# COMPOUNDING IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH: SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

**Claudia Pisoschi**
University of Craiova

**Abstract**

The paper is focused on the morpho-syntactic and semantic characteristics of adjectival compounds used by William Shakespeare in his sonnets. The analysis is performed against the background of Early Modern English features in point of vocabulary (tendencies in use, foreign influences) and it is the result of an appropriate selection of the theoretical criteria involved in compound classification. Compounds are described both formally (i.e. the lexical class of the compound and of the components, the syntactic relations existing at surface structure level) and semantically (the deep structure relationships among components which determine the property of endo/exocentricity of the compound). In case of combining forms whose nature places them between free and bound morphs, the etymology of the lexeme is considered in order to account for the interpretation of the word both in Shakespeare's time and at present.

**Key words**: *compound, sonnet, surface structure, deep structure, endocentric*

**Résumé**

Cette étude est axée sur les caractéristiques morphosyntaxiques et sémantiques des composés adjectivaux des Sonnets de W. Shakespeare, à partir des traits de la période timpurii de l'anglais moderne du point de vue du vocabulaire (tendances dans l'utilisation, influences étrangères), en étant le résultat d'une section des critères théoriques appropriés dans la classification des composés. Ceux-ci sont analysés tant du point de vue structurel (la catégorie lexicale du composé et de ses composantes, les relations syntaxiques au niveau de la structure de surface), que du point de vue sémantique (les relations du niveau de la structure profonde qui détermine la propriété endo/exocentrisme du composé). Dans le cas des éléments lexicaux qui se situent à la frontière entre la catégorie des morphèmes libres et de ceux dépendants, on a discuté l'étymologie du mot, pour expliquer sa perception tant dans le temps de Shakespeare, qu'en présent.

**Mots-clés**: *composé, sonnet, structure de surface, structure profonde, endo-exocentrisme*

## 1. W. Shakespeare and Early Modern English

Compounding has been a major means of word-formation ever since Old English period, acquiring in time features which distinguish the newly-

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formed words in point of form and meaning. Considered as the most productive type of word formation process in English[1], it is also viewed as maybe the most controversial in terms of its linguistic analysis. After conversion and derivation, compounding is the third major way of forming new words in the hierarchy of morphological selection[2], being functionally motivated by the semantic gap hypothesis (a semantic gap creates a potential new word if there is a well-formed concept which has no established corresponding lexical item) and by the minimax principle (the speaker tries to optimally minimize the surface complexity of his utterances while maximizing the information effectively communicated[3].

A brief view on the characteristics of the Early Modern English compounds that appear in William Shakespeare's sonnets will ease the understanding of their role within the structure of the present-day lexicon. On the one hand, the study of the compounds used by Shakespeare in his sonnets will help us understand the influence that the spoken language of his time had on Shakespeare and, on the other hand, the degree to which the compounds displayed by his sonnets have been maintained in language ever since. Shakespeare's linguistic intuition and prestige allowed him to create and/or impose various types of compounds by an intense activation, many of which are still in frequent use nowadays.

A. C. Baugh and T. Cable[4] enumerate the three major problems facing 16th century modern English:

> "the recognition in the fields where Latin had for centuries been supreme; the establishment of a more uniform orthography; the enrichment of the vocabulary so that it would be adequate to meet the demands that would be made upon it in its wider use."

Our analysis can be viewed as an illustration of the last aim accomplishment, regarding the influence of literature on the language used by most English speakers. The syntagm *wider use* raises maybe the most important problem of the time, that of creating a standard literary language freed from the variations of local dialect[5]. Writers such as Spencer and Shakespeare played a huge role in this process and Shakespeare is acknowledged to have had the largest vocabulary of any English writer. But Shakespeare's role in language standardization and modernization should

[1] Ingo Plag, 2003, p. 132.
[2] Taina Dutescu-Coliban, 2001, p. 83.
[3] Carroll & Tanenhaus, 1976.
[4] A.C. Baugh and T. Cable, 1978, p. 202.
[5] A.C. Baugh and T. Cable, 1978, p. 250.

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not be seen only in its quantitative dimension, but also at a qualitative level. The manifest creativity in combining words already existing in language was completed by an open attitude towards foreign borrowings, the latter being a source of expressing new meanings. Using Baugh and Cable's terms, apart from "his daring and resourceful use of words", Shakespeare proved himself a true "liberal" in this respect because he readily accepted "words of every kind". The two authors[6] discuss the categories of borrowings in Shakespeare's works with reference to the time interval between their attestation and the date when Shakespeare employed them in writing.

