2. LEXICAL, SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC CHANGE

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2. LEXICAL, SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC CHANGE

2.1. Lexical change: expansion and loss.

> If the vocabulary of a language reflects the perception of the world by a speech community, it will have to be constantly adapted to its changing needs. Therefore, the vocabulary is as much a reflection of deep-seated cultural, intellectual and emotional interests, perhaps even of the whole *Weltbild* of a speech community, as are the texts that have been produced by its members. The systematic study of the vocabulary of a language thus is an important contribution to the understanding of the culture and civilisation of a speech community (...) And the history of the vocabulary of a speech community is a reflection of its general history, since both innovations and losses document changes in the social needs of this community arising from the pressure to adapt to changing external circumstances. (Kastovsky 2006: 201-202)

2.1.1. Expansion

Coinages:

- True coinages: arbitrary expressions that have not been formed from pre-existing elements. These are rare.

Kodak	brand name created by John Eastman
quark	James Joyce in Finnegan's Wake, then adopted by physicists for a type of particle of matter.

- Motivated coinages: onomatopoeic and echoic words, e.g. *hiss*, *buzz*, *vroom*...

Borrowing: External source of vocabulary. Languages incorporate lexical material from other languages. Borrowing as the generic term. Borrowings can be classified into:

- loanwords (form and meaning are borrowed). E.g. English, Spanish *sushi* < Japanese *sushi*.
- loantranslations / loanrenditions (meanings are borrowed and are rendered in the recipient language more or less literally). E.g. English *superman* < German *Übermensch*; Spanish *baloncesto* < English *basketball*; German *Liebe machen* < English *make love*.
- semantic loans or semantic shifts (a native word acquires a new meaning on the model of a foreign word). OE *synn* 'crime' > 'sin', i.e. 'crime against God' on the model of Latin *peccatum*.
- Sometimes a foreign word is borrowed (only the form), and it is used with a new meaning in the recipient language. E.g. German *Handy* 'mobile phone' < English handy 'useful'; German *Smoking* 'dinner jacket', Spanish *esmoquin* 'tuxedo' < English *smoking* 'habit of smoking'.

Word formation: New words are created by combining existing units into new units. The processes of word formation tend to be **productive** (i.e. we can produce new words from them) and **transparent** (i.e. if we are familiar with the meaning of the constituent parts, we can guess the meaning of the composite form).

- **Compounding**:

The largest and most important source of new words in English after borrowing. Two (or more than two) free-standing forms combine under the same stress contour. E.g. *fur baby*, *songwriter*, *dog-collar*. Semantically they can be **determinative**, when the second element of the compound is the semantic head; **copulative**, when both members are heads (*tragicomic*); **exocentric**, when the semantic head is left unexpressed (*skinhead*, not a type of head!). Different combinations can be identified, e.g. N+N (*songwriter*), Adj + N (*mobile phone*), N + Adj (*sky-blue*)...etc.

Over time, phonological, lexical and semantic changes may affect the compound, and as a result it may lose transparency and eventually become opaque, i.e. it becomes **lexicalized** (**amalgamated** compounds). E.g. *woman*, *mermaid*, *cupboard*.

Compounds were used as a stylistic device in Old English (and Germanic) poetry: metaphorical compounds (*kenningar*), such as *ban-hus* 'bone'-'house' > 'skeleton'. Cf. PDE *couch potato* 'a person who spends a lot of time sitting and watching television' (OALD s.v. *couch potato*).

- **Derivation**:

Derivation involves the combination of one form which may occur alone (the base) and a derivational element (affix). Affixes are classified into prefixes (*re-* in *rewrite*) and suffixes (*-ish* in *childish*) depending on their position with respect to the base.

Derivational affixes create new words, e.g. *bake* vs. *baker* (as opposed to inflectional affixes, which create new wordforms. E.g. *word*, *word-s*).

Affixes may change the word-class of the base or not: Class-changing → *-er bake* (v.) vs. *baker* (n.); class-maintaining → *write* (v.) vs. *rewrite* (v.).

