-	6	-6	-
Suffer	-	6	-6	-
Hope	-	5	-5	-
Hell	3	9	-6	-6
Deeds	1	4	-3	-3
Mind	3	2	1	1
Good	4	-	4	-
Forgive	-	2	-2	-
Forgiveness	-	2	-2	-
Sinners	-	2	-2	-
Soul	8	9	-1	-1
Totals	26	122	-96	-34

Table 2 (extract): Frequency of occurrence of the content words per act I

3.2. Exploring the topic of religion and traditional moral values per act II inter-plays

The data in Table 3 show that the distribution patterns of the content words related to religion and traditional moral values are not parallel in SH versus SG. As a result, the total quantitative difference equals minus thirty-six, which means that these content words are employed more often in SG than in SH. At the same time, the rest of the content words that appear mostly in SG raise the qualitative distinction per Act II.

Word	SH	SG	(SH-SG)	(SH-SG)
	Frequency of occurrence per act	Frequency of occurrence per act	Differences between all content words	Differences between the content words that coincide
Deeds	-	6	-6	-
Evil	-	6	-6	-
Spirit	1	7	-6	-6
God	10	16	-6	-6
Guilt	-	5	-5	-
Sin/Sins	-	9	-9	-
Soul	4	8	-4	-4
Change	-	3	-3	-
Heart(s)	2	15	-13	-13
Thought(s)	1	8	-7	-7
Totals	22	123	-101	-36

Table 3 (extract): Frequency of occurrence of the content words per act II

Without a doubt, this kind of asymmetry, resultant in negative figures, and the extensive quantitative, which equals 123 times against twenty-two times in SH, and diverse qualitative use of the content words connected to religion and traditional moral values in SG probably provide evidence of the fact that in Act II this topic is of great importance for Sumarokov who is drawn to a range of sub-topics, namely the unholy doings and the change of the sinners' nature that may receive forgiveness from God. As opposed to Sumarokov, Shakespeare is interested in this topic only to some extent.

3.3. Exploring the topic of religion and traditional moral values per act III inter-plays

The data in Table 4 display that the patterns of the content words associated with religion and traditional moral values are distributed on a more or less the same level in SH versus SG. As a result, the total quantitative difference equals minus eight. However, the rest of the content words that are mentioned primarily in SG increase the qualitative dissimilarity per Act III.

Indeed, this kind of asymmetry, resultant in negative figures, and a slightly more extensive quantitative, which equals thirty-eight times against seven times in SH, and the vast qualitative use of the content words linked to religion and traditional moral values in SG seem to emphasise that in Act III religion, with its focus on moral values, is dealt with by both Shakespeare and Sumarokov, although with preference to the latter author, who pays greater attention to a variety of sub-topics such as evil, fate, honour and the transformation of the sinners's souls thanks to God's blessedness and good.

Table 4: Frequency of occurrence of the content words per act III

Word	SH	SG	(SH-SG)	(SH-SG)
	Frequency of occurrence per act	Frequency of occurrence per act	Differences between all content words	Differences between the content words that coincide
Evil	-	5	-5	-
Fate	-	3	-3	-
Lost	-	3	-3	-
Hope	4	7	-3	-3
Peace	1	4	-3	-3
Honour	-	7	-7	-
Fear	1	-	1	-
Good	1	3	-2	-2
Blessed	-	2	-2	-
Filled	-	2	-2	-
Hid	-	2	-2	-
Truth	-	1	-1	-
Totals	7	38	-31	-8

3.4. Exploring the topic of religion and traditional moral values per act IV inter-plays

The data in Table 5 show that the patterns of the content words associated with religion and traditional moral values are distributed more or less alike in SH versus SG. As a result, the total quantitative difference between the frequencies of occurrence of the content words that are present inter-plays equals minus three. However, the rest of the content words that are employed only in SG intensify the quantitative and qualitative divergences per Act IV.

Word	SH	SG	(SH-SG)	(SH-SG)
	Frequency of occurrence per act	Frequency of occurrence per act	Differences between all content words	Differences between the content words that coincide
Honour	-	6	-6	-
Evil	-	5	-5	-
Bitter	-	4	-4	-
Heaven	3	6	-3	-3
Good	6	-	6	-
Blessed	-	2	-2	-
Change	-	2	-2	-
Dishonour	-	2	-2	-
Spirit	-	2	-2	-
Vanity	-	2	-2	-
Wicked	-	2	-2	-
Totals	9	47	-38	-3

Table 5 (extract): Frequency of occurrence of the content words per act IV

In fact, this kind of asymmetry, resultant in negative figures, and the extensive quantitative, which equals forty-seven times against nine times in SH, and qualitative use of the content words connected to religion and traditional moral values in SG appear to point to the fact that in Act IV this topic is of particular appeal to Sumarokov who is drawn to the sub-topics of evil, honour and the transformation of the human's soul through God's blessedness as opposed to Shakespeare who does not show much interest in it.

3.5. *Exploring the topic of religion and traditional moral values per act V inter-plays*

The data in Table 6 display that the patterns of the content words linked to religion and traditional moral values are rather similarly distributed in SH versus SG. As a result, the total quantitative difference equals minus one. The rest of the content words appear only intra-play. However, they provide wide-ranging distinctions in qualitative terms between SH and SG.

