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FIRE STUDENTS' ENTHUSIASM USING MANGA AND ANIME WITH KYOKO MATSUYAMA
VIEW *HAMLET* THROUGH THE FILM *RENAISSANCE MAN* WITH YUTO KOIZUMI
MATCH *TWELFTH NIGHT* AND *HANAZAKARI NO KIMITACHI E* WITH MARIE HONDA
PAIR RADFORD'S AND LAMBS' *MERCHANT OF VENICE* WITH SHINICHI SUZUKI

Find this magazine and more at the BSA Education Network's webpage

www.britishshakespeare.ws/education/

A HEARTY WELCOME

A hearty welcome to new roles for our existing trustees Karen Eckersall and Chris Green as co-chairs of the BSA Education Committee. Apart from their contributions to BSA events, you can see their work on Twitter @BSAShakespeare and on the Education Network blog. It's also extremely exciting to welcome Tracy Irish and Helen Mears, experts in Shakespeare in theatre practice for education, as newly elected members to the board.

Read all about them here:

www.britishshakespeare.ws/about/board-of-trustees/

SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

The Shakespeare Association of America has a raft of education-related sessions in its programme for the LA meeting in Los Angeles. These include: the End of Education, Shakespeare Beyond the Research University, First-generation Shakespeare, Shakespeare and Service Courses, Teaching Shakespeare at the Performance, Connecting Faculty, Schools and Communities through Shakespeare, and Shakespeare in the Health Humanities.

For further details see:

www.shakespeareassociation.org/annual-meetings/

www.shakespeareassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/June-2017-Bulletin-Final-w-Signature.pdf

CONFERENCES IN 2018

Other relevant conferences in 2018 include the Asian Shakespeare Association meeting in the Philippines and our very own British Shakespeare Association conference in Belfast. For details visit:

www.asianshakespeare.org/conferences/

www.britishshakespeare.ws/conference/

SHAKESPEARE TEACHING METHODS

Calling all English teachers in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England. We're (Drs. Sarah Olive, University of York, and Velda Elliott, Oxford University) doing the first major study of Shakespeare teaching methods ever (there was one in Birmingham about 30 years ago – literally the last time someone did a widescale survey of it). Please complete the attached survey – and spread it to your English teaching friends in all four countries of the UK. We're especially keen to reach NI, Scotland and Wales so that the experiences and voices of teachers there are truly represented. We will endeavour to share results at the BSA conference in Belfast 2018 – a truly fitting location for hearing about teaching Shakespeare throughout the United Kingdom!

www.oxford.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/teaching-shakespeare

SHAKESPEARE FOR INCLUSIVE AUDIENCES

A message from the actor, director, researcher, contributor to *Teaching Shakespeare*, Kelly Hunter about Flute Theatre's important work on Shakespeare for inclusive audiences: 'We are just about to go into rehearsals for our new production – *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for children with autism at the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond. We tour round the world with our shows whilst relying entirely on donations and grants to keep us going. The Just Giving link is below. This is a brand new campaign – it would be wonderful to have you on board and please do pass it on to anyone you think may be happy to support us.

www.flutetheatre.co.uk

www.orangetreetheatre.co.uk/whats-on/a-midsummer-nights-dream

www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/flutetheatre/journeycontinues

CALLING ALL ARTISTS, ILLUSTRATORS, ART STUDENTS, DESIGNERS AND COMIC CREATORS . . .

The Second International Graphic Shakespeare competition is open for submissions until 31 December 2017. Prizes are planned for winning entries. For further details of the criteria and submission process see:

www.s-sj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/2nd-Graphic-Shakespeare-Competition-call-for-participation-0724_2.pdf



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a NTHONY MARTIN is a Professor in the Faculty of Arts, Letters, and Sciences at Waseda University. He studied at University College London and at Oxford (gaining a D.Phil in 1993). Since 1994, at Waseda University, he has researched national identities and Renaissance drama, taught and supervised students in various areas, including Shakespeare. He has also published articles on George Herbert, Thomas Norton, and myth and legend in Renaissance history plays.

