Free Indirect Discourse in Shakespeare*

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Abstract

This paper demonstrates a number of uses of free indirect discourse in Shakespeare's plays, thereby putting pressure on the standard view that free indirect discourse was an outlier form in pre-modern literature. It is argued that the use of free indirect discourse in Shakespeare exhibits the features associated with free indirect discourse elsewhere: a dual perspective integrating both the point of view of the narrator and the protagonist, as well as involving mimicry of the protagonist's speech or thought. Free indirect discourse is seen to be a tool for narrativizing speech in the plays.

1 Introduction

Free indirect discourse (also known as *free indirect style* and *narrated monologue*) is a mode of representing speech or thought that blends direct discourse (*oratio recta*) and indirect discourse (*oratio obliqua*). Consider these simple examples:

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(1) **Direct Discourse** (DD)
"Should I call him? Yes! I will call him tomorrow. Tomorrow, for sure,"
Valentina said/thought.

(2) **Indirect Discourse** (ID)
Valentina said/thought that she would call him the next day.

(3) **Free Indirect Discourse** (FID)
Should she call him? Yes! She would call him tomorrow. Tomorrow, for sure(, Valentina said/thought).

As is routinely observed, in FID tenses and person-features of pronouns are as in ID, while everything else – including questions, exclamations, indexicals, incompleteness, and repetitions – is as in DD.[1]

The FID report in (3) represents Valentina's utterance or thought by referring to Valentina with the 3rd person (*she*), and by using the past tense (*would*), as in the ID report in (2).[2] *Modulo* these alterations, the question *Should she call him?* is preserved as it occurs in DD in (1), as is the exclamation *Yes!*. Similarly, (3) uses the indexical *tomorrow* to refer to the day after Valentina's decision, as in DD, rather than to the day after (3) is uttered, as *tomorrow* would if it occurred in ID. And moreover, like the DD rendition of Valentina's original utterance or thought, the FID report likewise preserves the repetition with the amplifier *for sure*.

This intermediary status of FID – between DD and ID – is the source of the main effect of FID: representation of speech of thought from a *dual* point of view. In (3) we are given both Valentina's own point of view and that of the narrator. In turn, according to one widespread view, FID thereby allows narrators to *imitate* or *mimic* the protagonist, rather than simply replicating

[1]Cf. e.g. Banfield (1982, ch. 2), Fludernik (1993, ch. 2), (2023, 204), Sharvit (2008, 354), Schlenker (2004, 283–284), Currie (2010, 140–141), Eckardt (2015, 3–4), Maier (2015, 347–348), Abrusán (2020, sect. 3.1).

[2]I use italics to mention specific expressions or phrases, and I use quotation marks to cite texts.

their words or thoughts as DD does, or describing their contents from a purely 3rd person point of view as in ID (Gunn, 2004, Currie, 2010).

FID is standardly associated with modern literature, especially with the rise of the European novel in the 19th century. And while occurrences of FID in earlier literature have been documented (Vermeule, 2010, Fludernik, 2023), these are often regarded as "embryonic forms" (Bode, 2011 [2005], 158), and the overall place of pre-modern FID "marginal" (Fletcher & Benveniste, 2013, 8). Indeed, the dual perspective inherent in FID is often seen as particularly suited to novelistic literature with its focus on the inner lives of its characters (Pascal, 1977).

This paper aims to put some pressure on this orthodoxy by highlighting a number of uses of FID in Shakespeare's plays. While so far completely unrecognized, FID is used in Shakespeare's plays, typically to report speech. Consider, for instance, the following lines from *Othello*, where Othello is recounting how he wooed Desdemona:[3]

(4) She gave me for my pains a world of kisses.
She swore in faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange,
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful.
(*Othello* 1.3)

The underlined parts of (4) are unmistakable instances of FID. Indeed, (4) is not DD, as is obvious from the past tense of *'twas*. Rather, (4) uses the tense of ID, while preserving both the exclamation *in faith* and the repetitions with amplifiers as they would be in DD. These are the characteristics of (3), as illustrated by this (crude) modernization of (4):

(5) She swore, really, it was strange, it was more than strange, it was sad, it was incredibly sad.

