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INCLUDING CALIBAN: INCLUSIVE TEACHING, SHAKESPEARE AND THE COMMONWEALTH

WHITNEY P. EATON is an MPhil/PhD Candidate in the Department of Literatures in English at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus. Her research is focused on textual analysis regarding representations of self, value and society within the canon. She is also committed to action research geared towards developing methods for the popular teaching and understanding of Shakespeare among Commonwealth Caribbean students. A special focus of this is to dispel fears of Shakespeare's 'complexities and lost relevance' in contemporary classrooms and among future students of literatures in English.

While the global COVID-19 pandemic has taken many things, if there is anything it's given me, it's given me perspective. In 2018, I launched a project aimed at exploring the methods employed in teaching Shakespeare in the Commonwealth Caribbean, specifically to Jamaican high school students. The project focused on the difficulties faced by teachers and students in both comprehending and expressing the intricacies of Shakespeare's work in the English Literature classroom. While Shakespeare's plays are still on the curriculum for our high schools in Jamaica and across the CARICOM (Caribbean Community and Common Market) nations, specifically required for our end of high-school exams, our students find it increasingly difficult to engage critically with Shakespeare's work. And I thought I was well on my way to figuring out why. However, as COVID-19 effectively put a pause on all live research, my obsession with answering that question was effectively replaced with the need to stay safe and sanitized. But, one must love a good eureka moment. In an effort to use my time in a nation-wide lockdown effectively (and stay sane), I enrolled in an online course entitled 'Inclusive Teaching', and in that unlikely place sat my "Aha!"

In Jamaica, the common practice in our high schools is to delay teaching these plays until the 9th grade, when exam preparations begin; the more Eurocentric high schools of society's upper crust introduce Shakespeare one year earlier. Our teachers have cycled through the usual pedagogy of in-class reading, discussion, in-class performances, movie adaptation and so on, and yet many students across the island can't seem to engage meaningfully with the material. So, my task became quite clear: figuring out why our students mentally check out at the very mention of Shakespeare's name. Initially, in my research, I'd narrowed it all down to a single major factor. The consensus, I believed at the time, was clear: language. Both linguistically and socially speaking, Jamaica is split into 3 categories: English speakers (English is our official language), Jamaican Creole speakers, and code-switchers – meaning those who are fluent in both and switch effortlessly between the two in conversation. This division of language is parallel to the class divisions of the island, as well as the greater Commonwealth Caribbean – Standard English is generally spoken in the upper class, the local dialect is predominantly spoken by the lower class, and code-switching is the hallmark of the middle class. Jamaican Creole is a tone and context-specific dialect; each word is specifically chosen by the speaker to ensure the right version of the right word is said at the right time, with the right emphasis, all suitable for the specific context being created in that specific moment. But, for this exact reason, where there are issues of language there are issues of translation. Many Commonwealth Caribbean teachers have taken to attempting to translate the plays into the local dialect and then having the students perform, in class, the "translated" or adapted versions of the play. However, that does not solve the primary issue faced by our students: understanding the play. For quite some time, the solution I've posed to solve this issue is early introduction – much like learning a new language, the earlier they're introduced to it, the better.

But after recently completing a course on inclusive teaching hosted by an ivy league university and feeling utterly unseen and untaught, the by-then dusty cogs in my brain began to turn again. Where this course fell short was that, much like the bard's work many decades ago was believed to be, the course and its material felt very clearly intended for or directed to white, CIS-gendered academics within American or maybe even British classrooms and lecture halls. Ironic, I know, considering it was focused on inclusivity. It was very difficult for me to "see" myself in this course, and I was reminded quite distinctly of what students have expressed to me in the past. But, as many students have learned, feeling as though the course did not specifically speak to me does not make it any less useful. As the course progressed, teachers and lecturers were encouraged to do two things in particular (among others) when creating their courses with the intention of inclusivity: recognize our own cultural frames of reference, and critique existing course material. At that point, it dawned on me that my cultural frames of reference, and those my students and

students of the wider Commonwealth Caribbean would possess, aren't adequately reflected or represented in the existing critical material.

When we think of inclusivity and Shakespeare, our minds go straight to those diverse characteristics, whether celebrated or not by Shakespeare's work, we consider to be time-old themes of the plays, like gender, sexuality and race. As such, there are endless articles written on Shakespeare's plays focused on those exact issues. But those are written within the context of the American and British experience. I include critical work done within the post-colonial context, as it's more than a little safe to say that being Black, Asian or any other marginalized race in a first world nation with significant global power is significantly different from being that globally marginalized race in a third world, nation – even more so when that nation is an island in the Commonwealth Caribbean. It is entirely important that we not only recognize the difference between diversity and inclusivity but also make distinctions between what inclusivity within the academic environment is intended to be and what it currently is. Only then can we address how those cultural frames of reference determine how course material is selected and presented.

Jennifer Brown sums up the difference between diversity and inclusivity quite succinctly in her 2016 interview with *Forbes* thus: 'Diversity is the who and what: who's sitting around the table . . . who we're tracking from the traditional characteristics and identities of gender and ethnicity, and sexual orientation and disability inherent to diversity characteristics that we were born with. Inclusivity, on the other hand, is the how. Inclusion is the behaviours that welcome and embrace diversity'. For a sound understanding of how we define inclusive teaching, specifically, we can turn to Christine Hockings's definition, 'Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education refers to the ways in which pedagogy, curricula and assessment are designed and delivered to engage students in learning that is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all. It embraces a view of the individual and individual difference as the source of diversity that can enrich the lives and learning of others'. So, with these definitions in mind, one would think that, just as those racial, gender and sexual experiences would differ across regions and national cultures, the course material would differ as well. Yet, that's not the case within the Commonwealth Caribbean, as the closest we've gotten to seeing ourselves in the works exactly as they're written is seeing colour-blind and

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gender-bending productions, that still don't place the plays in any sort of cultural context that we can completely identify with.

So how do we select the course material with this in mind? A cursory search yields less than favourable results and going through official academic channels is, surprisingly, no different. Most of what engages directly with Shakespeare's work and the Commonwealth Caribbean isn't current enough, having been written in the latter 90s and early 2000s, and what else exists is either in blog-based or tackles productions and adaptations of the plays, as opposed to critically engaging with the texts. Why? Montague Kobbé's reading of the character of Caliban and the importance of his role in *The Tempest* could be said to echo the position held and locally internalized by many about the Caribbean, 'circumstantial and eminently secondary'. Kobbé goes on to pose that the roster of Caribbean authors who have turned to *The Tempest* as a source of inspiration is impressive 'considering that back in 1611 no English settlements existed in the Caribbean . . . and the Atlantic slave trade, though established since over a century, was still conducted at a modest scale'. However, despite the lack of British settlements, Spanish settlements were established within the Commonwealth Caribbean as early the 1400s with the arrival of Columbus. Furthermore, the Anglo-Spanish war between England and Spain, though never formally declared, is dated to have been from 1585 to 1604. So, to imply that Shakespeare's knowledge of the Caribbean, slave trade and England's direct impact on the Caribbean would be limited by the lack of English settlements would be a tad parochial. This is especially so, if we take into account that Sycorax is said to be from Argier (the older form of Algiers) as it would speak to Shakespeare's knowledge of Africans being carted off into the Caribbean and beyond. Kobbé's reading may just have everything to do with the intrinsic differences between the Commonwealth Caribbean and wider post-colonial spaces.