Some of the words Shakespeare uses must have been very new indeed, since the earliest instance in which we find them at all is only a year or two before he uses them and in a number of cases his is the earliest occurrence of the word in English.

They also refer to the fact that Shakespeare's pioneer role concerns not only the lexicon inventory but also the semantic changes, which can be regarded as part of the process of integrating them within the English language from all viewpoints. That happened in case of many words often used, since their attestation, in a sense different from the one they have today but closer to the meaning of their Latin etymon.

## 2. Defining English Compounds

At first sight, defining a concept which seems so widely used and familiar to speakers of a large range of languages is an easy task, but, on the other hand, the definition should be equally general (to be applied cross-linguistically) and precise (to fit the characteristics of a certain natural language).

Our concern about offering some of the most relevant definitions of compounds for the English language results from the fact that such definitions reflect the view on the most salient characteristics of compounds. Therefore, the criteria of compound analysis should emerge from the definition given to such lexical structures.

A 'compound word' is usually understood to be the result of the (fixed) combination of two free forms, or words that have an otherwise independent existence, as in *frostbite*, *tape-measure*, *grass-green*. These items, though clearly composed of two elements, have the identifying characteristics of single words: their constituents may not be separated by other forms, and their order is fixed[7].

[6] A.C. Baugh and T. Cable, 1978, p. 233.
[7] V. Adams, 1973, p. 30

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We notice that the prevailing criterion is the formal one, but on enlarging upon the matter, Valerie Adams mentions the role of semantics in defining compounding, thus separated from derivation as a word formation means:

Thus, compounding may be distinguished from derivation both formally, in terms of the presence or absence of a bound form, and, semantically, according to whether both elements are 'lexical' or not. […] Lexical elements are not always free, grammatical ones are not always bound[8].

Without taking distance from the formal criterion in defining compounds, (it would be impossible to do so, since this is the sine qua non condition to call a combination of elements a compound), Ingo Plag's definition is more general than Adams's and tries to avoid the problems posed by the presence of bound morphs as elements of compounds, mainly in the case of neo-classical compounds. The definition of compounds should be a combination of (free/bound) roots not of words:

A compound is a word that consists of two elements, the first of which is either a root, a word or a phrase, the second of which is either a root or a word[9].

The definition is further explained by resorting to the semantic criterion; semantically, the set of entities denoted by the compound is a subset of those denoted by the head. Syntactically this is reflected by the positioning of the head on the right-hand side, as a rule. The head 'lends' most of its syntactic and semantic properties to the compound. Thus, compounds become "lexicalized phrases memorized holistically by the speakers". The structure of an English compound is formalized as it follows:[10]

[X, Y] $_{Y}$ y grammatical properties inherited from Y
Y {root, word} X {root, word, phrase}

### 3. Classification of Compounds

Laurie Bauer[11] sustains that the normal way of classifying compounds is by the function they play in the sentence as nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. Their subclassification may be done in many different ways, by considering the form classes of the items that make up the compound (Marchand, 1969), by semantic classes (Hatcher, 1960; Warren, 1978), by presumed underlying operators linking the two elements (Žepić, 1970) or by presumed underlying syntactic function, any method of subclassification being bound to be controversial.

[8] V. Adams, 1973, p. 30
[9] Ingo Plag, 2003, p. 135
[10] Ingo Plag, 2003, p. 137
[11] Laurie Bauer, 1983, p. 201-202

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All these considered, we find it useful to discuss both the form of the compound and of its elements and its meaning. Agreeing with Bauer, we will begin by focusing on the **lexical class of the compound**, since it is obvious that it was created in language as a unit to meet some communication needs. Bauer also points out the necessity of analyzing **the lexical (form) classes of the components** since that might prove useful in the discussion of the semantic relationship[12]. Once we discuss the lexical class of the components, it is only natural to establish **the surface structure relationship** between the elements, i.e. their syntactic relationship. Following Bauer's argumentation even further, the next step is to make the logical connections with **the deep structure** (**DS**) **relationship** between the elements, establishing a bridge between the surface structure (SS) of the lexical compound and its meaning. To do so, we should make use of **the property of endo/exocentricity**, which, in our opinion, is of mixed nature, combining the syntactic and semantic features of a compound; it is the result of syntactic determination between components and leads to finding one or more than one possible corresponding DSs for a given compound.

**4. Adjectival Compounds in Shakespeare's Sonnets**

In point of **the lexical class of the compound**, the majority of them (about half) are adjectival compounds, which is quite explainable considering that any kind of fixed form poem implies a high usage of epithets, all acquiring adjectival value, whether expressed by an adjective proper or not.