We will consider more examples later. We will see that, as in this case, the dual perspective of FID is used in Shakespeare when characters want their

[3] All quotes are from Wells and Taylor (2005).

audience to, as it were, re-live with them the experience of hearing the speech that is being reported. This makes it straightforward to understand the use of FID in the plays as exhibiting the kind of mimicry that has been associated with modern FID. Correspondingly, I will argue that FID is used in Shakespeare to narrativize reported speech.

In Section 2 I briefly review some of the discussion of the history of FID in relation to the rise of the novel. Section 3 examines a number of examples of FID in Shakespeare's plays, and discusses them in relation to DD and ID. In Section 4 I discuss some ways of reacting to my arguments, and I comment on the significance of the dual perspective and mimicry involved in FID as used in Shakespeare.

2 Free Indirect Discourse and the Rise of the Novel

2.1 Free Indirect Discourse before the Novel

Scholars have long recognized that the rise of the modern novel is tied to its use of FID. Part of the revolutionary impact of the novel is its intimate way of allowing readers to see – some would say inhabit – the perspective or point of view of its protagonists, FID being the flagship vehicle for authors to achieve this presentation of their characters.

In this history of early FID – at least in English – Jane Austen usually, and rightly, takes center stage. In his influential study, Pascal (1977, 45) argued that "Jane Austen's novels supply the preconditions one might consider necessary for the unhampered emergence of free indirect speech." Along these lines, most agree that "in the early years of the nineteenth century, Jane Austen made a formal breakthrough." (Fletcher & Benveniste, 2013, 7)

At the same time, while it is not uncommon to hear outside academic discussions that Austen "invented" FID, scholars have shown that "In English, Free Indirect Discourse (FID) is used both for the representation of utterances and of consciousness from the Middle Ages onwards." (Fludernik, 2023, 204)

Yet, typically, this is accompanied by reservations concerning a "scarcity of FID" (Fludernik, 2023, 209), and to the effect that "FID enjoyed only a marginal place in English literature prior to Austen." (Fletcher & Benveniste, 2013, 8)

Indeed, to my knowledge, no discussion of FID in Shakespeare has so far been conducted. In particular, while Fludernik (2023) provides a thorough investigation of FID in English from 1200 to 1700, identifying instances of FID in medieval and early modern romances, and in the works of Chaucer, Philip Sidney, and many others, Shakespeare makes no appearance in this comprehensive survey.

Demonstrating, as I will do here, that FID is used in Shakespeare's plays is a way of casting new light on the history of FID, and in turn on the orthodox centrality of FID to modern literature – for some, even to the emergence of a modern, narrative kind of consciousness.

2.2 Austen as "The Prose Shakespeare"

Pollack-Pelzner (2013, 765) summarizes the "standard history" of FID as the view that "free indirect discourse emerges as a full-fledged narrative technique at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the novels of Austen." Acknowledging that the novels of Austen (and others) are a key source of the prevalence of FID in modern literature, Pollack-Pelzner nevertheless presents an interesting case for an "alternative history" of FID, one that is linked to Shakespeare.

Yet rather than demonstrating that Shakespeare's own plays include instances of FID, Pollack-Pelzner shows that FID was used in Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*, first published in 1807, around the time when Austen was writing her first novels. A work aimed at introducing young readers to Shakespeare, the Lambs' *Tales from Shakespeare* re-told (parts of) a number of the plays in readable and entertaining prose.