The four papers published here derive from a conference held at Waseda University, Tokyo, in January 2017, on the theme of Shakespeare Film East West. as part of the association between the University of Birmingham and Waseda, which had been initiated the previous year. The Shakespeare Institute at Birmingham and the Faculty of Letters, Arts, and Sciences and the Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum have developed a number of joint projects, of which the January conference was a landmark event. With keynote lectures from Yoshimoto Mitsuhiro and Russell Jackson, a special film showing, and two days of papers from young academics from Japan, the UK, China and Taiwan, the conference was a major success in furthering the link between the two universities.

While there are a number of connections relating to Shakespeare – Waseda’s humanities programme and its Theatre Museum are the direct inheritance of the work of Tsubouchi Shoyo, the great translator and facilitator of Shakespeare into Japan – the theme of Shakespeare Film, from western and eastern perspectives, was particularly useful in bringing together our interests and practices, and in developing a shared vision of how Shakespeare studies at university level can progress in the globalized educational area that we now inhabit. For the students we have in Japan, and elsewhere in east Asia, Shakespeare is most readily seen and studied on screen. Although Japan in general and Tokyo in particular are fortunate in being able to host frequent visits by international theatre groups,

and while Japanese translated and adapted versions are performed by student and school groups occasionally, most exposure to Shakespearean performance for Japanese students is through screen media. Thus, analysis and discussion can proceed from a basis that students may well find familiar. Moreover, as these papers demonstrate, discussion of characterisation, plot, and narrative is greatly facilitated by the use of excerpts and scenes from screen versions, since these can be viewed repeatedly. The use of film allows for repeated viewing of episodes and clips, both as an instructive tool, using or not using captioned subtitles in Japanese or English, and also as a way of understanding nuances of performance and interpretation. Moreover, such screen and supporting textual materials are easily available from a variety of sources, thus encouraging further viewing and study.

Importantly, students can connect the Shakespeare versions and adaptations to their own environments, knowledge, and interests. It is noticeable that many of the versions discussed here are received by the students in terms of the movie stars who act the roles, and in relation to the other movies, television shows, anime and manga already known to them. Thus, Shakespearean themes and productions are related in the classroom to questions of gender roles and sexuality (Honda); of representations of violence and war (Koizumi); of how patriotism, nationality and ethnicity are expressed dramatically (Suzuki). Through studying these screen and manga versions, students can gain knowledge of the various Shakespearean worlds (Matsuyama), and can come to appreciate, and enjoy, a process of understanding Shakespeare as part of their own world.

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TEACHING UNFAMILIAR MATERIALS
WITH FAMILIAR RESOURCES

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In Japanese universities, English Literature itself has become a subject taught to a very limited number of students. There are courses in "English Literature", a common subject in many universities with faculties of literature, of modern language or humanities, and/or faculties that grant teaching licences for English teachers. In the former faculties, if they have such a course, it is usual that "English Literature" is a compulsory subject, while in the latter the subject could be either compulsory or selective. If it is designated as a selective subject, students are advised either to take an "English Literature" class or an "American Literature" class. Japanese students might take perhaps at most one or two semesters of one course. Moreover, in most cases students graduating from high school in Japan have very little knowledge of, or exposure to English literature at all. And, within this limited exposure, for many students reading an actual English literary text, even in Japanese translation, is something they would never think about. Indeed, for many students, reading a literary text of any kind is something that they are not accustomed to.

Teaching English Literature to such students presents great difficulties, since their circumstances and the educational environment has not allowed them to be familiar with English Literary texts. Some students may be familiar with the names of certain authors, but they would never have read either original texts or translated texts in Japanese. For those students who are not at all familiar with reading through a complete text, the task of reading through a novel or play itself would be a major challenge. To draw such students into reading such literary materials, what is needed is something that they can connect with. In Japan these materials can be readily found in manga or animation.