But, as Kobbé says, numerous Caribbean authors have in fact turned to *The Tempest* and other works of Shakespeare for their inspiration, so there *must* be something of us and for us there if so many of our authors have connected within the work. Having students engage with adaptations simply doesn't solve the issue at hand. Neither does simply bridging the language barrier with an earlier introduction to the material. Our goal is to have students truly engage with the material and, if we think about what sparked a love for literature in us as educators, it's clear the only way to do that is to let them see themselves, on and off the stage. Only in the last few years have we "seen" ourselves in the work, but that sight has been limited only to the stage. We've seen "Jamaicanized" roles, like Oberon as an "Obeah man" (magical practitioner) as portrayed by David Heron in Colonial Theatre of Rhode Island's Shakespeare in the Park production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2019, dir. Michael Scholar Jr.), and we've seen local productions of loose comedic adaptations such as *Romi and Julie* (2019, dir. Patrick Brown). The placement of our selves on stage has done wonders, of course, especially when it comes to addressing issues of language, as is attested to in the British Council's commissioned documentary, *Shakespeare in the Caribbean*. But we still lack representation in the critical and academic realm, and literature classes are not taught on performance alone.

The approach to inclusive teaching when it comes to Shakespeare cannot just be a matter of language; it must also be a matter of context. If our students can't see where others who share their lives, their culture, and their history have been able to "see" themselves in the work then how can we expect them to see enough of themselves in the material to truly connect with it? Just as teaching is more than reading the text and discussing it, making a student engage with work that, in truth, was never written for them will require more than mere discussion. When the closest representation to a Caribbean person in Shakespeare's plays is Caliban, black Macbeths simply aren't enough. The issue comes down to a lack of critical material specific to their culture: the solution isn't translating the "thee", "thy" and "thou" of it all, but having critical material that reads them from the Commonwealth Caribbean perspective, not just the general post-colonial perspective.

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women and shakespeare podcast

APURVA KOTHARI is a final-year student at the College of Arts and Sciences of New York University. She is currently pursuing a double major in International Relations and Environment Studies. Passionate about reading and dissecting Shakespeare's works since her high-school years, Apurva enjoys analysing how global film adaptations of the playwright's works add to the depth of his plays and keep them relevant and resonant.

'Women & Shakespeare' Podcast was launched on Shakespeare's birthday on 23 April 2020. Funded by New York University (NYU), it features conversations with diverse women directors, actors, writers, and academics who are involved in making and interpreting Shakespeare. As one of a select group of students who formed the steering committee for this project, I had the opportunity to interview the creator of this podcast series, Dr Varsha Panjwani, both before and after the launch of the series.

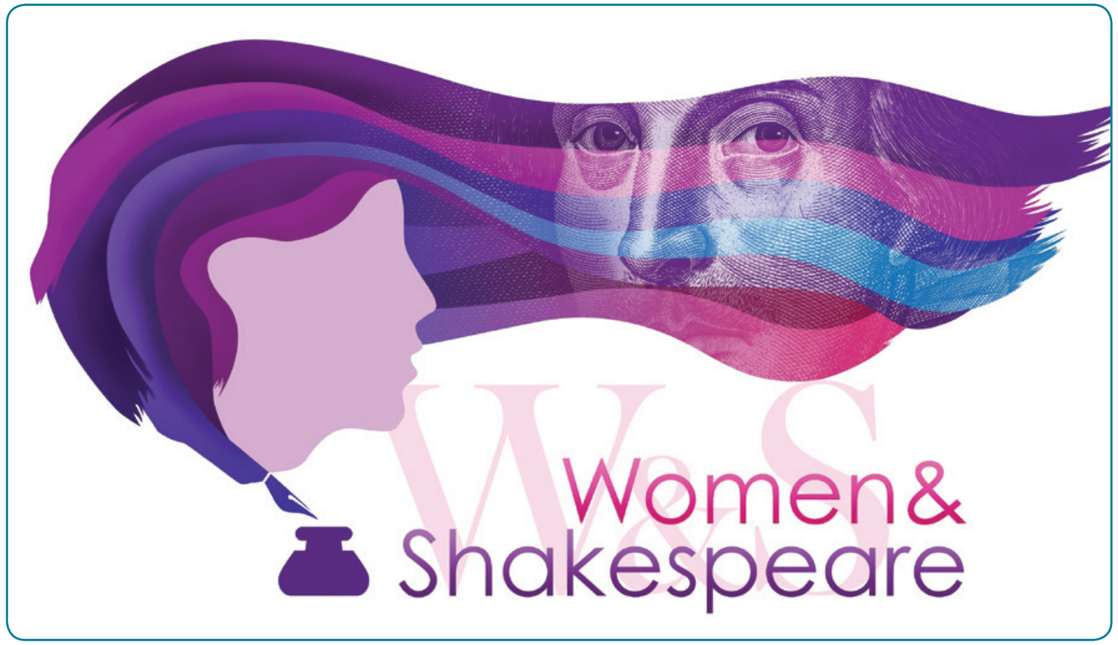
AK: I am excited to talk about the podcast, but could you tell our readers a little bit about your work first?

VP: Sure, I teach Shakespeare at NYU (London) and my research focuses on the way in which Shakespeare is deployed in the service of diversity and how diversity, in turn, invigorates Shakespeare. My recent work has been published in journals such as *Shakespeare Survey* and *Shakespeare Studies*, and in edited collections such as *Shakespeare, Race and Performance*, *Shakespeare and Indian Cinema*, and *Eating Shakespeare*. I am currently working on my monograph, *Podcasts and Gender in Shakespeare Pedagogy* which is under contract with Cambridge University Press.

AK: That's wonderful! Both as a researcher and a creator, it looks like you are thoroughly immersed in podcasting at the moment. Thus, I want to start right away by asking, what were your key motivations behind creating the podcast, 'Women & Shakespeare'?

VP: As I said, my research and teaching is centred around Shakespeare and what I increasingly began noticing is that, despite the overwhelming number of women students and scholars in this field, a very small percentage of women scholars get cited in essays and presentations. Also, my women colleagues have found themselves at conferences with all-male keynote speakers many times. In theatre,

"this collective silencing of women experts on shakespeare was becoming really oppressive to me. so, i wanted to create a platform where women scholars of shakespeare could be heard loudly, clearly and proudly."



I often hear about how women actors still have to really fight for their interpretations, because all the focus is on male characters, say *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and so on. In public discourse as well, I noticed how women are very rarely asked to be commentators on Shakespeare, and even when they're asked, the selection is really not diverse enough. This collective silencing of women experts on Shakespeare was becoming really oppressive to me. So, I wanted to create a platform where women scholars of Shakespeare could be heard loudly, clearly and proudly.

AK: In that case, would you call this podcast a feminist space?

VP: In the broadest possible sense, yes. Each episode features a conversation with a woman who is an authority on Shakespeare and the listeners get an overview/analysis of her work, so the podcast amplifies the voices of women. However, the guests will be asked about their area of expertise and not only about issues of gender and feminism unless these come up organically in conversation. I feel it is actually anti-feminist to ask women only about women's concerns.

AK: You are talking about gatekeeping and authority so, on a related note, are you editing these episodes? If so, what kind of an editor are you? In other words, how unfiltered would these podcast episodes be?