Pollack-Pelzner demonstrates how the Lambs "transform soliloquy into narration" (2013, 770) by using FID. He points to the following passage from their version of *Hamlet*:

> What so galled him, and took away all his cheerful spirits, was, that his mother had shown herself so forgetful to his father's memory; and such a father! who had been to her so loving and so gentle a husband! (cited in Pollack-Pelzner, 2013, 769, underlining added)

The underlined passages here are clear cases of FID. As Pollack-Pelzner shows using *Mansfield Park* as an example, the parallel with Austen is striking:

> Just as the Lambs turned Hamlet's stage performance into armchair prose ("and such a father! who had been to her so loving and so gentle a husband!"), Austen uses questions and exclamations ("Alas!"), fragments ("Edmund so inconsistent."), and intensifying adverbs and phrases that turn back on each other ("all his objections – objections so just and so public!") to situate us inside Fanny's upset and obsessive mind, although the voice of the passage remains ostensibly the narrator's—third person, past tense. (Pollack-Pelzner, 2013, 771)

Observing that "Austen was frequently dubbed a "prose Shakespeare" by nineteenth-century critics, who pointed to her Shakespearean skill in the dramatic presentation of character" (loc. cit.), Pollack-Pelzner shows that this epithet has a history that traces back to the Lambs.

As I go on to show in the next section, FID can be found in Shakespeare's original plays, as well. Indeed, as we will see, FID is used in Shakespeare precisely to narrativize reported speech, just as the Lambs used FID to narrativize soliloquies. Whether this fact is to be seen as influential on the Lambs, and in turn on Austen, I will leave for future research.

3 Free Indirect Discourse in Shakespeare

3.1 Free Indirect Discourse as Speech Report

The characteristics that Pollack-Pelzner enumerates concerning the Lambs' prose Shakespeare and Austen correspond directly to those we have already pointed

to concerning (4).

(4) She gave me for my pains a world of kisses.
She swore in faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange,
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful.
(*Othello* 1.3)

In (4) we see precisely the use of exclamations and "intensifying adverbs and phrases that turn back on each other", while "the voice of the passage remains ostensibly the narrator's – third person, past tense." (loc. cit.)

Yet while Austen uses FID in this way to "situate us inside Fanny's upset and obsessive mind" (loc. cit.), it is Othello who uses FID in (4). And in this case, FID is used to report speech: what Desdemona said. The parallel is nevertheless apparent. Othello is using FID in order to make his listeners – the Venetian senators and, not least, Desdemona's father – see Desdemona's point of view: to make vivid to them how she "with a greedy ear [would] / Devour up my discourse." (loc. cit.) By the same token, as audiences to the play, we are allowed the same access to Desdemona's reactions, as re-told by Othello.

FID is often used to report speech in modern literature, as in this example from Joyce's *Ulysses*:

(6) Father Conmee [...] walked by the treeshade of sunnywinking leaves and towards him came the wife of Mr David Sheehy M.P.
– Very well, indeed, father. And you, father?
Father Conmee was wonderfully well indeed. He would go to Buxton probably for the waters. And her boys, were they getting on well at Belvedere? Was that so? Father Conmee was very glad indeed to hear that. And Mr Sheehy himself? Still in London. The house was still sitting, to be sure it was. Beautiful weather it was, delightful indeed. Yes, it was very probable that Father Bernard Vaughan would come again to preach. O, yes: a very great success. A wonderful man really.
(Joyce, 2000 [1922], 280–281)

The FID report of Father Conmee's speech gives an impression of the amiable yet trivial character of his chattering, and through doing so, also of his more general mood on this occasion. Similarly, (4) presents a vivid impression of Desdemona's enthralled, almost mesmerized, response to Othello's tales of his adventurous past.

This is significant, since Othello is, in this speech, precisely answering her father's accusation that he won Desdemona over "By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks." (loc. cit.) Instead, the FID presentation of Desdemona's reactions shows us how she was captivated by Othello's account of himself, rather than by sorcery. As he says, having described how his story sparked her love for him, "This is the only witchcraft I have used." (loc. cit.)

Here is another example from *Henry IV, Part 1*: In Act 1, Scene 3, the King is interrogating Hotspur on why he has neglected to deliver a group of prisoners. Hotspur tries to explain that he did not intend to act rebelliously. In doing so, he tells the King about his encounter with the King's messenger – a prim nobleman in spotless attire and brandishing a snuff-box who appeared on the battlefield. Hotspur describes how he, wounded and exhausted, was exasperated by hearing this courtier's idle chatter, telling him that fat from the head of a sperm whale ("parmacity") is the best remedy for a wound, bemoaning that the earth has to be dug up to make gunpowder ("saltpetre"), which is used to kill so many good men, and so on:

(7) To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman
Of guns and drums and wounds, God save the mark!
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
Was parmacity for an inward bruise;
And that it was great pity, so it was,
This villainous saltpetre should be digged
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
So cowardly, and but for these vile guns,

He would himself have been a soldier.
This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,
Made me to answer indirectly, as I said;
(*1 Henry IV* 1.3)

The evidence for FID in this passage is as before: the persons of the pronouns and the tense are as in ID, while the other elements are as in DD.

