Textual Analysis of English Quack Doctor Plays: Some New Discoveries


Abstract

Many questions remain regarding the actual origins of English Quack Doctor plays now that pre-Shakespearean theories of origin have collapsed. While it seems likely that the plays were added to pre-existing house-visiting customs in the early- to mid-18th century, and that they were influenced by contemporary theatrical conventions, the ultimate source for the texts is still unknown.

With few notable exceptions, there has been a marked reluctance to analyse the texts of English folk plays. Partly this has been because key scholars believed the “actions” of the plays to pre-eminent and the texts to be irrelevant and partly because of the daunting enormity of the task. This paper breaks the impasse by reporting major analyses of the large collection of texts that are available online at www.folkplay.info. These have been done with the assistance of graphical methods and computerised techniques such as cluster analysis.

There are three main results. Firstly, evidence is presented for a single proto-text that was ancestral to all versions. The lines that this proto-text probably contained have been identified, and assembled into an initial tentative reconstruction. Secondly, the analyses yield a new classification for the plays that both confirms and extends the earlier schemes, but under two principal classes rather than three. The Hero-Combat Plays are divided into seven subclasses, of which one comprises the Sword Dance Plays that were previously regarded as distinct. The Plough Plays are divided into two subclasses – the Multiple Wooing Plays and the Recruiting Sergeant Plays. Lastly, the evolutionary relationships between the various classes are considered, which lead to a proposed genealogy of the plays.

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Quack doctor definition: an unqualified person who claims medical knowledge or other skills | Meaning, pronunciation, translations and examples.

Definition of quack doctor from the Collins English Dictionary. New from Collins. Quick word challenge. Quiz Review. Question: 1. - Score: 0 / 5. comprehensible or comprehensive? Drag the correct answer into the box. Discourse analysis is the study of the ways in which language is used in texts and contexts, observing everything from audio to written compositions. For example, in one study, transcripts of conversations between doctors and...
patients were analyzed to determine where misunderstandings had occurred. In another, women were interviewed about their feelings regarding a diagnosis of breast cancer. How did it affect their relationships? What was the role of their social support network? How did "positive thinking" come into play? In terms of textual analysis, grammarians may examine texts in isolation for elements such as the art of persuasion or word choice (diction), but only discourse analysis takes into account the social and cultural context of a given text. By analyzing these types of discourse, researchers aim to gain an understanding of social groups and how they communicate. How is discourse analysis different from other methods? Unlike linguistic approaches that focus only on the rules of language use, discourse analysis emphasizes the contextual meaning of language. It focuses on the social aspects of communication and the ways people use language to achieve specific effects (e.g. to build trust, to create doubt, to evoke emotions, or to manage conflict). Instead of focusing on smaller units of language, such as sounds, words or phrases, discourse analysis takes into account the social and cultural context of a given text. By analyzing these types of discourse, researchers aim to gain an understanding of social groups and how they communicate. How is discourse analysis different from other methods? Unlike linguistic approaches that focus only on the rules of language use, discourse analysis emphasizes the contextual meaning of language. It focuses on the social aspects of communication and the ways people use language to achieve specific effects (e.g. to build trust, to create doubt, to evoke emotions, or to manage conflict). 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