In effect, a slight quantitative dissimilarity in the usage of the content words related to religion and traditional moral values, which equals eighteen times in SH against twenty-one times in SG, and the diverse qualitative use of these content words occurring in SG seemingly convey the fact that in Act V:

1. In quantitative terms, religion, with its moral focus, is of little interest to both Shakespeare and Sumarokov who deal with this topic more or less equally.
2. In qualitative terms, Shakespeare is especially keen on the sub-topics of honour whilst Sumarokov is concerned with the sub-topics of fate and evil.

Word	SH	SG	(SH-SG)	(SH-SG)
	Frequency of occurrence per act	Frequency of occurrence per act	Differences between all content words	Differences between the content words that coincide
Spirit	2	7	-5	-5
Fate	-	3	-3	-
Malice	-	3	-3	-
Villain	-	3	-3	-
Faith	7	-	7	-
Honour	3	1	2	2
Heart	3	1	2	2
Good	3	-	3	-
Justice	-	1	-1	-
Strength	-	1	-1	-
Throne	-	1	-1	-
Totals	18	21	-3	-1

Table 6: Frequency of occurrence of the content words per act V

3.6. *Summary of the normalised data per acts I-V inter-plays*

To sum up, the analysis of the normalised data contained in Table 7 and Figure 1

reveal:

1. Significant quantitative dissimilarities with regard to the cross-linguistic representation of the topic of religion and traditional moral values per Acts I, II and IV: inter-plays.
2. Considerable quantitative commonalities in Shakespeare and Sumarokov’s interest in the same topic per Acts III and V: inter-plays.

Act	Topic	SH	SG
I	Religion and Traditional Moral Values	-0.12	2.42
II	Religion and Traditional Moral Values	0.14	2.89
III	Religion and Traditional Moral Values	-0.66	0.49
IV	Religion and Traditional Moral Values	-0.46	1.70
V	Religion and Traditional Moral Values	0.42	0.23

Table 7: Summary of the normalised data per acts I-V

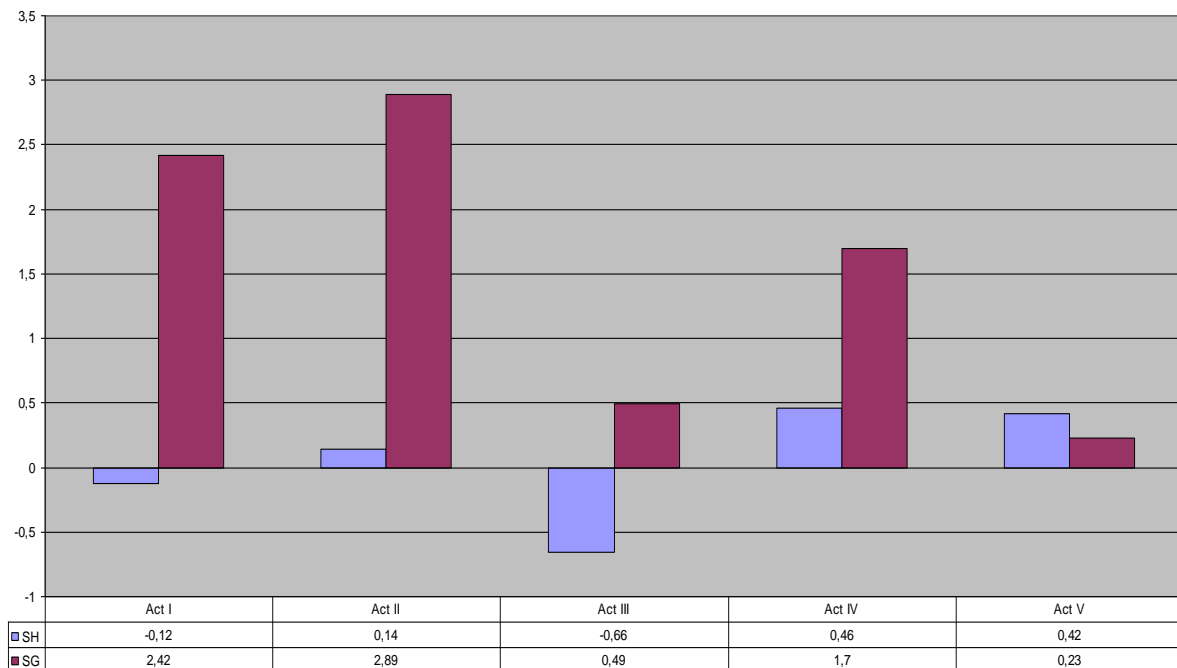


Figure 1: Summary of the cross-linguistic representation of the topic of religion and traditional moral values in accordance with the normalised data

4. Conclusion

Comparing the resultant data between SH and SG, substantial quantitative deviations and a wide-ranging qualitative variation are identified with respect to one of the central topics –religion and traditional moral values.

To conclude, the major findings on the cross-linguistic representation of this topic shed light on extensive differences between Shakespeare and Sumarokov’s conceptual

perceptions of religion and traditional moral values. In other words, these data highlight that these conceptual frameworks have led Sumarokov to pay greater attention to specific content words and, consequently, to alter the internal organisational and thematic scheme of Shakespeare's original play *Hamlet*.

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