We grouped them according **to the lexical class of the components** and while discussing that, we will also refer **to the surface structure relations among those components.** The result of a clear syntactic determination is the inclusion of the compound within the class of endocentric compounds. The general pattern of the first group of adjectival compounds is the following, according to T. Dutescu-Coliban's system of notations (2001):

[Adv. + [V + -en] $_{adj}$] $_{adj}$

We are dealing with cases of two-member compounds whose head is represented by verbal adjectives, originally past participles. The past participle changes its value and behaves functionally as an adjective, without modifying its morphological class. The process is called *transposition*[13]. The compounds further analysed are basically of the type [Determiner + Adj.] $_{adj}$. Therefore, the head poses no problems of interpretation but its determiner covers a wider range of possibilities. We enumerate the main situations

[12] Laurie Bauer, 1983, p. 202.
[13] Hans Marchand, 1969, p. 12-13

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below. The number of the sonnet where the compound was used is mentioned between round brackets:

Type 1.

[Adv. + [V + -en] $_{adj}$] $_{adj}$

*well-tuned sounds* (*VIII*), *first-born flowers* (*XXI*), *long-liv'd phoenix* (*XIX*), *well-contented day* (*XXXII*), *well-refined pen* (*LXXXV*), *the hardest knife ill-used* (*XCV*), *ever-fixed mark* (*CXVI*), *up-locked treasure* (*LII*).

The above cases contain irregular adverbs, their formal marking with suffixes being unnecessary. The compound *up-locked* is somehow different, in that *up* is an adverbial particle which does not syntactically determine the head, it rather emphasizes the head-word meaning, its position in contemporary language being reversed in comparison with Shakespeare's time variant: *locked-up* is the participle of the phrasal verb *lock up*.

*First* and *long* are examples of grammatical homonymy; they can be used both as adjectives and as adverbs without any change of form. Their etymology explains the evolution of their form[14]:

*long* < O.E. *lang*, *long*, (cf. O.H.G., Ger. *lang*, O.N. *langr*, Goth. *laggs* "long"), perhaps from PIE **dlonghos*- (cf. L. *longus*, Gk. *dolikhos* "long". The adverb derives by zero derivation from O.E. *lange*, *longe*, i.e. from the adjective. The word illustrates the phonetic tendency in O.E. for short *a* to become short *o* before -*n*- in West Midland dialects.

*first* < O.E. *fyrst* "foremost", the superlative form of *fore*. The analogic tendency, implying the consistent use of suffixes in order to regulate the paradigm, led to the formation of the adverb *firstly* around 1530. The linguists' conclusion, in light of the general use, was that the adverb has never become the preferred form, the adjective taking over the functions of the adverb.

Type 2.

[[Adj. + Ø] $_{adv\ value}$ + [V + -en] $_{adj}$] $_{adj}$

*new-made* (*II*), *new-found methods* (*LXXVI*), *new-fangled* (*XCI*), *dear-purchas'd right* (*CXVII*)

Regarding the adjectival compounds used by Shakespeare in general, Hope[15] quotes Abbot who says that Shakespeare 'often joins two adjectives in a compound, the first acting as an adverb modifying the first'. Unlike present-day English which requires the first element of the compound to carry an adverbial inflection, Early Modern English displays cases of no adverbial markers. Such compounds are not hyphenated, the components being usually separated by a space, and sometimes by a comma: an example

[14] www.etymonline.com

[15] Jonathan Hope, 2003, p. 57.

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given by Hope from *Henry IV* is *more active, valiant or more valiant yong*[16]. The only example of hyphenated adjectival compound appears in *Merry Wives* and the adjective is *fertile-fresh*[17]. Hopes considers such adjectives as unusual, 'likely to require careful processing', this becoming the cause for their being used mainly in predicative position rather than as pre-head modifiers. Nevertheless, our examples from *Sonnets* mostly illustrate the second case.

*Dear*, as it appears in the compound above, is accounted for by Hope's observation; it is maintained in its adjectival form in spite of the adverbial function. It continues to be used in the same way in contemporary language in British English, the meaning being 'expensive, costing a lot of money'[18]; in the line under discussion, the meaning is figurative, but derived from the denotation previously explained: *Accuse me thus*; […] *That I have frequent been with unknown minds,/ And given to time your own dear-purchas'd right*;

The same situation maintains with *new*, listed in the dictionary[19] as a combining element (adjective) in compounds having as head a participle in cases such as *new-found freedom*, the meaning being 'something that has recently happened'. The existence in language of compounds containing the adverb *newly* meaning 'recently' preceding past participles (*newly created job*, *newly qualified doctor*) has not influenced the maintenance of the compounds formed with the corresponding adjective. The compound *new-fangled* has been used in standard language ever since, preserving its negative connotation and its typically attributive value; it refers to 'something that has been recently been invented or introduced, but that you don't like because it is not what you are used to, or it is too complicated'.