Some affixes are no longer productive: *-th* → *long* (adj.) vs. *length* (n.). Sometimes derivational patterns are no longer transparent: *-th* → *merry* (adj.) vs. *mirth* (n.).

Some affixes have their origin in independent words: *-ly* → *friend-ly*, *king-ly*, comes from OE *lic* 'appearance, body': OE *freondlic* was a compound meaning 'with the appearance of a friend' > 'friendly'.

- **Backformation**:

Backformation entails the creation of a new simple form from a word which is analysed as a composite form. The analysis is not necessarily correct. It is like the opposite of derivation. E.g. *edit* (1791) < *editor* (< Latin, 1649); *baby-sit* (1946) < *baby-sitter* (1937).

- **Conversion (also zero derivation):**

This strategy changes the part of speech of the base without adding anything. It is common in languages with little or no inflectional affixes (so, not common in Old English!).

E.g. *run* (v.) > *run* (n.); *better* (a.) > *better* (v.); *down* (adv.) > *down* (a.), *down* (n.), *down* (v.)

> all form classes seem to be able to undergo conversion, and conversion seems to be able to produce words of almost any form class, particularly open form classes (noun, verb, adjective, adverb) [...] The commonness of conversion can possibly be seen as breaking down the distinction between form classes in English and leading to a system where there are closed set such as pronouns and single open set of lexical items that can be used as required. (Bauer 1983: 226-227)

- **Clipping (also abbreviation, shortening)**

Clipping involves the truncation, or abbreviation of an existing word. E.g. *pub* < *pub(lic house)*; *bus* < *(omni)bus*; *mike* < *mic(rophone)*; *fab* < *fab(ulous)*; *coz* < *cous(in)* (1559); *(in)flu(enza)*; (*re)frige(rator)*

Sometimes clipped forms can combine with affixes: *granny* < *gran* < *grandmother*.

- **Blending (portmanteau words)**

Blending involves the fusion of words in a single lexeme. A combination of compounding and clipping. Blending may affect the integrity of both elements, or just of one of them. E.g. *motel* (*motor* + *hotel*); *mansplaining* (*man* + *explaining*); *blog* (*web* + *log*).

- **Acronym and initialism**

Acronyms and initialisms are another kind of abbreviated expressions. New words are formed from the initials of other words and are pronounced as a word (e.g. *radar* < *ra(dio) d(etecting) a(nd) r(anging)*), or as letters (*TV* < *t(ele)v(ision)*).

Once the acronym/initialism has been around for a while, it may happen that the original source words are forgotten.

Especially common from the 20th century onwards.

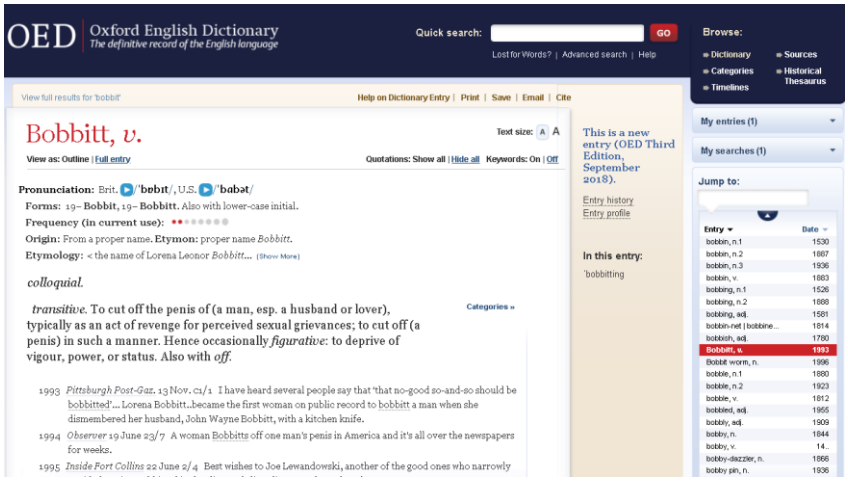
- **Commonization**

A proper noun or a brand name is used as a common noun. E.g. *sandwich* < Earl of Sandwich.