Manga has been used for study materials for some time in Japan in the form of "study manga (学習まんが)". "Study

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manga" are comic books made in several fields from humanities to science and social studies. However, such "study manga" which are perhaps similar in intent to the "dummies" series of books in the English-speaking world: they will only attract those students who are already interested in the fields. And such students could be encouraged to go on to read literary texts in English literature classes. On the other hand, those students who have exhibited no previous interest in "study manga" would not be persuaded to read the texts that are taught in class. To draw such students' interest manga materials other than "study manga", but which similarly refer to or use English literature materials, are necessary.

In the last few years manga or light novels – that is light reading materials that could be categorised between novel and manga – and animations that use Shakespeare as their main source of materials have emerged. *Seven Shakespeares*, and *Seven Shakespeares Non Sanz Droict*, by Harold Sakuishi, *Black Butler* by Yana Toboso, *Blast of Tempest* by Kyo Shirodaira, Arihide Sano, and Ren Saizaki, *Requiem of the Rose King*, by Aya Kanno are a few examples. All these manga use Shakespeare's plays partly or wholly, and, with the exception of the *Requiem of the Rose King*, use Shakespearean plots or quotation.

Therefore, instead of reading a fully adapted manga version of a Shakespeare play or a Shakespeare study manga, many students would rather read a manga where part of the plot adapts Shakespeare or uses quotations, both within and outside the context of the original text. In most cases, when quotation is used, the source is very clearly stated within the pages of the manga and it is thus very easy for the reader to notice the presence of the Shakespearean quotations or plot lines. Moreover, all the manga mentioned above are either published in weekly or monthly magazines. Customarily, in these serials, if the readers' reaction or reception are not positive, within a few months there would be a possibility that, even for the creations of the most popular manga artists, the serial stories would be terminated. Since all these manga have been published for more than one year, their influence amongst students is apparent. The renewed serial publication of some of these manga is advertised on public



transport, which is quite common for famous or popular manga artists or manga comics.

In the case of *Seven Shakespeares*, and *Seven Shakespeares Non Sanz Droict*, by Harold Sakuishi, the plot is mainly about uncovering the untold story of the lost years of Shakespeare and how he collaborated with others to write his plays. Sakuishi accepts the theory of Shakespeare being Catholic, and adds a story of his collaborator being a Chinese English girl named Li with the ability to write beautiful poetry. While the manga is clearly fictional, the background research is thorough and the atmosphere that is explained in the story is very true to the historical background of the time of Shakespeare, as is made evident by the list of references. This allows students to become familiar with the background of Shakespeare's plays and the themes that may be discussed in considering the text. Students' familiarity with the manga or the manga expressions allows them to understand the complex historical or cultural structures of England in Shakespeare's time. This development of familiarity also makes it easier for the students to access the world of Shakespeare and allows them to read the text with fewer feelings of intimidation. However, this manga does have one problem in that it is quite historical in its plot, and students who are not interested in historical manga would not have read it.

Black Butler by Yana Toboso may share the same problem of limited readership with *Seven Shakespeares*, and *Seven Shakespeares Non Sanz Droict*, by Harold Sakuishi. It is set in Victorian England. Furthermore, it is designated as a girl manga (Shojo-manga) which sometimes limits its readers exclusively to females. However, unlike the *Seven Shakespeares* series *Black Butler* does not deal exclusively with Shakespeare. Although the period setting is Victorian, the manga deals with many English literary and cultural themes, including Sherlock Holmes, and such topics as Jack the Ripper and Indian curry culture. Shakespearean quotations and dialogue alluding to Shakespeare are only used for a few pages in the manga, but they are used in dramatic ways, including direct reference to Shakespeare. Nevertheless, the use of such allusions and quotations is not the key factor in the manga's structure. Rather they are used to spice up or give a more plausible atmosphere to the setting.

“shakespearean quotation and dialogue alluding to shakespeare are only used for a few pages in the manga, but they are used in dramatic ways, including direct reference to shakespeare. nevertheless, the use of such allusions and quotations is not the key factor in the manga's structure. rather they are used to spice up or give a more plausible atmosphere to the setting.”