Except for the last example, in point of their syntactic function, all the adjectives are predicatives.

Type 3.

[Noun + [V + -en] $_{adj}$] $_{adj}$

*Self-will'd* (*VI*), *storm-beaten* (*XXXIV*), *tongue-tied* (*LXVI*; *LXXX*; *LXXXV*; *CXL*)

All three compounds contain a past participle as head, the noun-determiner functioning as a prepositional object of the former; expanding the compounds into phrases makes the syntactic relationships clearer: 'willed by the self', 'beaten by the storm', 'tied by the tongue' (the meaning

[16] Folio 1, *Henry IV*, 5.1.90 apud Hope, 2003, p. 57.
[17] Folio, *Merry Wives*, 5.5.69, apud Hope, 2003, p. 58.
[18] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2004, p. 322.
[19] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2004, p. 855; 856.

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is metaphorical and we will come back to that when analysing compounds in point of meaning). We should notice the use of the verb *will* as a notional verb, although its use as a future auxiliary was already developing in O.E. The implication of intention or volition distinguishes it from *shall* which expresses or implies obligation or necessity. W*ill* < O.E. **willan, wyllan* 'to wish, desire, want' (past tense *wolde*) < P.Gmc. **welljan* (cf. O.S. *willian*, O.N. *vilja*, O.Fris. *willa*, O.H.G. *wellan*, Ger. *Wollen*, Goth. *Wiljan* 'to will, wish, desire', Goth. *Waljan* 'to choose') < PIE **wel-/*wol-* 'be pleasing' (cf. Gk. *Elpis* 'hope'; L. *Volo*, *velle* 'to wish, will, desire', etc). Cf. also O.E. *wel* 'well', 'according to one's wish'; *wela* 'well-being, riches'[20]. It is interesting to notice the morphological behaviour of the verb, which gets the suffix *-ed* in the Past Tense and Past Participle, feature preserved until now, when the verb is used as a full lexical one: 'to use your power of mind to do something or to make something happen' – *As a child, he had thought he could fly if he willed it enough. She willed her eyes to stay open*; 'to intend or want something to happen' (old use) – *They thought they had been victorious in battle because God had willed it*[21].

Type 4.

[Adj. + [Noun + -en] $_{adj}$] $_{adj}$

*kind-hearted prove* (*X*), *swift-footed Time* (*XIX*), *swart-complexion'd night* (*XXVIII*), *sweet-season'd showers* (*LXXV*), *short-number'd hours* (*CXXIV*).

Such combinations are specific to the spirit of the English language since they blend concision and power of suggestion, this being the reason why they are so productive in contemporary language. The situations of words whose head element has no independent existence are grouped together under the heading of *parasynthetic compounds* (e.g. *milk shake* or *highbrow*, in the latter compound, the zero suffix adding the feature [+human] to the word)[22]. Compounding and derivation operate simultaneously on the base. V. Adams refers only to zero suffixation but we consider that type 4 examples in our classification can be included into the same category.

A particular observation should be made in relation to *swart*:

*swart* < O.E. *sweart* "black," (cf. O. Fris. *Swart*, O.N. *svartr*, Ger. *schwarz*, Goth. *swarts* "dark-colored, black"), from PIE base **swordo-* "dirty, dark, black" (source of *sordid*)[23].

[20] www.etymonline.com
[21] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2004, p. 1481
[22] V. Adams, 1973, p. 34
[23] www.etymonline.com

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Nowadays the adjective derived from the mentioned etymon is *swarthy*, the form *swart* being considered archaic.

Type 5

a. [base + semi suffix {*-most*; *-like*; *-fold*}] $_{adj}$

b. [semi prefix {*over-*; *-fore-*} + base] $_{adj}$

*High-most pitch* (*VII*), *doctor-like* (*LXVI*), *o'er-read* (*LXXXI*), *o'ergreen* (*CXII*), *Three-fold* (*CXXXIII*), *surety-like* (*CXXXIV*), *over-plus* (*CXXXV*), *over-partial* (*CXXXVII*), *fore-bemoaned moan* (*XXX*)

We already referred to the compounds whose elements have an ambiguous nature, intermediary between lexical and grammatical words; as V. Adams[24] shows, some second elements of compounds appear to have a status between 'lexical' and 'grammatical', the second element failing to be ever used independently, or, if that happens, the meaning is changed. The examples given by Adams are *ironmonger*, *playwright*, *clockwise*, *seaworthy*, *chairman*. She resumes the topic discussing the case of complex words containing particles, they being justly called as such although many particles are similar in meaning to prefixes; the examples given are *over*, *out*, *under* cf. *super-*, *ex-*, *sub-*. Bound particles appear in English in initial position only whereas independent particles, like 'lexical' compound elements, may occur either initially or finally in a complex word: *overstep*, *walk-over*[25].