VP: Very good question and I'm glad you asked me this because I am editing these podcast episodes. But what I'm deleting are just the 'umms' and the false starts and actually some of the disasters! For instance, there was a leaf-blower when we were recording Dona Croll's podcast who just wouldn't go away. And then when we were recording the podcast with Kathryn Pogson, a curtain fell with a thud! Sometimes, I cut to streamline and shorten but edits are not made to change the meaning of what the guests are saying. Many times the guests do not say what I want them to say . . . which is very inconvenient *(laughs)* . . . and they don't interpret Shakespeare in the way that I do. Instead, they offer completely different or even opposing readings to mine but these myriad and conflicting thoughts will not be altered in any way. My purpose in the interviews, too, has been to clarify and ask and not offer my own analysis . . . not too much anyway . . . so I'm not going to be a sneaky editor.

AK: I think that's very good for our listeners to know that this podcast is as unfiltered as it can be. Moving on to the question of listeners . . . for the larger body of listeners, particularly students, how do you think this podcast will be useful?

VP: I'm going to be my classic teacher self and turn this question to you. You're a student. You tell me how you might use this podcast?

AK: Oh, well, I have put myself in a mousetrap! But I think . . . I see 'Women' and 'Shakespeare' as two entities which simultaneously have an impact on each other. So that is particularly useful for me, as it makes me feel that Shakespeare is for me and people like me. Furthermore, I do feel that Shakespeare continues to hold substantial cultural capital, so it is important to know, especially as a student, how women are mobilising Shakespeare to create more empowering cultures for women themselves . . . and women, not just in London or the UK but across the world.

VP: I think you're absolutely right because this podcast shows what Shakespeare can do for women. But, it also emphasises what women contribute to Shakespeare studies and performance. So, I hope that students will be able to appreciate both these aspects.

AK: It seems like students are at the centre but are they the only people who would, in your opinion, listen to this podcast? Or can this podcast be relevant to the larger populace out there?

VP: I think that this podcast is for anyone who's interested in Shakespeare. So that is what we had in mind when we were creating it. We have not used, for instance, obscure jargon so that a non-specialist can follow the conversation easily. This is also why the podcast is free, and I was very adamant that it would be free so that it is accessible not only to university-going students, but to anyone who wants to know more about various facets of Shakespeare. In fact, the medium of podcast was also dictated by this desire to cater to a variety of people because if you are a student or in academia, you may, at least theoretically, have access to a library and get time to read books. But not everyone can afford these pleasures. A podcast, however, can be listened to while commuting, cooking, gardening, whatever really. But having said this, I also think that established academics will find it useful due to the range of voices that have been consulted and the level of analysis that is offered by each guest.

AK: I know that we've already established that this is a space for anyone and everyone who would like to be a part of the Shakespearean community. But I think we must explicitly voice: why should men listen to 'Women and Shakespeare'?

VP: Actually, very bluntly, to learn about Shakespeare. I mean, I read books by and listen to my male students and colleagues in academia and theatre and film and beyond, because I value their scholarship and experience and

"this podcast is not about excluding men from the shakespeare dialogue, but rather it is about adding women's voices to this ongoing conversation."

expertise. But as I was explaining earlier, this compliment has really not been returned or has been returned, but in a very tokenistic way. So this podcast is not about excluding men from the Shakespeare dialogue, but rather it is about adding women's voices to this ongoing conversation. So, quite simply, they should listen because they might learn a thing or two!

AK: Absolutely! As a final question, I want to ask you about the world we find ourselves in right now with everything becoming digital. How do you think that this podcast fits in with the digital classroom post-pandemic?

VP: When the students and I were thinking about this project, we were blissfully unaware of the pandemic and the way in which it would change the pedagogical landscape or indeed how our digital lives and 'real' lives would be suddenly pushed even closer to each other. However, what we were aware of was that we are increasingly part of digital communities - and this is a hostile place for women. As Seyi Akiwowo, founder of Glitch, a non-profit campaigning to end online abuse, has demonstrated, at least one-fifth of women online have suffered harassment and abuse on the web simply for voicing their opinions. Tim Berners-Lee, who created the world wide web publicly said that 'the web is not working for women and girls' when he created an initiative, with Rosemary Leith, called the Web We Want. As digital citizens, Shakespeare studies scholars and practitioners, the web we wanted in our field was one where women's voices were not silenced or side-lined. Mary Beard has famously pointed out that since Homer, Western Civilization is built upon excluding women from public speech. Shakespeare is a big part of Western and Global civilization and, one could argue, the World Wide Web civilisation. We did not want the digital civilization of Shakespeare to be founded on Homeric models. Since the pandemic has necessitated that we build something new, freshen up syllabi, and think of creative ways to teach and interact, why not use this opportunity to build back better in terms of gender equality. So, I hope that 'Women & Shakespeare' is a step in that direction.

AK: On that hopeful note, thank you so much for talking about 'Women & Shakespeare' podcast series and I sincerely do hope that the listeners all enjoy the conversations and build a better learning environment and a better world for women.

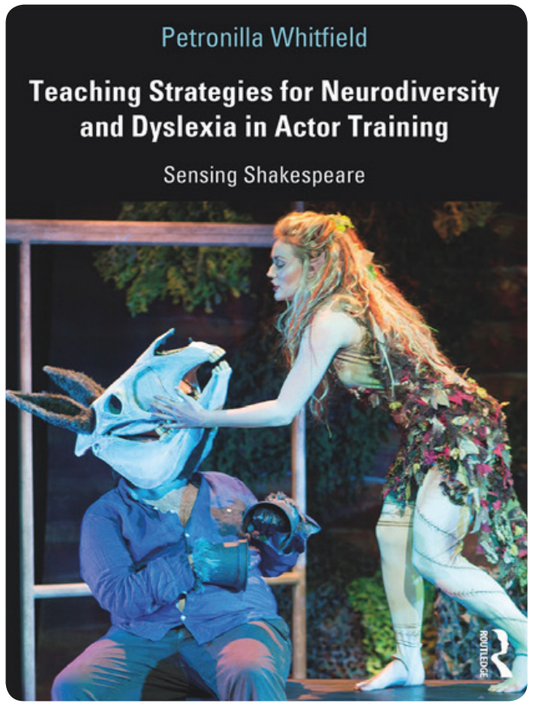
Editor's note: *Women & Shakespeare* rounded out season 1 with Dame Janet Suzman. The podcast is now into season two, with episodes on film and radio Shakespeare. Out soon is my episode on *Teaching Shakespeare*, with further ideas for using podcasts in class.

'WOMEN & SHAKESPEARE': SERIES 1: EPISODE LIST
Available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or www.womenandshakespeare.com
Each episode is published with a full transcript available from the website

23 Apr 2020	**Delia Jarett-Macauley**: Orwell prize-winning author for *Julius Caesar* based novel, *Moses, Citizen and Me*, and editor of *Shakespeare, Race and Performance*.
23 May 2020	**Dona Croll**: Renowned actor whose most famous Shakespeare roles include Cleopatra (she was the first black Cleopatra on the professional British stage) and John of Gaunt in *Richard II* at Shakespeare's Globe.
23 Jun 2020	**Chris Bush**: Multiple award-winning playwright who has adapted Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Pericles* as community theatre musicals at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre and National Theatre.
23 Jul 2020	**Farah Karim-Cooper** Head of Higher Education and Research at Shakespeare's Globe, Professor of Shakespeare, Language and Literature at King's College London, and Vice-President of the Shakespeare Association of America. She is the author of several books on Shakespeare, including *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama* and *The Hand on the Shakespearean Stage*.
23 Aug 2020	**Kathryn Pogson**: Acclaimed actor whose famous Shakespeare roles include Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* (the opening production at Shakespeare's Globe), Ophelia in *Hamlet* directed by Jonathan Miller (she changed the prevailing interpretation of the part through her performance), and Lady Anne opposite Derek Jacobi in *Richard III*.