For instance, in *it was great pity, so it was*, the tense is as it would be in ID while the amplification of *so it was* is as in DD. In particular, the courtier's original utterance might have been, "it is a great pity, so it is." The same applies to *villainous*, *harmless*, *tall good fellow*, *cowardly*, and *vile* in the subsequent lines. All of these are as in DD, that is, it is not Hotspur who thinks gunpowder is villainous, and so on, but rather it was the courtier who said so. Similarly, *but for these vile guns, | He would himself have been a soldier* is as clear a case of FID as one can get.

Again, FID is being used in order to invite the listener, King Henry, to take part in the scene of the speech which is being reported. Indirectly, this allows us, the audience, to do the same. Hotspur wants Henry – and Shakespeare wants us – to see how infuriating the messenger's "unjointed chat" was in its original context. One can hear, and does hear in performances, the tough warrior's sneering parody of the nobleman's foppish prattle.

3.2 Comparison with Direct and Indirect Discourse

Consider another example from *All's Well That Ends Well*. Here Reynaldo tells the countess, in prose, how he has overheard Helen confess her love for Bertram, the countess's son:

(8) Her matter was, she loved your son. Fortune, she said, was no goddess, that had put such difference betwixt their two estates; Love no god, that would not extend his might, only where qualities were level; Dian no queen of virgins, that would suffer her poor knight surprised, without

rescue in the first assault or ransom afterward. This she delivered in the most bitter touch of sorrow that e'er I heard virgin exclaim in [...].
(*All's Well That Ends Well* 1.3)

The underlined passage in (8) is an FID report of Helen talking to herself. As before, a DD reading of (8) is immediately ruled out by the tense and pronouns. If (8) was DD, it should be as in (9).

(9) "Fortune," she said, "is no goddess that has put
such difference betwixt our two estates ..."

DD of this kind is abundant in Shakespeare's plays, as in (10).

(10) And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star.
This must not be.'
(*Hamlet* 2.2)

But further, we are not claiming that (8), or (4) for that matter, is FID simply because of the absence of a *that* complementizer. As in contemporary English, Shakespeare often, indeed usually, uses ID without an explicit complementizer, as in (11).[4]

(11) I myself heard the King say he would not be ransomed.
(*Henry V* 1.5)

What makes it natural to read (8) as FID is the repetition, which mimics the character of Helen's original lamentation – her words' "most bitter touch of sorrow" – rather than simply stating what their contents were, as in ID.

Just as Othello and Hotspur use FID in order to give their audiences a vivid picture of the original scene in which the reported speech took place, Reynaldo uses FID in order to give the countess, and the audience, a vivid picture of Helen's state of mind. The iterative character of *Fortune [...] was no goddess*, *Love no god*, *Dian no queen of virgins* mimics a kind of despairing yet angry tirade.

[4] A search for "said that" of the complete works on http://www.folger.edu returned only 6 result.

3.3 Some More Complex Examples

Before ending this section, I want to mention some more complex cases that further illustrate what we have sketched above. I group these into three. First, there are cases, as we might say, localized FID. For instance, in *Cymbeline*, Innogen (or Imogen) asks Pisanio to tell her what her lover Posthumus's last words were when Pisanio saw him embark on a voyage:

(12) **Innogen**. [...] What was the last
That he spake to thee?

Pisanio. It was his queen, his queen.
(*Cymbeline* 1.3)

Again, (12) is not a DD report of what Posthumus said. Such a DD report would use the 1st person, as in (13).

(13) It was "my queen, my queen."