We have used the terms *semi-prefixes* and *semi-suffixes* to designate those elements which have preserved their meaning, entirely or partially, when entering in combination with a free morph as head. The term generally used in lexicology to solve the problem of the dual and thus ambiguous nature of such morphs is *combining form*, the name implying the acknowledgement of these morphs as elements with lexical meaning. Hans Marchand[26] separates the cases of compound verbs containing an adverbial particle in initial position from those which represent false verbal compounds on the basis of their meaning: if the particle added something to the meaning of the base, then their combination was a compound. Of course verbal compounds are of no interest to us here, but the same argument could be used for compound adjectives.

In point of productivity, Marchand[27] states that, according to Old English Dictionary[28], 'by 1600 it had become allowable to prefix *over-* to

[24] V. Adams, 1973, p. 30
[25] V. Adams, 1973, p. 33
[26] H. Marchand, 1969, p. 97-99
[27] H. Marchand, 1969, p. 99
[28] OED *over* 27

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any verb whose sense admitted of it.' Of all the combining elements enumerated under type 5, Marchand lists just *over-* which contributes to compound formation when having the meanings 'outer, covering' (proper meaning) linked to the figurative one 'higher, superior'; 'exceeding the usual norm'[29]. In our opinion, all the examples listed by us containing *over-* (*over-read* – we tend to consider it similar in usage to the compound *overwrite* which is attested in the 17-th century[30] –, *overgreen*, *over-plus*, *over-partial*) can be included into the same category with view to their meaning: they all express the idea of 'excess' (*o'er-read*), 'beyond a certain point' (*o'ergreen*) or 'beyond the proper limit' (*over-plus* – the pleonastic value enhances the stylistic effect –, *over-partial*).

*-fold* is a multiplicative suffix, from O.E. *-feald*, related to O.N. *-faldr*; Ger. *-falt*; Goth. *Falþs*; Gk. *-paltos*, *-plos*; Latin *-plus*. The Anglo-Saxon forms made up with this suffix were gradually replaced by the Latinate *double*, *triple*, etc., but the suffix remains in *manifold*. It is considered a suffix nowadays[31] and its hyphenation when forming the multiplicative numeral in Shakespeare's sonnets is maybe the result of the English users perceiving the word components as distinct independent elements at that time; we should not overlook the fact that *fold* remains till today a free morph, i.e. a word.

The same explanation and present-day perception is true for the suffix *-most*, clearly derived from the superlative degree of the adjective *much*. In spite of the evident semantic content of the word, it is considered a suffix[32].

*Fore-* evolved as an affix from the adverb *fore*, which was used as a prefix in O.E. and other Germanic languages with the sense of 'before in time, rank, position etc.' or designating 'the front part' or 'earliest time'. It appears in contemporary language dictionaries as a combining form[33], which means that, up to this moment, it is perceived as a morph carrying lexical meaning.

In the same line with *-fore*, *-like* is perceived by contemporary English users as a lexical element which has lexical meaning, implying the idea of comparison with the referent denoted by the base; consequently, it is listed in dictionary as a combining form[34]. As in Shakespeare's time, speakers are aware of the meaning carried by the word, but its function of affix has been emphasized at present by giving up the hyphenation. Spelling is the

[29] H. Marchand, 1969, p. 116-117
[30] H. Marchand, 1969, p. 99.
[31] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2004, p. 496.
[32] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2004, p. 828.
[33] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2004, p. 502.
[34] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2004, p. 746.

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indication of the fact that, nowadays, the function of this element prevails over its semantics.

The analysis of the five morphs presented shows that usage comes to be the most important factor in the evolution of many lexical elements which are similar in point of origin and meaning. Their treatment by the users is best rendered by their spelling when combined with free morphs (using hyphenation or not).