Dyslexia: studying and reading Shakespeare

DR PETRONILLA WHITFIELD is an Associate Professor in Voice and Acting at the Arts University Bournemouth, working particularly on the Acting (Hons) degree course. This article offers some information about her recent publication, a book titled *Teaching Strategies for Neurodiversity and Dyslexia in Actor Training: Sensing Shakespeare* and published by Routledge 2019.



In this book, I address some of the challenges met by students with dyslexia and highlight some of the abilities that are frequently demonstrated by individuals with specific learning differences. My book is aimed towards teachers who work with students with dyslexia, specifically involving the reading and acting of Shakespeare in higher education drama environments. However, some of the pedagogical strategies I offer in the book may well be of interest to teachers working in schools, or with youth and drama groups, where there are opportunities for creative and physical explorations of Shakespeare's language. Throughout the book – through examples of my action research with my students – there are a variety of multisensory approaches towards reading, understanding, remembering and expressing Shakespeare's words and meaning.

"there are a variety of multisensory approaches towards reading, understanding, remembering and expressing shakespeare's words and meaning."

I was a professional actor for twenty years, including being a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company, where I worked with John Barton and Cicely Berry (amongst many other Shakespeare specialists) and was an actor in the Peter Hall Company, experiencing first-hand several of Peter Hall's sessions on acting Shakespeare. I was also trained in approaches to teaching Shakespeare by David Carey (voice coach at the RSC and Voice and Text Director at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, USA) when I did my MA in Voice Studies at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. My teaching of acting students in Shakespeare is informed by my training and professional work with these Shakespeare acting and voice specialists, and the development of my own teaching ideas through my PhD study and action research.

I have taught Shakespeare to acting degree students for sixteen years, and it is my experience of working with students with dyslexia on Shakespeare, and noting their difficulties, that motivated my PhD study into the subject at Warwick University, with Professor Jonathan Neelands as my supervisor. This practical PhD study and my further studies into enabling dyslexic students constitute the contents of this book.

The readability of Shakespeare for the young person can present unchartered terrain. Many acting students tell me that their school experience of studying Shakespeare was dull, and that at school, they found Shakespeare's writing boring and incomprehensible. Amongst a student cohort, some can read effortlessly, but still find Shakespeare's meaning hard to grasp. For those with dyslexia, the hurdles in accessing the meaning and content of Shakespeare's writing are even more prominent. Dyslexia, as a specific learning difficulty/difference, is frequently present amongst student cohorts in actor training institutions. Several years ago it became evident to me, when teaching acting students in both university and vocational drama school settings, that there are some individuals who have great difficulty in reading without effort, and physically articulating and processing language and speech sounds. This can be in conjunction with other characteristics, such as distractibility, disorganisation, anxiety, and physical awkwardness, despite a possession of literacy, intrinsic motivation, athletic movement skills, strong acting talent and intelligence.

In my experience, the obstacles blocking some individuals with dyslexia from being able to contribute freely when reading and responding to sessions on text, can raise pedagogical problems for the teacher; especially located within the larger student cohort. This can emphasise issues about student and teacher proficiency, provoking further anxiety. Dyslexic students are sometimes unable to accomplish the required reading or processing tasks successfully amongst their peer group, thus being placed in a vulnerable position, their difficulties witnessed by all involved in the exercise. The teacher often lacks the expertise to support the individual, enhancing a feeling of failure in the student, while promoting feelings of inadequacy in the teacher.

"the exercises i explore with the students and describe in this book, demonstrate that the 'otherness' of shakespeare's language can uncover a paradox in the work of some of those with dyslexia."

However, the exercises I explore with the students and describe in this book, demonstrate that the 'otherness' of Shakespeare's language can uncover a paradox in the work of some of those with dyslexia. My research and teaching of Shakespeare has produced evidence that for some of those with dyslexia, an initial confrontation with Shakespeare's text can block access to meaning, inhibiting thought processes and fluent reading. However, with further focussed work, Shakespeare's writing can also provoke a unique blossoming of artistic modalities in those with dyslexic characteristics. Although Shakespeare's language can present obstacles for those with dyslexia, his abundant word pictures and action-filled images, wrapped within metaphor, simile and personification can lead to interdisciplinary innovation in style and expression.

"with further focussed work, shakespeare's writing can also provoke a unique blossoming of artistic modalities in those with dyslexic characteristics."

My book offers six tested teaching strategies, created from my practical and theoretical research investigations with my dyslexic acting students, using the methodologies of case study and action research when working on Shakespeare's text. The investigations I describe in the book explore the visual, kinaesthetic and multisensory processing preferences demonstrated by some of my students assessed as dyslexic, specifically when working with complex texts such as Shakespeare. Utilising Shakespeare's text as a laboratory of practice and drawing directly from the practical work of the dyslexic students themselves, I explore:

- The stress caused by dyslexia and how the teacher might ameliorate it through changes in their practice
- The theories and discourse surrounding the label of dyslexia and how these might relate to the individual student and pedagogical methods used
- Neural re-use and multi-sensory processing
- Approaches for engaging deeply with Shakespeare's language, and how working on Shakespeare can enable those with dyslexia to develop their authentic voice and imaginative abilities
- Practical and visually led strategies into performance; interacting with the text's content through the use of artwork, colour and drawing
- A grounding of the words and the meaning of the text, through embodied cognition, gesture, spatial awareness and epistemic tools
- Stanislavski's method of *units and actions* and how it can benefit and obstruct the student with dyslexia when working on Shakespeare (with practical examples given)
- *Interpretive Mnemonics* as a memory support, hermeneutic process, experiential space for expression, and method towards an autonomy in live performance

My book is offered as a guide for those in voice and actor training, but also for those who teach Shakespeare in a range of circumstances, who might be curious about emancipatory methods that can support difference through humanistic teaching philosophies and multisensory teaching and learning investigations.

teaching english stress pattern

YU UMEMIYA is an alumnus of the Shakespeare Institute and former assistant professor at Waseda University. With the completion of his thesis in 2020, he received his doctorate in March 2021. Alongside his work as a part-time lecturer in universities in Tokyo, he contributes to a student theatre company, Waseda Institute Players, as an artistic director.

From May 30th to June 21st 2019, I ventured an experimental English language tutorial with 6 university students who live in an eastern part of Japan, Fukuoka prefecture, (to ensure their anonymity, I have given them the pseudonyms C-H). The aim of this project was to find out the effect of Shakespearean verse on the improvement of Japanese students' English accent. Here, the concept of accent does not suggest regional dialect, rather it relates to the preferred stress pattern. The project challenged the limitations of time, faced by university and schoolteachers alike, by restricting the duration of the project to a period of 3 weeks, as well as requesting the students to self-teach as much as they wished to outside of the tutorial time. As for the teaching method, I mainly used email for its practicality.