Yet (12) is not ID, which cannot report sub-sentential utterances, as can be illustrated by comparing (14a–b). (As usual, we use "*" to mark ungrammaticality.)

(14) a. I asked where the coffee was. She said, "On the shelf."
b. I asked where the coffee was. *She said that on the shelf.

Accordingly, it is most plausible to regard (12) as FID. As in paradigmatic cases, the 3rd person is being used to refer to the speaker whose utterance is being reported while exclamations and repetitions are preserved as in DD.

Second, FID is sometimes used to represent purely imagined speech. Take an example from *Henry IV, Part 1*. Prince Hal's friend Poins proposes to Hal that they play a trick on Falstaff: they will set upon him as robbers in disguise. Poins's then explains how he expects that Falstaff will later lie about what happened, and that the punch-line of the joke, so to speak, will be to catch him out:

(15) The virtue of this jest will be, the
incomprehensible lies that this same fat rogue will

tell us when we meet at supper: how thirty, at least, he fought with; what wards, what blows, what extremities he endured; and in the reproof of this lies the jest.
(*Henry IV, Part 1* 1.2)

What is being described here is a future, anticipated utterance. Is it FID? Consider a modernized version:

(16) The joke's gonna be the outrageous lies he'll tell us at dinner: how he fought with at least thirty; what bruises, what contusions, what injuries he received. We'll call him on it. It'll be hilarious.

As this illustrates, (15) is not a DD representation of what Poins imagines Falstaff will say. If it were, the pronouns should be 1st person. But nor is it ID, as is clear from the repetition, which would not be natural in ID. I take it to be most plausible to regard (15) as a case of FID.

There is nothing unusual in FID being used to represent purely imagined speech. Consider this passage from Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*:

(17) A tooth – Senator Buddenbrook had died of a toothache, that was the word around town. But, confound it all, people didn't die of that! He had been in pain, Herr Brecht had broken off the crown, and afterward he had simply collapsed on the street. Had anyone ever heard the like?
(Mann, 1994 [1904], 666)

Here FID is used to represent "the word around town", yet there is no indication that anyone actually said the relevant words. Rather, FID is used to make vivid what *kind of things* people in the town were saying. It is straightforward to regard (15) as comparable to this way of using FID.

Third, there are other examples in Shakespeare where we can see something similar going on. In Act 3, Scene 2 of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Agrippa and Enobarbus are mocking the triumvir Lepidus for his inflated praise for the two other members of the triumvirate, Antony and Caesar (Octavian):

(18) **Agrippa.** 'Tis a noble Lepidus.

Enobarbus. A very fine one. O, how he loves Caesar!

Agrippa. Nay, but how dearly he adores Mark Antony!

Enobarbus. Caesar? Why, he's the Jupiter of men.

Agrippa. What's Antony – the god of Jupiter?

Enobarbus. Spake you of Caesar? How, the nonpareil?
...
Hoo! Hearts, tongues, figures, scribes, bards, poets, cannot
Think, speak, cast, write, sing, number – hoo! –
His love to Antony. But as for Caesar –
Kneel down, kneel down, and wonder.
(*Antony and Cleopatra* 3.2)

It is clear that Agrippa and Enobarbus are using words that they, ironically, attribute to Lepidus, the most natural reading being that they scornfully imagine that Lepidus might say such things as "Caesar is the Jupiter of men", "Antony is the god of Jupiter", and so on.

The underlined passages are not DD, as seen from the 3rd person. Yet it might be thought that they are not FID either due to the present tense. However, of course, FID can be given in the present tense, as in the following made-up example:

(19) He goes to store. He walks around the isles and looks at the groceries, thinking about what to buy. Cheese... yes... he's definitely getting cheese. Hm... is there enough money for wine, too?

FID uses the tense that would be used in the corresponding ID report. Indeed, the following ID reports are natural paraphrases of (parts of) (18):

(20) a. He says/thinks that he loves Caesar.
b. He says/thinks that Caesar is the Jupiter of men.
c. He says/thinks that Antony is the god of Jupiter.