Type 6

a. [Adj. + [Verb + -ing] $_{adj}$] $_{adj}$

b. [Noun + [Verb + -ing] $_{adj}$] $_{adj}$

c. [Adv. + [Verb + -ing] $_{adj}$] $_{adj}$

a) *new-appearing sight* (*VII*), *true-telling friend* (*LXXXII*), *false-speaking tongue* (*CXXXVIII*)

b) *love-kindling fire* (*CLIII*), *time-bettering days* (*LXXXII*), *pity-wanting pain* (*CXL*), *heart-inflaming brand* (*CLIV*), *all-eating shame* (*II*), *self-doing crime* (*LVIII*), *self so self-loving* (*LXII*)

c) *ne'er-cloying sweetness* (*CXVIII*), *ill-wrestling world* (*CXL*), *eyes well-seeing* (*CXLVIII*)

The *-ing* form is interpreted as a present participle and the reason for doing so is the DS structure of the compound. The present participle is expanded into a relative Attributive Clause together with its complements and adjuncts (i.e. obligatory or optional constituents): for example, *true-telling friend* is rather interpreted as 'a friend who tells the truth' than as *'a friend for telling the truth'; it is only the second interpretation which would allow considering the *-ing* form as a gerund, and since that doesn't make sense, it is obvious that the verbal form is a present participle used as an adjective[35]. Marchand[36] considers that this type of compounds existed in Old English and gives some examples (*hēah-sittende* 'high-sitting' *cwic-lifigende*, 'quick-living') but they did not represent the current pattern and the situation remained somehow the same through Middle English period, when occasional coinings appeared, for instance *far-casting* 'cunning', attested in 1387. Such compounds grew common in Modern English and the combinations with *ill*, *far* and *well* were justified by the grammatical homonymy existing even in the case of these lexemes used as such both as adjectives and as adverbs.

J. Hope refers to the verb forms used as pre-modifiers in Shakespeare's work, whether it was about present participle ending in *-ing*

[35] Ioana Ștefănescu calls the compounds thus formed *deverbal adjectival compounds* (1978, p. 302).

[36] H. Marchand, 1969, p. 92.

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or past participles (*-en*, *-ed* or irregular forms). He confirms that, as in present-day English, in Early Modern English verb forms derived from present or past participles were frequently found in pre-modifying structures, and behaved like adjectives in such contexts: *A rising sigh*[37], *My thrice driven bed of Downe*[38], *a well-graced actor*[39], *the new-made king*[40]. Hope[41] mentions complex pre-modifying structures, which, in his opinion, are 'more concentrated, more metaphorical, i.e. less explicit, and also more ambiguous and difficult to process'; comparatively, post-head modification is 'more explicit, more measured and less risky'. Beautiful examples from the first category in Shakespeare's plays are: *cormorant devouring Time*[42] or *too hard a keeping oath*[43].

We would like to insist on the value attributed to *self*. In spite of Marchand's viewing it as a pronoun in structures of the type *self-advertising*[44] or *self-adaptable*[45], we favor Ioana Ştefănescu[46] who analyses *self* as a noun in such compounds. The proof is that, initially, *self* was a noun and 'the compounds are fine with the old formative', while nowadays *self* occurs only as a component of the reflexive or emphatic pronouns, this being evident with the verbs having a reflexive pronoun as direct object (*to boast oneself* not **boast self*). Dictionaries continue to list the fom *–self* either as a combining form[47] or as a prefix[48], which proves the difficulty in classifying this morph due to its ambivalent nature.

Type 7

[Adj./Noun + Adj./[Verb + -en] $_{adj.}$] $_{adj.}$

The next type of compound adjectives contains an adjective proper as head, the determiner being and adjective (proper or participial) – *two contracted-new* (*LVI*), *these present-absent* (*XLV*), a pronoun – *all-oblivious enmity* (*LV*), *self-substantial fuel* (*I*).

Of all the compounds listed above we stop to *two contracted-new* which is distinct since the word order between the determiner and the

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[37] Folio, 1 Henry IV 3.1. 8-9 apud Hope, 2003, p. 59.
[38] Folio Othello 1.3. 231 apud Hope, 2003, p. 59.
[39] Folio, Richard II, 5.2. 24 apud Hope, 2003, p. 59.
[40] Folio, Richard II, 5.2. 45 apud Hope, 2003, p. 60.
[41] Hope, 2003, p. 61.
[42] Folio, Love's Labour's Lost, 1.1. 4 apud Hope, 2003, p. 61.
[43] Folio, Love's Labour's Lost, 1.1. 65 apud Hope, 2003, p. 61.
[44] H. Marchand, 1969, p. 91.
[45] H. Marchand, 1969, p. 87.
[46] Ştefănescu, 1978, p. 307.
[47] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language.*
[48] http://www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus/british/self_14

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determinant is reversed: *new* is placed after its determined, *contracted*, which is an exception in English. Another particular case among those discussed here is *these present-absent*. The head word is a pronoun and its determiner is post-posed to it, which is typical, but the interesting aspect is the relationship between the components of the compound adjective *present-absent*: they are implicitly coordinated, of equal rank syntactically and semantically. Quirk[49] discusses the adjectival compounds of the type *grey-green* implying a coordinating relation; he draws the conclusion that the stress pattern determines the thematic role of the first element (the green color has a tinge of grey, which is not typical) and the focal role of the second, which is thus semantically dominant (the basic color is green). According to that hypothesis *present* is the theme and *absent* the focus.