This use of Shakespeare as background detail is continued in the animation series of *Black Butler*, with the exception of one episode which deals entirely with performing *Hamlet*. This is quite unusual since none of the other episodes of the animated manga uses literature in this style. This one, bonus, episode deals with the similarity of the situation between the protagonist Earl Ciel Phantomhive and Hamlet. His loyal demon-butler, Sebastian Michaelis, functions as a guide in explaining the traits shared by Ciel and Hamlet, such as revenge, family situation, presence of a character the protagonist can truly trust. What is interesting is that Ciel's butler Sebastian has provoked him throughout the episode and criticised the paths Hamlet has taken. Sebastian, a demon, indicates that human foolishness is clearly shown in Hamlet's tragedy, and with so many shared traits between, if he continues on to have his revenge, like Hamlet, it will lead to a tragic end. The reference is quite clear to the viewers, since the play of *Hamlet* will be performed by Ciel as Hamlet. By the end of the episode, Ciel has been able to change the play's genre to comedy, thus avoiding a tragic end. This episode explains the plot of Hamlet in a rather comical way, which may reduce students' resistance to reading a classic literary text. Particularly, in Japan, sometimes students avoid texts that end tragically, saying that they do not like “bad-end” stories. In the animation episode of *Black Butler's Hamlet* the way the plot is explained to some



extent prepares the students for the tragic end, and since the plot is criticised by the protagonist it appears to conjure their interest. On the other hand, the problem of using this animation episode as a pedagogical resource is somewhat similar to the manga version of *Black Butler*. A manga which has been turned into an animation strongly suggest that the number of viewers were more than sufficient to make profit for two seasons. However, like the readership of the “girl manga”, the viewers of the animated *Black Butler* episodes would be exclusively female. Neither the animation nor the manga would reach male students.

In the case of *Blast of Tempest* by Kyo Shirodaira, Arihide Sano, and Ren Saizaki the genre of the manga is defined as boy manga, but the manga that was published in magazine format had both girl manga and boy manga genre manga artists. Thus, the readers of this magazine would be both male and female. Moreover, it is noticeable that *Blast of Tempest* itself has both boy manga and girl manga traits. The way the manga is drawn can be categorised as girl manga, especially with the presence of two handsome teenage male characters. The plot of the manga is strongly intertwined with the plots of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*. This manga repeatedly uses quotations from *Hamlet* and *The Tempest* in crucial scenes and on the opening pages of each monthly issue, with the source of quotations clearly cited. Also the plots of both plays are explicated thoroughly, and both protagonists, Yoshino Takigawa and Mahiro Fuwa, repeatedly allude to, quote and sometimes criticise actions taken by Shakespeare’s characters. When the manga was turned into animated episodes, Shakespearean quotation has an even greater effect since all the quotation used in the manga are used and with a few additions to fit the adaptations. Although the quotation are spoken in translated Japanese, the wording used is quite out of context compared to everyday spoken language, which makes each quotation stand out in a rather dramatic way. And like *Black Butler* the number of students who are aware of the animation was much more than that of students who are aware of media that is only in manga.

Requiem of the Rose King, by Aya Kanno, could be considered as a very innovative adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Henry VI parts 1 to 3* and *King Richard III*. The manga’s protagonist is Richard III himself, and almost everything is seen from the perspective of Richard. Another innovative factor is that Richard is portrayed as an androgynous figure who devotes his/her life to his/her father, the Duke of York, and the family, although he/she is loathed by his/her mother, the Duchess of York. In the manga, the relationship between Richard and Henry VI is portrayed as a secret connection where both hide their identity. As the plot plays out, those readers who are familiar with Shakespeare already know the ending and feel Richard’s struggle to try to avoid the inevitable. Although the manga has not completed currently, it has completed the events of *Henry VI part 1 to 3* and has started on Richard III, but how the author will elaborate the story is yet to be seen. Kanno’s manga is quite close that of Harold Sakuishi, although the setting is fictional, since Kanno is following the plot of Shakespeare; nevertheless, it is in a way a historical manga. Some student readers, who feel uncomfortable with such historical fiction as noted previously, may also reject this manga and its adaptation of Shakespeare’s story. Furthermore, as it is not been made into an animation, the spread or the general awareness of this work is much lower compared to that of *Black Butler* or *Blast of Tempest*.