Similarly, an ID version of (19) might be:

(21) He goes to store. He walks around the isles and looks at the groceries, thinking about what to buy. He thinks that he will get cheese. He wonders whether there is enough money for wine, too.

In other words, the present tense of (18) is the one that would be used in ID, and yet, undeniably, (18) is not ID. Hence, it seems most plausible to regard the underlined passages in (18) as FID, yet, as in (15), what is being represented is not speech that has in fact taken place – so we assume – but speech that the characters think might take place.

It should be clear that in all these cases, (12), (15), and (18), the imitative character of FID is being exploited, as before. In (12) Pisanio wants Innogen to see how Posthumus expressed his anguish in departing. And in the two latter cases, FID is particularly well suited for the way the characters are using the anticipated speech to ridicule Falstaff and Lepidus, respectively.

To sum up, we have seen in this section that FID is used in Shakespeare to report speech. But moreover, the hallmark characteristic of FID – its dual perspective – is being exploited in order to give a vivid account of the speech that is being reported, rather than simply reproducing what was said, as DD does, or representing its content from a purely 3rd person perspective, as ID does.

In the next section, I turn to some potential reactions to these observations.

4 Some Potential Reactions

4.1 Liberal Indirect Discourse?

As we said in Section 2, it is undeniable that FID existed before the modern novel. So perhaps one should not be surprised to find FID in Shakespeare's plays, even if they have not so far been highlighted. Still, some might want to object to the classification of the particular examples we have considered.

While our examples cannot be regarded as DD, as we have noted repeatedly, one potential suggestion might be that, rather than FID, what we have found is evidence that Shakespeare could use ID more liberally than we typically recognize. For instance, it might be argued that (4) is really ID, but just a more loose version than other ways ID is used.

(4) She gave me for my pains a world of kisses.
She swore in faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange,
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful.
(*Othello* 1.3)

Yet we would want to know, what is the way in which cases like (4) is more liberal than standard ID? The answer would have to be: precisely in the ways that FID is, namely by preserving exclamations, repetitions, amplification, and so on. It is at best unclear what the motivation for such a view would be, instead of simply accepting the more straightforward suggestion that (4) is a case of FID.

Or take (7) again.

(7) To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman
Of guns and drums and wounds, God save the mark!
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
Was parmacity for an inward bruise;
And that it was great pity, so it was,
This villainous saltpetre should be digged
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
So cowardly, and but for these vile guns,
He would himself have been a soldier.
This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,
Made me to answer indirectly, as I said;
(*1 Henry IV* 1.3)

To claim that the underlined parts of (7) are ID, albeit of a particularly liberal kind, is to claim that ID, in this case, licenses the exclamation *so it was*, and the use of words oriented to the courtier's perspective such as *villainous* and *harmless*. Again, I see no difference between this proposal and simply acknowledging that this passage is a case of FID. As indicated earlier, it is telling that in performances, actors will often instinctively deliver these lines with a mocking intonation, mimicking the speech of the courtier.

4.2 Narrativity and Mimicry

A more interesting reaction to what I have argued here is one that agrees that our examples are instances of FID while asking to what extent they exhibit the features associated with FID beyond the purely grammatical configuration of pronouns, tenses, and so on. As we noted, this grammatical blending of DD and ID is almost universally recognized as resulting in a dual perspective.

There are many different ways of understanding this general feature of FID. One central theme that can be found in the work of various theorists is that FID depends on – and indeed makes manifest – a distinction that is inherent to the structure of the way of conveying information that we call *narrative*. Namely, the distinction between an internal perspective and an external perspective.