C-H are students whom I have never met before. So the results of this project might be useful for other teachers who likewise may have strongly motivated students, but little time to spend building up trust with the learners (many educators in universities have only a term to get to know any one set of students). To see the effect of previous exposure to Shakespeare in my teaching style on the students, I have also included two more students (A and B), who I have taught in class before this experiment. The accompanying table offers some insight into the students' experience of tutoring during this experiment as well as their previous English-language study and experience.

Student	Means of tutoring	English language certificate	Notes
A	Face to face: once	Eiken Grade 3 (2010) (see below for explanation)	Attended a private communicative English class from the age of 3 to 17. At age 16, went to Toronto for a month-long homestay programme. At age 20, enrolled in voluntary work for three weeks at Sibiu International Theatre Festival.
B	Email: twice	Eiken Grade 3 (2010) (see below for explanation)	At age 19 and 20, went for a two-week stay in the UK with a British family.
C	Video chat: once Email: thrice	Eiken Grade 2 (2015)	Took normally required English language classes at the university.
D	Email: thrice		Took normally required English language classes at the university.
E	Email: once	Eiken Grade 3 (2011), TOEIC Bridge 120 (2018)	Attended Kumon (see below for explanation) during kindergarten.
F	Email: once		At age 19, stayed in Canada for 10 months as part of a study abroad programme.
G	Email: thrice	Eiken Grade Pre-2 (2016), TOEIC Bridge 140 (2018)	In addition to the required English classes at the university, completed advanced English for tourism.
H	Email: four times	TOEIC 570 (2019)	At age 19, went to the USA for a month-long study abroad programme. In addition to the required English classes at the university, completed advanced English pronunciation.

The Japanese traditional English language certificate test, Eiken, established in 1963, has been a dominant means of measuring students' level of English proficiency before other tests from the USA and the UK arrived in Japan. Grade 3 is aimed at Japanese junior high school graduates (15 years old). Grade 2 is for high school graduates (18 years old), and Grade Pre 2 is in the middle of the course. The examinees of Grade 3 are expected to be able to understand and use language concerning familiar, everyday topics, such as likes and dislikes, and basic personal and family information. In order to accurately measure examinees' speaking ability, an interview test is included from Grade 3 onward. The Grade 2 examinees should understand and use English at a level sufficient to allow them to take part in social, professional, and educational situations. Grade 2 certificate provides a wide range of benefits, such as its usefulness in applying to post-secondary academic institutions and obtaining academic credits, in addition to serving as preparation for the National Center Test for university admissions. Furthermore, it is widely accepted as a qualification certifying general English ability for studying or working overseas.

Kumon is a basic paper-based tutorial for all subjects, established in the late 1950s, mainly for young pupils and students. It combines regular homework with regular visits to a learning centre, where students receive marks and comments on their work from a tutor. English became available since 1980 and the method has been exported all over the world. It is not counted as one of the certificates, but to attend and complete the course is fairly common in the early stage of education in Japan.

Different from Eiken and Kumon, TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) started as a test that is considered to allow Japanese English learners to establish their ability in business. In 1979, in collaboration with ETS (Educational Testing Service) in the USA which is responsible for TOFEL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), the first TOEIC test took place in major cities in Japan. TOEIC Bridge is designed to be one level below the ordinary TOEIC. According to the chart that compares the compatibility of each score, Bridge 120 is equivalent to 310 in standard TOEIC, and Bridge 140 is suggested to be 395. Generally, a score of over 650 from the standard TOEIC allows new university graduates to declare it on their CV for job opportunities, but when applying to internationally owned companies, for instance, a score exceeding 750 is desired.

The accompanying table, with its details of the students and their qualifications, makes clear that C-H are generally understood as average Japanese university students in terms of their English language ability with minor exceptions. G and H have higher aspirations of learning English than the others, but the language level and experience of A and B surpasses the rest.

STAGE 1

C-H were sent an email with the directions for the project on 29th of May 2019, together with the original script of Hamlet's fourth soliloquy. Starting from 'To be, or not to be', the script contained all 33 lines written in modern spelling. Apart from the punctuation, linage, capitalisation and such derived from the *Oxford Complete Works of Shakespeare*, the script showed no information related to expectations for reading or pronunciation.

As the task for the first stage, I asked the students to simply practice reading each and every word, so that they would not stumble when coming across unfamiliar vocabulary. Since this project focused solely on accent, the students were advised not to worry about the meaning. To find out the proper stress in a word, I encouraged them to use accessible dictionaries such as Google translation and smart phone apps which enable them to listen to the model sound. To avoid the students picking up idiosyncrasies from previous recorded performances, they were banned from going online to find audio or videos of the entire soliloquy. Finally, to maintain their active enrolment and comfort, the means of practicing – whether they read out loud or read in their minds – was decided by the individual students themselves.

Judging from the recordings from the first day (29th May) and the last day (4th of June) of stage 1, it was obvious that the students became familiarised with the wording of the text. G for example, took 3 minutes and a half to read aloud through 33 lines on the first day. In contrast, G's recording from the final day of stage 1 lasted 2 minutes and a half, cutting down the length of the recording by a minute. However, the fluency with which they delivered the speech does not mean that the reading improved, because it seemed only the speed that the students were focusing on, rather than the delivery.

STAGE 2

On the first day of stage 2, the students once again received an email with two attached files: one explaining the general rules of Shakespearean verse, and the other containing an edited version of Hamlet's soliloquy, created by me for this project, using Tomonari Kuwayama as its inspiration (*Aspodel*, vol 44, pp.21-39, 2009). The former explained the structure of iambic pentameter and the role of stresses in verse lines. The feature of iambic pentameter is visualised in the sheet as follows:

to BE, or NOt to BE,

that IS the qUes<u>tion</u>

Enlarged letters depict the placement of the stress, and this way of representation was used for the edited version of the script. The underline at the second syllable of 'question' is intended to suggest that there is another weak

syllable before the line break. The function of this type of verse, the so-called feminine ending, was also explained in the sheet provided and students were requested to consider the continuation to the next line.

Additionally, taking line 13 for example, the script showed the irregular pattern of Shakespearean verse

must gIVe us pAUse. [___]

ThEre's the *rEspect

As shown above, the third foot started with an unpronounced weak stress and therefore used the brackets to tell the students that there is a pause before the word 'there's'. 'Respect' is another example of a feminine ending, but it also has the possibility of an alteration of stress pattern. In modern English, the second syllable of the word is stressed, whereas verse analysis suggests that students should instead place a stress on the first part.

C was the only student who received a tutorial through video chat (Skype) at this stage due to the personal availability of the rest. The remaining students, D-H, learned the information from self-study of the sheet of paper and moved on. The only difference between C and the others was that C had the chance to check the level of comprehension of the given sheet by going through the information together with me, live.

The resulting improvement in all the students com-pared to the recording from the previous day was significant. After, on average, an hour's practice, including the time taken to read and understand the additional information, their reading of the soliloquy dramatically changed. In terms of speed, the majority of the students slowed down by approximately 20 seconds, but the placement of the stress became much clearer and thus the total impression resembled that of an advance-level speaker. It can be presumed that the unfamiliar arrangement of the alphabet on the edited script from the second stage enabled the students to perceive each word with attentiveness, encouraging them to focus on the desired stress pattern in the soliloquy. Although the quality of their English accent reached a satisfactory level, there were still several mispronunciations or inaccurate readings. Therefore, to improve further, the students continued practicing the soliloquy (using the resources mentioned in stage 1) at the second stage.