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I have considered four series of manga: *Seven Shakespeares*, and its sequel even *Shakespeares Non Sanz Droict*, *Black Butler*, *Blast of Tempest*, and *Requiem of the Rose King*, and the two animated versions of *Black Butler* and *Blast of Tempest*. When comparing the manga and the animation, student recognition is higher for the manga that has been animated. However, the abiding or deeper interest of students in literary texts does not really depend on the existence of animated versions of the manga; instead their interest seems more reliant on the style in which the manga are presented and the amount of literature which is reflected in manga’s plot. To use manga and/or animation as a means of encouraging student’s interest in literature such as Shakespeare may work to a limited extent, but the variety of resources is the key factor in drawing in and maintaining student engagement.

FROM *10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU* TO *HANA YORI DANGO*

mARIE HONDA is a Lecturer at Meiji Gakuin University. She received M.A. degrees from Waseda University and the Shakespeare Institute, (the University of Birmingham), and her Ph.D. from Waseda University. Her current area of interest is the Elizabethan and Jacobean underworld as well as teaching Shakespeare by through film adaptations.

Currently, I teach Shakespeare in two seminar classes for third and fourth year students and also hold two lecture classes: an “Introduction to British Literature” for second-year students and “British Drama” for third- and fourth-year students. (Following the American university model, Japanese universities have a four-year system.) In this article, I discuss the effects of using teenage film adaptations of Shakespeare in teaching Shakespeare in Japan, particularly through the perspective of students’ comments.

EFFECTS OF USING FILM ADAPTATIONS

With my third-year and fourth-year students, we read a Shakespeare text with Japanese commentary, supplemented by watching films. In these classes, I ask students whether reading Shakespeare’s original text is important and also if the film adaptations are helpful for them. The results indicate that in the views of students there are both advantages and disadvantages. Most students think reading the original text is important because without it they cannot understand Shakespeare’s verse, figurative expression, and wordplay. Some feel Japanese translations are useful, but the problem is that different translators produce different translations and interpretations; therefore, understanding of the text varies according to the translation used. However, a few students feel reading the original text is unnecessary because it is too difficult, and just reading a Japanese translation is sufficient; one student said, ‘Japanese lines move my heart more directly.’

“a few students feel reading the original text is unnecessary because it is too difficult, and just reading a Japanese translation is sufficient; one student said, ‘Japanese lines move my heart more directly.’”

On the other hand, most students feel film adaptations are helpful for understanding people’s ways of life, including the food, clothes, customs, and manners of Shakespeare’s

day, as otherwise they find it hard to imagine Renaissance England. From such film adaptations with Renaissance settings as those of Zeffirelli, students can appreciate the Renaissance way of life visually and easily. Also, according to one student, the facial expressions and gestures of the actors are useful for understanding the text; especially in the case of comedy, such fools as Feste are difficult to follow and she could hardly understand such a character from the text alone. Another student said she finds it difficult to remember English names and visualize who is who when reading the text, but in a film, an actor’s face helps with recognition of each character.

However, as some students point out, film adaptations have disadvantages as well as advantages. For example, some students claim that film adaptations can narrow your perspective and imagination, and also if you watch a film with a modern contemporary setting such as *10 Things I Hate about You* or *She’s the Man* before reading the text, the first impression will haunt you permanently. Therefore, as some suggest, a combination of original text and film adaptation seems preferable in teaching Shakespeare, so whenever the students watch film adaptations, I urge them to try to draw a line between the adaptation and the original.