Commonization may combine with other strategies → *google* (v.) commonization and conversion.

Bobbit

> If 'bobbit' turns up in several different stories over a period of time, this suggests it should go in the dictionary. (Peter Gilliver, associate editor of the OED, *The Age*, 7 February 1994, p. 11; quoted in Burridge & Bergs 2017: 38)



- **Reanalysis** entails the interpretation of a word as having a structure that is not historically valid. Redefining of boundaries

hamburger from *hamburg.er* > *ham.burger* and hence *cheeseburger*, *fishburger*.
alcohol.ic 'adict to alcohol' → *-(a/o)holic* 'addict', as in *workaholic*, *chocoholic*.

2.1.2. Loss

Languages widen their vocabulary but they also lose words.

Obsolete, obsolescent, archaic...

OED	
† *eme*, *n.*	Not found in OALD
'uncle' Obsolete exc. dialect.	

OED	Not found in OALD
tabret, n.	
'A small tabor; a timbrel'. *Historical* or *arch.*	

- **Obsolescence** "if objects, ideas and institutions no longer form a part of the speakers' mental world then they will be forgotten" (Burridge & Bergs 2017: 43). Change in the world.

- **Weakening** > loss This is particularly frequent in certain areas of vocabulary (e.g. taboo, terms of abuse, intensification). E.g. *milksop* 'a boy or man who is not brave or strong' is termed old-fashioned in OALD (s.v. *milksop* n.).
- **Phonetic reduction** Short words are sometimes replaced by longer forms. E.g. OE *ea* 'river'; OE *ieg* 'island' (still found in placenames, e.g. *Eaton*, *Sheppey island*).
- **Homonymy** Homonyms are words that have the same pronunciation (and sometimes the same spelling) but different meanings and origin. Problematic, especially if the two homonyms (i) share the same part of speech (but cf. ME *þei* 'though' and *þei* 'they') ; and (ii) belong to the same semantic field and are likely to occur in similar contexts. *Let* < OE *lættan* 'permit'; OE *lettan* 'stop, hinder' (cf. *without let and hindrance*). Homonymy connected with taboo works really quickly: *coney* 'rabbit' because of connection with the c-word; *fuk* 'sail' and *feck* 'purpose' disappeared due to the resemblance with the f-word.
- **Synonymy** Synonyms are words with exactly or nearly the same meaning. Languages tend to avoid exact synonyms. If synonymy appears, especially after borrowing, one of the synonyms may become obsolete. E.g. OE *eagþyrel* 'window' vs. ON *vindauga* 'window'. Another possibility is for one (or both) of the words in the synonymic pair to develop a different meaning. E.g. *shirt / skirt*; *deer /animal*.
- Some words disappear for no obvious reason. The Early Modern English period was a period of lexical experimentation, with many additions and subsequent losses:

> For the better part of the [EModE] period, several formally related words could be coined without any clear difference in meaning. This freedom of choice led to a large number of doublets such as *frequency* (1553) and *frequentness* (1664), *immaturity* (1540) and *immatureness* (1665), *immediacy* (1605) and *immediateness* (1633). In the course of time one variant usually became established at the expense of the other, or variant forms acquired different senses, as in the case of *light*, *lighten* and *enlighten*. (Nevalainen 1999: 334).

> Neuhaus (1971) [...] found that between 1460 and 1620 more new words were introduced than obsolete ones lost. The period 1640–80, however, showed a higher than average disappearance rate for words introduced after 1530. In other words, the intensive period of neologising is followed by a corresponding increase in obsolete words. Most of these obsolete words disappear during their first decade, and many are cited only once. (Nevalainen 1999: 348).