STAGE 3

By the time they reached stage 3, there were differences between the students in terms of their aspiration and punctuality. Students C, D, G, and H were always quick in response to the emails I sent and therefore they were easy to work with. For instance, those who sent the audio files at the very last minute could not receive satisfactory guidance from me. Even though the tutorial through email did not surpass the level of pointing out the mistakes or the bad tendencies of the students in their reading, it was clear that those emails also boosted their motivation to keep working on the project.

As a result, students C, D, G, and H seemed to have gained enough technique to read the soliloquy with a good accent. For their last stage of the project, a sample reading created by me was finally distributed. The model recording carefully followed the pattern of iambic pentameter rather than adjusting to the modern stress (stressing the first syllable of the word 'respect' for instance) or ignoring the line breaks and punctuations. Additionally, it contained some differentiation of the stress levels, which can be connected to the idea of the naturalistic reading of verse lines. The four students who have effectively reached this stage had the habit of stressing five times to almost equal level, which gave the monotonous impression. Therefore, for the final adjustment, I encouraged the students to listen carefully to the different level of stress in the sample reading and try to imitate it accordingly.

RESULTS

Students C, D, G, and H who reached stage 3 while being constantly in touch with me, improved significantly their reading of Shakespearean verse. At the start of the project, they all had the tendency of pronouncing the subject of the line stronger than the verb or function word, as well as keeping the Japanese feature of having almost no stress (Japanese, unlike English, does not have a stress accent – rather it has a pitch accent). However, by listening to the model recording, they all acclimated to the different, English version. There are still improvements to be made in terms of their pronunciations of vowel and consonants, but the general impression of their readings was distinctively better than average English learners in Japan. The words identified as being especially difficult for the students included 'o'er', 'consummation', and 'resolution'. 'O'er' is a contraction of the word ('over') that does not appear in standard, modern English, and 'consummation' was indicated as difficult because of its length, with four syllables. 'Resolution' had the feature of containing both 'R' and 'L' sounds which are irregular for Japanese speaker.

After completing stage 3, C, G and H enrolled to do another reading experiment. For this, they were each given a different script from Shakespearean plays. Student C received the 'Tomorrow…' speech from *Macbeth,* G, the opening lines of Orsino from *Twelfth Night*, and H ventured to read the 'has not a Jew eyes' speech by Shylock from *The Merchant of Venice.* All three had only a day to search the pronunciations of the unfamiliar words, consider the stress pattern of the lines, practice and record. Students C and G demonstrated satisfactory readings by somewhat hitting the correct stresses. On the other hand, H struggled to find the rhythm in the speech and resulted in rather monotonous delivery which was typical of their practice at stage 1. The reason for this gap among the students seems to be the difference between verse lines and prose lines. The speech of Shylock is written in prose and therefore it is not compatible with the verse analysis technique that the students have been trying during the project. In contrast, the lines from *Macbeth* and *Twelfth Night* are in verse, and the result of this extra task suggests that the 3 week period enables the students to detect the stress pattern of verse and quickly apply it to another verse that they have never seen before.

OVERVIEW

The recordings of students A and E could not be collected, so it is impossible to measure their progress. Student F had sent all the recordings at the end of each stage and this resulted in the lack of tutorial input. Judging from the four audio files sent by F, development could not be detected. Towards the end of the project, the reading of F became faster and smoother but with the wrong stress pattern and mispronunciations. These defects are the result of not understanding the explanation sheet of Shakespearean verse, and not receiving detailed modification that the other student had. Student B who had the highest ability in English language did not reach any better standard than the other students. B had a lot of preconceptions about how the lines of Shakespeare have been read by the others and could not follow the basic pattern of iambic pentameter. B knew the soliloquy from seeing it performed on stage, and had the experience of reading the entire play in the past. These factors might have prevented B from approaching the text with flexibility. However, it seems that less proficient and experienced students, who have had less exposure to such passages, can come to them with an open mind.

The last thing that needs to be mentioned here is the result of questionnaire collected at the end of the project, about how the students practiced for their reading tasks. For stage 1, the average time used for preparation (ahead of them recording their reading and sent me) was 30 minutes, and this custom continued during both stage 2 and 3. The average frequency for practice was either once every 2 or 3 days. This might contradict the idea of engaging themselves with the learning text at least once every day. However, the lower than expected frequency of practice could have created a less-stressed self-study environment that could have worked in favour of the students.

Furthermore, during the process of training, I aimed to give advice in as much detail as possible, particularly of the kind that cannot be gained from the reading function of the online dictionary or other supporting materials. At the same time, the content of each email was filled with encouragement and positive feedback to give moral support for the students. C, who participated in Skype tutorial at the beginning of stage 2, mentioned that talking through a screen while looking at my face and hearing my voice allowed C to feel attached to the project. G, while being satisfied with the result and the process of learning, considered Skype tutorial to be more effective. In reality, there was very little difference in terms of their final outcome between the students who went through the Skype tutorial and those who did not. Since the Skype tutorial did nothing more than reading the sheet together and checking the comprehension of the student, it is possible that the follow up emails enabled non-Skyping students to make up for the missed Skype opportunity.

CONCLUSION

After going through a 3-week-long project and examining its process and result, there seem to be three factors which allowed the students to improve their readings. One is the detailed feedback that enabled them to know their mistakes. Second is the stress-free environment that was created to make them feel comfortable and motivated to accept or adjust to the advice they have received. Finally, the distinctive pattern of Shakespearean verse enabled the students to apply better reading with a clear stress pattern. The transferability of this method should be further examined, but it seems there is a potential for including Shakespearean plays into mid-level English language teaching in Japan.

COVID-19 DID NOT Defeat SHAKESPEARE

TEACHING SHAKESPEARE TO FEMALE STUDENTS DURING 2020 IN SAUDI ARABIA

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One of the common burdens that teachers and college professors share when teaching Shakespearean plays is the difficulty of making them relevant to the students. Naturally, the burden becomes doubled if the students are second language learners of English language and endure a lockdown due to the spread of a virus. Teaching Shakespeare to Saudi female students was a great challenge during the pandemic because of the disconnected audio that these students hear on the other side of the Blackboard/Zoom platform, but the result was rewarding nevertheless.

William Shakespeare's plays have always been adapted. During class we knew that we had to adapt Shakespeare to female Saudi students, who have been deprived of having direct physical communication in class due to the sole dependence on voices to convey the lectures. The lectures were delivered by voice only while showing the slides on zoom/blackboard as a personal choice since we wanted to respect the privacy of our students and let them experience an easy transition with the pandemic happening abruptly. We did not request our students to turn on their cameras, as sometimes this did cause a sense of discomfort among students. However, our doubtful outlook on the term during the beginning of the lockdown turned into an optimistic one when we realized that our students understood Shakespeare better compared to the period preceding the lockdown and previous terms (before March 2020, classes were face to face) and found his plays engaging and relatable, especially, *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*.