The last type of adjectival compounds is represented by multiword compounds and, in this case, it is impossible to establish a general pattern. The main problem is the differentiation between compounds and phrases but the hyphenation is a clear marker of the fact that the constituents are perceived as a unit semantically: *all-too-precious you* (*LXXXVI*), *world-without-the-end hour* (*LVII*).

According to Ingo Plag[50] compounds are binary structures if the head word is separated from the determinant usually placed on the left side; the number of words making up the determinant is finally irrelevant. Plag[51] says that

> 'based on the principle of recursivity, new words can be repeatedly stacked on an existing compound to form a new compound […]. There is no structural limitation on the recursivity of compounding, but the longer a compound becomes, the more difficult it is for the speakers/listeners to process, i.e. produce and understand it correctly. Extremely long compounds are therefore disfavoured not for structural but for processing reasons.'

In point of **meaning**, compounds have been divided into endocentric and exocentric. The explanation offered for each category proves the interdependence form-content: endocentric compounds are defined by Bloomfield[52] as functioning as a whole in the same way as the head element. The definition of compounds as given by Plag, appears in a different light, since it referred to the fact that the compound inherits *most* properties of the head. If actually all the properties are inherited, the compound is endocentric, if not, it is exocentric.

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[49] R. Quirk et ali, 1991, p. 1578.
[50] Ingo Plag, 2003, p. 134.
[51] Idem, *ibidem*.
[52] Bloomfield, 1933, p. 235 ff, apud Adams, 1973, p. 34-35.

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Diachronically, ever since Middle English, compound nouns fell into the two categories mentioned before. Jacek Fisiak[53] links endocentricity to the determination relation between the compound elements; therefore, lack of any determination means that the compound is exocentric. In their turn, A. C. Baugh and T. Cable[54] sustain that during the Middle English period the habit of "combining native words into self-interpreting compounds" was "weakened but not broken". In other words, endocentric compounds were typical in OE, and this tendency was maintained during Middle English and later in Early Modern English, even if their percentage decreased and the source of the components was no longer prominently represented by native words but by Latinate elements.

V. Adams (1973: 60-61) quotes Jespersen[55] regarding the deep structure relationships among the compound components in case of nominal compounds, but the basic types can be preserved for adjectival compounds under discussion: I. Subject-Verb – irrelevant for adjectival compounds; II. Verb-Object; III. Appositional; IV. Associative; V. Instrumental; VI. Locative; VII. Resemblance; VII. Composition Form-Content; IX. Adjective-Noun; X. Names; XI. Other. In our opinion, the second, fifth, sixth, seventh and ninth category can be illustrated by adjectival compounds at the level of the DS.

Type 1 compounds include word formations following the pattern:

Verb + Adverb.

*Well-tuned* (*sounds*) 'X is well tuned'
*first-born* (*flowers*) 'X was first born'
*well-refined* (*pen*) 'X is well refined'
*long-liv'd* (*phoenix*) 'X lived long'
*well-contented* (*day*) 'X contents one well'

Most compounds in this class are endocentric, even in cases when the head noun is used metonymically (in *well-refined pen*, *pen* stands for 'talent'). The structure *well-contented day* reveals its meaning in the context of the whole poem, the referent being the day of the poet's death; the compound adjective significance is 'fully paid up', death becoming the act of settling one's accounts with this world. All the examples of the series are endocentric.

Type 2 compounds have the same corresponding DS, V + Adverb, only that the determiner is used in its adjectival form in spite of the adverbial value: *new-made* 'X was newly made', *new-found* 'X was found recently'. The rest of the compounds from this series were analysed

[53] Fisiak, 1968, p. 112.
[54] Baugh, Cable, 1978, p. 183.
[55] F. Jespersen, *Modern English Grammar* VI, CH. 8.

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semantically in the part concerned with the form, the purpose being to underline the connection form-content.

Type 3 compounds reflect the DS Verb + Object (Prepositional Object, which includes the Object of Agent): *self-willed* 'willed/wanted by the self (oneself); *storm-beaten* 'beaten by the storm'; *tongue-tied* 'tied by the tongue', the meaning being metaphorical, but the compound remaining transparent semantically, which means endocentric.