2.2. Semantic change: causes and consequences.

> [C]hange in word meaning is generally much less amenable to systematic analysis than change in word form. Semantic changes are notoriously difficult to classify or systematize, and we have no tool comparable to the historical grammar to help us judge what is or is not likely or plausible. Further, although some semantic changes occur in clusters, with a change in one word triggering a change in another, we do not find anything comparable to a regular sound change, affecting all comparable environments within a single historical period. In this respect semantic changes are more similar to sporadic sound changes, but with the major difference that they are much more varied, and show the influence of a much wider set of motivating factors. Additionally, semantic change is much more closely connected with change in the external, non-linguistic world, especially with developments in the spheres of culture and technology. (Durkin 2009: 222-223)

2.2.1. Factors triggering semantic change

2.2.1.1. External factors

- **Change in the world** Cultural and social changes can be the trigger of semantic change. The 'old' form is kept, with a 'new' meaning. An existing word acquires a new meaning because of the introduction of inventions (e.g. *computer mouse*; *torpedo*).

Pen:
A hand-held instrument for writing or drawing with ink or a similar fluid: (originally) such an instrument made from a feather with its quill sharpened and split to form a nib which is dipped in ink; (subsequently) a small metal point formed like the lower end of a quill pen and fitted into a pen-holder, a pen-nib; (also) the complete contrivance of pen-holder and nib, a dip pen; (in later use) such an instrument containing its own supply of ink, which is delivered to the page by means of a nib or (more recently) a small ball or nylon tip. Also: an instrument for machine-controlled writing or drawing with ink. (OED s.v. *pen* n.3 I.1.a)

Picture:
A painting, drawing, photograph, or other visual representation on a surface; *esp.* such a representation as a work of art. (OED s.v. *picture* n. I.1.a)

Gay: 'merry' > 'woman living by prostitution' > 'homosexual' (derogatory) > 'homosexual' (neutral).

- **Language of special groups** (esp. former scientific vocabulary) may enter the general vocabulary. E.g. *neurotic* 'a person suffering from a neurosis' > 'a confused person'.

- **Exaggeration** or hyperbole, *my feet are killing me! terribly good, I'm starving, adore* 'worship' > 'like'. Also exaggerations via understatement: *a couple of drinks*, actually more than two > 'a few'.

- **Taboo**. Creation of euphemisms (and disphemisms) to refer to taboo areas such as death, illness, sex, excretion, etc. E.g. OE *steorfan* 'die', originally 'to become stiff'; *he is pushing up daisies*, *he kicked the bucket*, *he passed away*. *Intercourse* 'social communication' > 'sexual connection'. *To go to the bathroom.* (On different ways to form euphemisms, such as borrowing, using diminutives, using a wider term, etc. see Brinton & Arnovik 2006: 80-81).

- **Misunderstanding.** *bead* 'prayer' > 'bead' *to tell/count one's beads*

2.2.1.2. Internal factors

> Like the components of other aspects of language, such as phonology and syntax, meanings are part of a system, and need to function efficiently; confusion, redundancies or clashes within the system are inefficient, and can lead to shifts in one or more meanings. (Kay & Allan 2015: 85)

- **Association with words of similar sound (contamination)** *flagrant* 'the way flowers smell' (cf. *fragrant*); *moulder* 'crumble to dust', but also 'to rot' under semantic association with the etymologically unrelated word *mould*; *mítico* for *típico*...

- **Phonaesthemes,** ""meaningful" sound sequences that occur either at the beginning of words (*tw-*, *gl-*, *fl-*) or in their rhymes (*-ash*, *-ump*, *-itter*)" (Burridge & Bergs 2017: 61) sometimes encourage similar sounding words to change their meaning. *Chronic* 'long-lasting' > 'very bad' /kr-/ is associated with something bad: *cripple*, *crooked*, *cretin*, *criminal*, *cruel*...BrE informal: *The film was just chronic.*

- **Avoidance of ambiguity.** If a word has two incompatible meanings (e.g. as a result of **homonymy** or **polysemy**) so that ambiguity may arise, one of the meanings may die out. *Let* < OE *lættan* 'permit'; OE *lettan* 'stop, hinder' (cf. *without let and hindrance*) (what dies out, the word or the meaning?)
  Older meanings of a polysemous word tend to become obsolete if the new meanings are negative: E.g. *crafty* 'strong, skilful' > 'clever at getting what you want, especially by indirect or dishonest methods'. **Synonymy:** exact synonyms tend to be avoided. Synonymy may arise after borrowing. E.g. *shirt* / *skirt*; *ox* / *beef*. In addition to the conceptual meaning, the stylistic or the affective meaning may change: E.g. *help* /*aid* (formal); *smell* (neutral) / *odour* (negative).