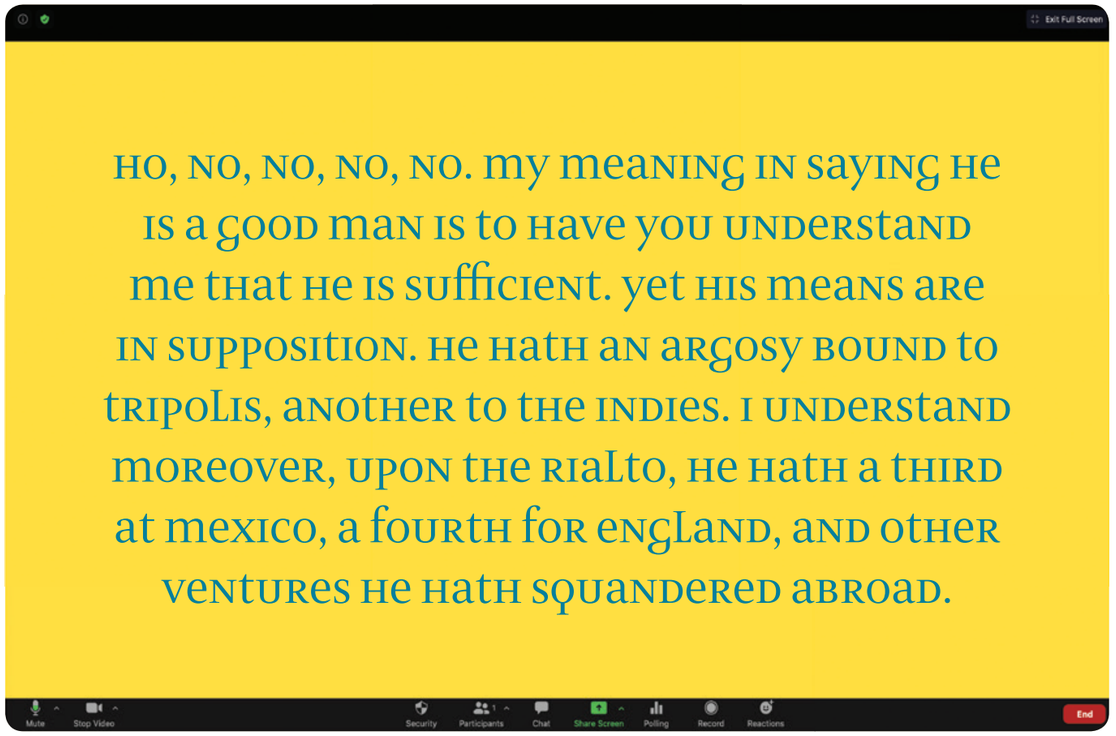
There is no doubt that the 'fourth wall' was at play here, where the performers (us in this case) were constantly challenging the conventional method of delivery in order for the students to grasp a text they were not in contact with before. Even though this concept was imposed on us (although the 'fourth wall' stems from modern day theatre, using it to describe the method of delivering lectures virtually on Blackboard/Zoom is appropriate given the minimalist approach we took, relying on only our voices to guide the student's experience of the Shakespearean texts). The focus of the students was on the text and nothing more; we were not even in the picture. During virtual classes in Saudi Arabia, usually female students do not get to see the female instructor's face or performance (it should be noted that this is not an obligatory rule but many females in Saudi Arabia do not prefer turning on the video for privacy concerns). As they focused on the audio, the instructor's voice, and the slides in this particular course, they also learned to listen to their inner voice while reading.

"as they focused on the audio, the instructor's voice, and the slides in this particular course, they also learned to listen to their inner voice while reading."

William Shakespeare is one of the few English literary figures that has his own courses in some of the universities in Saudi Arabia, such as King Abdulaziz University (LANE 448), Jazan University (Eng. 331), Majmaah University (Shakespeare I), and King Saud University (Eng. 343). This short paper will focus on our experience as instructors for course Eng. 343 at King Saud University during the second term of 2019–20, when the Covid-19 lockdown took place. During March 2020, all universities in the kingdom stopped giving classes on campus to comply with the Ministry of Education announcement as a protective measure against Covid-19. At such time, around 6 weeks had already passed in terms of running the program. Both instructors and students were put under pressure to finish the course they had both invested so much time in. The characters of Shylock and Iago received most of the attention from students in relation to both plays (*Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*), which makes one wonder if the unfortunate circumstance is fortunate. The first challenge we faced was how to make the students more active and responsive to our questions regarding the text. However, because we expected they would not be responsive, we focused on one theme (good vs evil) for both plays to unify the exploration.

It appeared being isolated from any form of distraction (such as going out and meeting their friends) forced the students to actually read Shakespeare. Even though his

"it appeared being isolated from any form of distraction (such as going out and meeting their friends) forced the students to actually read shakespeare."

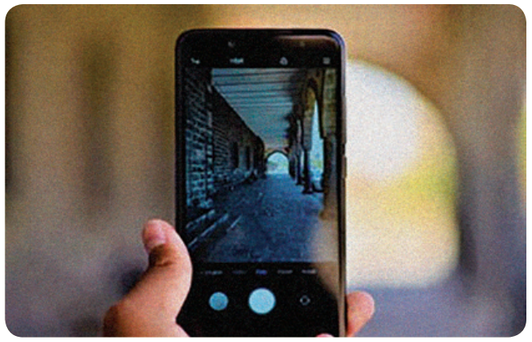


works are performative in nature, the beauty of his works falls into his dialogues, which does not necessarily require performance. The fact that students seemed to understand Shakespeare more during the lockdown was due to them reading the dialogues which make Shakespeare's plays more of a spoken work rather than a performative one for Saudi students. What caught the students' attention the most in his plays was the position of female characters and Shakespeare's treatment of outsiders. They felt more empathetic and had better understanding of his use of anti-hero traits in creating the characters; they got inspired reading about female characters that were given prominent actions and events that drove the plot towards its resolution. They no longer looked vaguely at evil characters, but rather they focused on the motives which lead to evil actions by studying the choice of words each character used.

"they felt more empathetic and had better understanding of his use of anti-hero traits in creating the characters; they got inspired reading about female characters that were given prominent actions and events that drove the plot towards its resolution."

Before the lockdown, and while we focused on good vs evil, students did not really empathize with the 'evil' characters, like the othered Shylock, or the manipulative Iago. One of the possible reasons that made the students show their empathy towards the othered characters is that they saw themselves as marginalized characters within English literature. When students were first introduced to Iago pre-Covid-19 pandemic, they really resented the racial slurs that dominate his speeches with other characters and existed in his monologues (I. I. 95-97& I. I. 126) During the lockdown, they hated him as a character wholly because of the slurs he directed, and his actions, towards other characters, which indicated that their awareness of social justice somewhat shifted during the lockdown. We can argue that experiencing a situation which included racist remarks (on the news and social media) against another nation (i.e. China), increased their awareness of race. Iago's vengeance scheme was not reasonable to them, and they saw his selfishness in the fact that he wanted to take Othello's place because he felt self-entitled, as a result of racial inequality (II. I. 317-329).

