EEBO-TCP Old Words for Your New Tools

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EEBO-TCP: Old Words for your New Tools

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Machines can’t read this text
TCP: Creating Searchable Text
Why? Three major Functions

• **Search:** depends on accuracy at the character, word and phrase level

• **“Distant reading”**: depends on some measure of accuracy, but mostly a huge sample size generated from a known corpus

• **Electronic text edition**, legible in absence of page images: depends on accuracy, completeness, and sensible structure

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What can one do with it?
Create a digital edition
What can one do with it?

Build a digital hub/collection around a certain theme
What can one do with it?

Digital humanities/text analysis projects

Launch of the Zeugmatic

My project for Summer 2013 is to design a text-analysis algorithm capable of recognizing Shakespeare’s rhetorical figures. For instance, this repetition of “farewell” in Othello is called an anaphora:

That’s a pretty straightforward anaphora, and is just the kind of linguistic feature that a pattern-recognizing algorithm could detect. I could show you more complicated examples, but first let’s imagine the higher-order interpretations that this algorithm would enable.

Start with that idea of recognition. The average schoolboy in Renaissance England was rigorously trained to recognize rhetorical figures, in order to imitate them in his own writing. This was formalized analysis according to classical precepts, adapted for the English language. John Milton’s copy of Hariot’s translation of Aristotle’s Orlando Furioso is thick with marginal annotations on its rhetoric — recognizing not only its argumentative stages but also the fineness of speech in the Rhetorical ornaments, as
What else can you do with it?

• Have students produce editions or do other assignments
• Request texts to be keyed
• Request raw files for one or many texts
Thank you!

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