- **Chain reactions.** Sometimes the semantic change in a word causes changes in words which belong to the same semantic field. "If one area of the lexicon becomes overcrowded, or changes in some other way, regulation of the system (systemic regulation) can take place and meanings shift in their location or in the amount of space they occupy" (Kay & Allan 2015: 86).

  meat 'all solid food' > *meat* 'flesh of animals'
  flesh 'animal tissue' > *flesh* 'tissue of humans'
  foda 'animal fodder' > *food* 'all forms of solid nourishment' (and so replaced *meat*)
  (Burridge & Bergs 2017: 56)

Colour terms (cf. Biggam 2015).

2.2.2. Types of semantic change

- **Generalization (broadening, widening)** → from a narrower to a broader class of thing. E.g. *grog* 'diluted rum' > 'any spirits with water'; *bird* 'nestling' > 'bird'.

- **Specialization (narrowing, restriction)** → opposite change; from a broader to a narrower class. E.g. *hound* 'any kind of dog' > 'dog used for hunting; *liquor* 'liquid' > 'beverage of any kind' > 'strong alcoholic drink'.

- (**A)melioration (elevation)** → from a neutral or negative connotation to a positive sense; or from negative to neutral. E.g. *terrific* 'causing terror' > 'excellent'; *queen* (OE *cwene*) 'woman' > 'queen'.

- **Pejoration (deterioration, degeneration)** → from positive or neutral to negative. E.g. *villain* 'a rustic' > 'a person who is morally bad'; *madam* 'lady' > 'woman in charge of a brothel'; OE *cwene* 'woman' > *quean* 'prostitute'.

- **Semantic shift** → addition of a new meaning. E.g. *mouse* 'rodent' > 'computer device' (resemblance); *noise* 'sea-sickness' > 'intrusive sound' (???)

Here you have to conjure up the unfortunate sailors in a tiny wooden vessel caught in the middle of the storm in the times of Ancient Greece. Imagine the din -the ship creaking, the wind howling, the waves battering the sides, and, of course, the groans and moans of those poor wretches on board. The racket and commotion would have been considerable. Now the transition from 'sea-sickness' to 'din, confusion' and finally to 'intrusive sound' becomes quite plausible." (Burridge & Bergs 2017: 55).

- **Bleaching** (or weakening of meaning) → loss of semantic content. E.g. OE *cunnan* 'know how to' > PDE *can* 'be able to'; *well* 'in a good way' > discourse marker indicating a new turn in a conversation; *do* 'put' > 'referring to a general action' *what are you doing?* > no meaning at all (auxiliary *do*).

2.2.3. Mechanisms of semantic change

Languages resort to different mechanisms in order to extend the meaning potential of words:

- **Metaphor**. A metaphor is an implicit comparison, a transfer of a literal meaning to a figurative meaning. The two entities are similar in a certain way, e.g. concrete > abstract.

head ⇒ head of a family, head of a department, head of a nail...
eye ⇒ eye of a needle, eye of a hurricane
mouse ⇒ 'timid person' (resemblance of behaviour); 'computer device' (physical resemblance).
grasp 'take hold of something' (physical) > 'understand completely' (cognitive). *Lo pillas?*

- **Metonymy** "shows the extended use of a term to denote something which is conceptually contiguous with the thing which it normally denotes" (Durkin 2009: 24). In metonymic changes a word referring to an attribute or a part is used to express the

whole (*pars pro toto*). Or the other way round (*totum pro parte*). E.g. *orange* 'a fruit' > 'colour of this fruit'; *Spain* (i.e. the football national team) *won the World Cup in 2010*; *cheek* 'jaw' > 'cheek'.