Students' perceptions of Shylock before and during the pandemic varied interestingly. Students focused on three parts to digest his character. First, they were introduced to Shylock through the impressions of other characters about Shylock (the students had a sense of the prejudice directed against him) (I. III. 425-29 and 506-10; II.II.566-96; II.III.776-84). The second way students got to know Shylock was through direct contact/introduction when he appears in the play (I.III.433-55). The third part was when Shylock was in the court scene, students began



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to see reasonable and relatable parts of Shylock (VI.I.1976-94 and 2021-35). During the pandemic they were more aware of the multiple dimensions of his character, whereas, students before the pandemic thought that he was just one-sided: an angry character. Pre-pandemic, students resented Shylock and all his evil deeds such as being an usurer, hating Christians, and abusing his only daughter, Jessica (II. V. 859-65 and 895-906). It was only post-pandemic and after reading two important articles about the othering of Shylock, "Redefining Censorship: Lessons Learned from Teaching the *Merchant of Venice* in Israel" by Esther B. Schupak and "'Certainly the Muslim is the very devil incarnation': Islamophobia and *The Merchant of Venice*" by Imran Awan And Islam Issa, that the students began to lower their guard and show empathy towards the isolated Shylock.

"that even if the students were not able to see shylock, and his reactions, and students were able to enjoy that students were able to enjoy a great shakespearian tragicomedy."

Through examining the theme of isolation students expressed their concerns for why the other characters were so harsh to Shylock at the end of the play. They hated that the state took possession of his property (IV.I.2295-311). I think it was around the time Shylock was expressing his emotions about the turquoise ring and how it was his deceased wife's ring, that the students saw him as a human being (III.I. 1350-354). This proves that even if the students were not able to see Shylock, and his reactions, a great Shakespearian tragicomedy.

Unlike Shylock, the students were immediately introduced to Iago from his interaction with Roderigo in act one (I. I. 8-35). It should be noted that the exploration of both characters was based on a close reading of the text to demonstrate to the students the way the characters developed across the acts. We did not plan to introduce the characters as evil or good since we tried to make the reading session as active as possible by demonstrating

"the students' treatment of such characters during the lockdown poses a very important question about how shakespeare texts should be taught to demonstrate the complexity of human nature to the student."

to the students how to interrogate the text by asking them certain questions about the relevant characters. From this point onward, the students' perception of him did not change during the pre-pandemic period. However, during the pandemic, they were trying to justify why he is the way he is, rather than accepting he is the villain of the play.

The empathy of students towards villain characters who are misunderstood grew stronger during the lockdown. The students' treatment of such characters during the lockdown poses a very important question about how Shakespeare texts should be taught to demonstrate the complexity of human nature to the student. Did the strain of social, political and economical collapse unlock the ability of students to understand a Shakespearean villain?

This experience allowed us to experience the text differently compared to previous terms and made us turn the virtual space into an active one with the interactions we made with the students about the place of Shylock and Iago on the Good Evil spectrum. Debating what makes a person good or evil helped the students to examine the characters with an enthusiasm they lacked during the lockdown. Not being able see the face of the voice who was discussing the text with them pushed them to get inside the psyche of the characters by facing the text directly to identify their own understanding of characters they are not necessarily familiar. Covid-19 did not only teach the students to overcome the isolation imposed by the lockdown, it also highlighted for them the beauty of literature.

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an approach to teaching hamlet

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When the dying Hamlet asks his friend Horatio to tell his story, we might wonder just what story Hamlet wants Horatio to tell, just what is Hamlet's story. Shakespeare's play is riddled with questions to which directors and actors, in the process of rehearsal, propose answers. The answers they propose are not Shakespeare's answers nor the play's answers, but their own.

Here are some (but by no means all) of the questions Shakespeare leaves unanswered in *Hamlet*, although as we watch the play we will never be troubled by them, sometimes because the actors will answer them for us and sometimes because, even if they have not answered them, even if they cannot be answered in performance, the play will ordinarily move forward with sufficient energy and plausibility to keep the audience engaged and the questions at bay.

1. How deeply does Claudius care about Gertrude? Does he seem an able or an inept ruler?

2. Why does Polonius warn Ophelia against Hamlet and say he is out of her star, while Gertrude, at Ophelia's grave, says she hoped they would marry?

3. Why does Hamlet pretend to be made when his doing so only raises the fears and suspicions of the King?

4. Why do Claudius and Gertrude send for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to learn about Hamlet and never question Horatio who is already at Elsinore? How does Hamlet act toward Rosencrantz and Guildenstern when he first meets them at Elsinore?

5. How willingly does Ophelia participate in the plot to spy on Hamlet? What are the "remembrances" Hamlet has given her? Why does she decide to return them to him? Why does she accuse Hamlet of being "unkind"? Why does Hamlet suddenly ask her, "Where is your father"?

6. Why does Hamlet berate Ophelia in the nunnery? Why does he respond so violently (at least verbally) to her?

7. Why does the King say "give me some light" as he watches *The Murder of Gonzago*. Is it a guilty conscience (as Hamlet thinks) or does he fear Hamlet as he watches the murder of a king by his nephew?

8. Why does Hamlet berate Gertrude in the closet scene? Why does he respond so violently (at least verbally) to her? What are Gertrude's conclusions about Hamlet and his allegations at the end of the closed scene?

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9. How much does Gertrude know? Does she act differently after the closet scene? Does her relationship with Claudius change after the closet scene? If so, how and why does she act differently? How and why has her relationship with Claudius changed?

10. How has Hamlet changed after his return to Elsinore? Why are his thoughts not "bloody" as he has earlier said they would be? What accounts for the change in Hamlet?

But readers of *Hamlet* are not much troubled either by the failure of the play to answer so many crucial questions about its characters and events. Actors and directors usually choose answers explicitly. Readers often do so implicitly, answering the questions as they read without always being aware they have done so, closing in the processing of reading what Shakespeare left open, choosing plausible answers to questions they do not always recognize as questions.

In the classroom, however, it may be worthwhile to articulate the questions, to raise them explicitly with the students so that they might, if nothing else, become more aware of the way they have themselves created – sometimes consciously, sometimes instinctively – a story for the play to tell. But more importantly, perhaps, discussing the questions, weighing the various answers they will inevitably evoke, will draw students into a process that replicates, in the classroom, the one in which actors and directors engage, and thus involve them more thoughtfully and imaginatively in the work that *Hamlet* demands of us all—the making (or actually the re-making once again) of the play. If time allows, the questions can, of course, take the students a step or two further by asking them to perform in the classroom the various answers they have proposed, to discover how more than answer can be plausible, more than one answer make sense. But even if they never get out of their seats, they will have discovered at firsthand how imagination, their imagination, must always amend what Shakespeare wrote.

"for those unanswered questions in Hamlet reflect the complexity – the mystery – of the world that we ourselves inhabit."

The unanswered questions, however, may not only make clear to students how we read Shakespeare, but also how we read the world in which we live, for those unanswered questions in *Hamlet* reflect the complexity – the mystery – of the world that we ourselves inhabit. Like Hamlet in Elsinore, we read the world around us as best we can, confronting questions which have no incontrovertible answers. And, like Hamlet, we choose—in the play and in the world—what answers seem right, while the certainty we seek, both in the play and in the world, forever eludes us. If students can come to understand, from their work with *Hamlet*, that we must all, for better or worse, choose without knowing all we need to know, then they will, I believe, have recognized one of the troubling truths of the human condition.

"we must all, for better or worse, choose without knowing all we need to know, then they will, I believe, have recognized one of the troubling truths of the human condition."

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