Type 4 compounds correspond to the pattern Attribute + Noun, the ninth in Jespersen's classification of nominal compounds: *kind-hearted* 'X with a kind heart; X has a kind heart', together with the head noun *prove* the meaning becomes 'the prove of a kind heart (= person); *sweet-seasoned showers* 'showers of the sweet season'; *short-number'd hours* 'hours whose number is short'; *swift-footed Time* 'Time with swift feet'; *swart-complexion'd night* 'a night with swart complexion'.

Because of their including a constituent which is ambiguous in nature between free and bound morphs, i.e. between lexemes and affixes, type 5 compounds allow no syntactic expansion or paraphrase and consequently we cannot speak of a DS. Nevertheless, the compounds making up this class have remained structurally transparent to English speakers all along, hence their treatment as derivatives in some cases. Some of them (*doctor-like*, *surety-like*) express resemblance in the classification adopted by Adams from Jespersen. We already discussed the intensity connotation of *over* in the compounds from this series, now we would like to express a hypothesis concerning the use of *up* in *up-locked*, where, in spite of the stressing function of *up* in relation to *lock*, the basic locative meaning could be still traced as long as the user makes the association between vertical distance and lack of accessibility.

Type 6 compounds exhibit DS structures which will be further presented. Most of them are endocentric, therefore we shall mention only the exocentric ones. The basic three types are listed also by Quirk[56] when discussing the DS of compounds containing an *-ing* formative.

Copulative verb + Predicative (if we consider the whole nominal compound, it can be included under the first type mentioned by Jespersen and Adams – Subject + Verb)

*new-appearing sight* 'a sight appears new'; it is obvious, as we have already mentioned, that the DS relationship enlightens us on the nature of the *-ing* form: it is a present participle being transposed (used functionally) as an adjective, which explains the presence of the adjective *new* as determiner.

[56] R. Quirk et ali, 1991, p. 1576-1577.

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Verb + Object

*true-telling friend* 'a friend who tells the truth'

*love-kindling fire* 'a fire which kindles love', the meaning is metaphorical even if the figurative meaning is based on the denotation of the verb; we consider the compound rather endocentric.

*Time-bettering days* 'days which better Time'

*pity-wanting pain* 'pain which wants (=needs) pity'

*heart-inflaming brand* 'brand which inflames the heart'; the meaning is metaphorical, the compound being though endocentric

*all-eating shame* 'shame which eats all' metaphorical meaning, endocentric compound

*self-doing crime* 'crime which is done to the self'

*self so self-loving* 'self which loves the self (itself)'

Verb + Adverbial Modifier

*false-speaking tongue* 'a tongue (= person) which speaks falsely'

*never cloying sweetness* 'sweetness which never cloys sb.'

*Ill-wrestling world* 'a world which wrestles ill'

*eyes well-seeing* 'eyes which see well'

Type 7 compounds include the following cases of DSs:

V + Adv. Modifier *contracted new* 'X is newly contracted'

Adjective + Prepositional Object *all-oblivious* (*enmity*) 'X is oblivious of all'

Noun + Prepositional Object *self-substantial* (*fuel*) 'X is substantial to its self'

All of them are endocentric.

**Conclusions**

Some general conclusions can be drawn in light of the observations made while describing the adjectival compounds used by Shakespeare in his Sonnets. Structurally, most compounds are binary structures, with a tendency towards verbal adjectives (present and past participles), which gather both verbal and adjectival features. Transposition (the change of the functional status of a lexeme) operates both at the level of the verbal adjectives, mentioned above, and at the level of their determiners (adjectives used as adverbs- *new*, *dear*). The presence of a significant number of parasynthetic compounds (involving both derivation and compounding at the same time) in Shakespeare's Sonnets is a proof that such lexical structures meet the requirements of the English language in concision and suggestiveness; the same is true with combining forms (*-like*, *-fore*) which are neither entirely free nor entirely bound morphs. The deep structure of the compounds under discussion exhibits a relatively small number of

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combinations (V + Adv., V + O and much less frequently Adj./Noun + Prep. Object, Copulative Verb + Predicative); all the examples are endocentric, transparent in point of their semantics, illustrating Baugh and Cable's observation on the tendency for self-explanatory compounds which has characterized English throughout its history till modern times.

Starting from the fact that Spencer's and Shakespeare's texts are generally considered typical for Early Modern English[57], our analysis is a further proof favouring Baugh and Cable's assertion[58] that Renaissance English was "much more plastic than now" and Shakespeare's successful attempt of

> "fitting the language to his thought, rather than forcing his thought into the mold of conventional grammar" was "in keeping with the spirit of his age […] an age with the characteristics of youth-vigor, a willingness to venture, and a disposition to attempt the untried."

The above quotation appears as a beautiful plea for creativity in language as a condition of progress.

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