- **Implicature** "reading between the lines" (Burridge & Bergs 2017: 68): the implicit meaning of an utterance may occur with sufficient frequency so as to become conventionalized. E.g. *want* 'lack' > 'wish' (if you lack something you may desire it); *since* 'from the time that' > 'because', as in *Life became dull since Fred left*, temporal, but causal reading; Galician, *e logo*?

2.2.4. Regularity in semantic change

Semantic change can be very elusive, but recently, linguists studying semantic change from a cognitive point of view have attempted to find regularity in semantic change. Notably, Elizabeth C. Traugott (various publications and especially Traugott & Dasher 2002) has tried outlined some tendencies for semantic change, which allow us to predict change to a certain extent. Traugott (1989: 34-35) identified three tendencies which illustrate common paths of change. Tendency I normally feeds Tendency II, while Tendencies I and II either may feed Tendency III.

Tendency I:
Meanings based in the external described situation > meanings based in the internal (evaluative/perceptual/cognitive) described situation. Metaphorical changes.

e.g. *grasp* (see above); *feel* 'touch' > 'feel'

Tendency II:
Meanings based in the external or internal described situation > meanings based in the textual and metalinguistic situation.

This tendency involves the development of textual senses. E.g. *while* 'time' > temporal connective used to link two clauses.

Tendency III:
Meanings tend to become increasingly based in the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude towards the proposition.

E.g. deontic modals > epistemic modals
You must leave immediately vs. (someone knocks at the door) *That must be Peter*.

Cases of pejoration and amelioration

Examples of regularities: Spatial concepts are an important source of abstract terms.

- bodily parts used to express spatial relations, and thus they can be the source of prepositions (human body used as a point of reference). E.g. *behind* < *be* 'from' + *hindan* 'back'.
- spatial meaning > temporal meaning. E.g. *before* originally meant 'in front of', now only formal: *He knelt in before the throne*.
- spatial meaning > degree meaning. E.g. *super-rich*, *over-sensitive*.

2.3. Pragmatic change: change in usage patterns

Traditionally historical linguistics has not been concerned with pragmatics, the study of language use, of language as a means of communication being used by speakers in different situations, with various intentions and within specific contexts (see Jucker & Taavitsainen 2013: chapter 1). One of the major problems was the impossibility of accessing spoken data in the past. However, over the last 20 years more scholars have paid attention to pragmatic issues and have used different types of written data for pragmatics: fictional language, the language of the courtroom and the language of private correspondence are taken as proxys for the spoken language and have been the base for different pragmatic studies.

Historical linguistics is "the art of making the best use of bad data" (Labov 1994: 11)

Historical corpora:

Helsinki Corpus of English texts (HC): OE-1710. Multigenre.

A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers (ARCHER): 1600-1999. Multigenre.

Corpus of Early English Correspondence (CEEC): 1410-1680. Supplement, 18th century. Register specific

Corpus of English Dialogues (CED): 1560-1760. Both 'real' and 'constructed' dialogue.

Information about corpora can be found at Corpus Resource Database (CoRD) <http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/CoRD/index.html>

2.3.1. What does historical pragmatics study?

- The emergence of various pragmatic markers (e.g. *well, you know, I mean, oh*, etc.).
- The expression of different speech acts over time (e.g. greetings, requests, insults, compliments, promises, etc.).
- Politeness and impoliteness (e.g. use of pronouns and terms of address, facework, politeness markers such as *pray, please*).
- Particular conventions of the different text-types and the evolution of genres.

2.3.2. Greetings: the origin of *good-bye* (Jucker & Taavitsainen 2013: 96-99. Copies in the teaching platform). Exercise: write a summary (500-700 words) on the origin of *good-bye*. You can complete the discussion in Jucker and Taavitsainen with information from the OED.

2.3.3. Terms and pronouns of address.

Jucker & Taavitsainen (2013: chapter 5) provides a good introduction to the issue and summarizes some of the studies which have been devoted to this topic.

"Addressing someone is an efficient means of attracting attention and one of the most prominent interactive features of language use." (Jucker & Taavitsainen 2013: 73).