A narrative, on this general picture, is (among many others things) a vehicle that presents two points of view at the same time: that of one or more of its characters and that of a narrator, which may or may not be thought of as identical to the actual author of the text. Roughly, this distinction corresponds to the familiar one between *story*, or *fabula*, and *discourse*, or *sjužet*. The internal perspective of the narrative is that of those inhabiting its story; the external that of the narrator who is producing the discourse. Some argue that, since FID invokes both perspectives at the same in virtue of blending ID and DD, FID is "restricted to narrative discourse mode only." (Zeman, 2018, 180–181)

Correspondingly, Goldie (2012, 34) argues that "Free indirect style is a particular expression of the ironic gap between perspectives," and cites the follow-

ing passage from Wood (2008):

> Thanks to free indirect style, we see things through the character's eyes and language but also through the author's eyes and language. We inhabit omniscience and partiality at once. A gap opens between author and character, and the bridge – which is free indirect style itself – between them simultaneously closes that gap and draws attention to its distance. (Wood, 2008, 11)

At least crudely, if this is right, we should find the same characteristics in the examples from Shakespeare we have cited. For instance, Othello's FID rendition of Desdemona's reactions to his stories about himself should feature a narrative structure, and a double-layered perspective.

Indeed, this is precisely what we do see. Othello is *narrating* how he wooed Desdemona, and the dual perspective that his FID report invokes captures the sense in which her growing sympathy for him aligned their minds.

Similarly, take (8).

(8) Her matter was, she loved your son. Fortune, she said, was no goddess, that had put such difference betwixt their two estates; Love no god, that would not extend his might, only where qualities were level; Dian no queen of virgins, that would suffer her poor knight surprised, without rescue in the first assault or ransom afterward. This she delivered in the most bitter touch of sorrow that e'er I heard virgin exclaim in [...].
(*All's Well That Ends Well* 1.3)

Reynaldo uses FID here in order to turn his report of what he overheard Helen say to herself into a narrative, rather than simply reproducing her speech as DD would do. Consider the lines immediately preceding (8):

(22) Madam, I was very late more near her than I think
she wished me: alone she was, and did communicate
to herself her own words to her own ears; she
thought, I dare vow for her, they touched not any

stranger sense.
(*All's Well That Ends Well* 1.3)

Reynaldo is telling a story, he is not simply reporting what Helen said, as a herald or messenger might do. He has a point to make with the story, and he uses FID to narrativize Helen's utterances.

Closely related to this understanding of FID as inherently narrativizing is the conception of FID we began by highlighting, namely the widely held view that FID involves mimicry. Currie (2010) writes,

> While FID is much less a *replication* of the character's speech/thought than is DRS [i.e. DD], it is much more an imitation [...]. The reason for this is that, in order to understand something as an imitation, we have to have a strong sense of the presence of the imitator, and the bare repetition, on the page, of a character's words gives us about as weak a sense of narratorial presence as we can get. (Currie, 2010, 142)

Again, the cases from Shakespeare we have discussed fit this pattern precisely. Reynaldo is present *qua* narrator in the report of Helen's musings to herself, and he is imitating her despairing ruminations. As emphasized above, this is particularly striking in the case of (7).

(7) To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman
Of guns and drums and wounds, God save the mark!
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
Was parmacity for an inward bruise;
And that it was great pity, so it was,
This villainous saltpetre should be digged
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
So cowardly, and but for these vile guns,
He would himself have been a soldier.
This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,

Made me to answer indirectly, as I said;
(*1 Henry IV* 1.3)

Hotspur is presenting King Henry with a narrative that is supposed to provide an explanation for why he has not delivered the prisoners to the king. The cornerstone of his story is his vexation with the speech by the nobleman – Henry's messenger – on the battlefield. It suits his purposes to mimic the nobleman's way of talking in order to make Henry understand why he did not react to it.

The same applies to the more complicated cases we looked at in 3.3. For instance, Agrippa and Enobarbus are joking internally about Lepidus's effusive praise for Antony and Caesar. FID is a way of representing, in this case, what they imagine Lepidus might say while drawing attention to "the ironic gap between perspectives", to borrow Goldie's (loc. cit.) phrase.

5 Conclusion

FID is used to report speech in several of Shakespeare's plays. This puts pressure on the orthodox idea that FID was a marginal phenomenon before the novels of Austen, and others. As in the works of these modern writers, FID in Shakespeare is used to narrativize reported speech, by exploiting the dual perspective inherent in the fusing of ID and DD that defines FID. Moreover, the way in which FID is used to mimic the original utterances by characters in the plays is a clear instance of the way FID is understood by modern critics.

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