Two types of terms of address: (i) pronominal; (ii) nominal. The system of address has experienced important changes in the history of English.

Pronouns of address (2nd person pronouns)

Period	**Singular**	**Plural**
Old English	*Þu*	*ʒe*
Middle English	*thou* *ye*	*ye*
Early Modern English	*thou* *you*	*you*
Present-day English	*you*	*you* ---------- non-standard *you guys, y'all, youse...*

The very first uses of reverential or polite *ye* go back to the second half of the 13th century, and seem to have entered English through imitation of French. The use of the plural (*you/ye*) for the singular remains sporadic practice in the 14th century, but increases rapidly in the 15th and 16th centuries. In the course of the 17th century *you* spread at the expense of *thou*, and it is generally agreed that it had completely ousted the original singular pronoun by the mid 18th century, but for a number of very restricted contexts, such as religion (both in the Bible and in prayers), and in certain dialects (Northern dialects, e.g. Yorkshire, still preserve forms such as *tha'* -both nom. and oblique- for the singular).

Factors influencing the variation between *you* / *thou* (cf. Spanish *usted / tú*; Galician *vostede / ti*; French *vous / tu*; German *du / Sie*, etc.)

- 'power'

	non-reciprocal	**reciprocal**
'more power'	*you*	*you* ↔ *you*
	↓ ↑	
'less power'	*thou*	*thou* ↔ *thou*

R. Donn: "For although **ye** be a gent., and I a poore man, my honestye shalbe as good as yours."

Mr. Ratcliff: "What saith **thou**? liknes **thou thy** honestye to myn?"

(2nd half of 16c. *Depositions of Durham*)

Pronouns of address correlate with terms of address:

you ⇒ *Lady*; m*y Lord, Your Honour, captain, knight*... etc.

thou ⇒ *fellow, knave, cook, boy*...etc..

What was **your** dream my Lord, I pray **you** tel me. (1597. Shakespeare. *Richard III*, I.4.8)

What would'st **thou**, Fellow? And how camm'st **thou** hither. (1597. Shakespeare. *Richard III*, I.4.85)

intimacy	↔	**distance**
thou	↔	***you***

Cf. Shakespeare's sonnet 61

ROSALIND: O coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz, that **thou** didst know how many fathom deep I am in love! (1600. Shakespeare. *As You Like It* IV.i.198) (between two characters that normally exchange *you*)

Terms of endearment correlate with this solidarity use: e.g. *coz, love, heart*

- **Shifts** in personal pronouns can be used for pragmatic purposes: e.g. using *thou* with someone who is entitled to receive *you* is seen as an insult; *thou* may also indicate positive emotions (cf. above). Emotional *thou* correlates with terms of abuse. deliberate use of terms inappropriate to the status of an addressee may indicate condescension or even open insult.

ATTORNEY: All that he did was by **thy** Instigation, **thou** Viper; for I **thou thee**, **thou** Traitor.

....

ATTORNEY: Have I anger'd **you**?

(*The Trial of Sir Walter Raleigh* I, 209, C1)

- **Pronominal shifts can also indicate a change of topic or an aside in drama:**

HASTINGS: What, go **you** to the Tower?

BUCKINGHAM: I do, my lord, but long I cannot stay there. I shall return before **your** lordship there.

HASTINGS: Nay, like enough, for I stay dinner there.

BUCKINGHAM [*Aside*]: And supper too, although **thou** know'st it not.- Come, will **you** go?

(1597 *Richard III*.ii.118-123)

How is this expressed in Present-day English?

- Respectful, neutral distance ⇒ Title + Last Name *Mrs Smith*
- Politeness ⇒ *sir, madam*
- Intimacy, solidarity, lower status ⇒ first names (*Margaret*); terms of endearment (*darling, sweetheart, pet, nana*); nicknames (*Meg*); *mate, pal, dude...*

Note that certain terms, originally used only for the gentry, have extended down the social scale (*Mr, lady, gentleman, madam*) ⇒ cf. extension of *you.*

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