THE POPULARITY OF SHAKESPEARE’S TEEN FILM ADAPTATIONS

Unlike in the seminar classes just described, in the two lecture classes, “Introduction to British Literature” for second-year students, and “British Drama” for third- and fourth-year students, I focus on film adaptations set both in the Renaissance and our time rather than on reading texts. In the introductory class, I show the balcony scene in Zeffirelli’s and Baz Lurhmann’s films of *Romeo and Juliet*, and ask the students which one they prefer and why. In my survey of the results, 43 students out of 75 preferred Zeffirelli, while 32 students preferred Lurhmann. Zeffirelli is thus slightly more popular.

Those who preferred Zeffirelli said the scene is more romantic, and that the balcony and the distance between Romeo and Juliet is important as it represents the obstacle between the lovers. Also, in Zeffirelli, the parting scene is longer, but their inability to say goodbye suggests their love is strong and deep, an aspect of the scene which impressed students. On the other hand, those students who preferred Lurhmann mostly stated that the actor, DiCaprio is hot; his clothing is cool; that the Juliet is better because Olivia Hussey looks too “Asian”; they preferred

the modern setting with CCTV, swimming pool, and lights which make the scene exciting and thrilling; and they felt that the kiss scene is more elegant than that of the older film, where Romeo kisses Juliet from her chin to neck (some students criticized the kiss scene in Zeffirelli as being obscene and disgraceful.)

In the same class, I show a couple of scenes from *Twelfth Night* by Trevor Nunn and *She's the Man* by Andy Fickman, and ask the same question, "Which is better?". According to the survey results, the majority of the class preferred *She's the Man*, with 47 students out of 73 as against 26 students who liked Nunn's version. Most of the students stated that they preferred the more familiar setting of *She's the Man* in a contemporary American high school, and that the film reminded them of the very popular *High School Musical*. Moreover, they found it more comical and more entertaining than Nunn's version. To some students, the story is similar to a Japanese popular comic and TV drama, *Hanazakari no Kimitachi e* [*To You Guys in Full Bloom*], though this perhaps is because I mentioned that work to the class before showing the film in order to help their understanding. This work, in comic and television adaptations, was immensely popular both in Japan and Taiwan. Such popularity evokes the question which students raised of the ubiquitous popularity of the disguise motif across the time and cultures.

One student preferred Nunn's film because the reason for the disguise in *She's the Man* is the heroine's desire to play football, but this did not seem persuasive, and thus made the film unrealistic overall, while in Nunn's *Twelfth Night* the reason behind the disguise is to survive and was thus seen as being more natural. Another observed, '*She's the Man* is an American film like *High School Musical*, and I don't like it. Nunn's film is British as I have imagined for a British film. I like the setting and costumes.' And another student states that 'the older version is magnificent and moving.' In general, those who prefer Nunn seemed to be more serious and conservative in attitude.

Similarly, in the "British Drama" class, I showed *Othello* by Oliver Parker and *O* by Tim Blake Nelson, and surveyed student responses. The vote was almost even: 34 students out of 67 preferred *O*, while 33 students preferred Parker's *Othello*. Some students liked *O* because of the familiar American high school setting, music, basketball, and the actor, Josh Hartnett. Others liked Parker's *Othello* because of its use of Shakespeare's verse and soliloquies, the depth of psychological expression, the beautiful images, and Kenneth Branagh's acting. One student thought the motive of Hugo (Iago) was far-fetched and not persuasive. Moreover, several students said the modern high school

setting looked so realistic that it was scary: in Japanese junior high and high schools, bullying is a big problem, and it appears the film reminded them of that.

"the majority of the students Liked 10 things because of the familiarity of high school setting, and also because the characters and plots have been changed to appeal to today's audience, especially women."

Also in this drama class, I showed *The Taming of the Shrew* by Zeffirelli, the film adaptation of the Broadway musical, *Kiss Me Kate*, by George Sidney, and *10 Things I Hate About You* by Gil Junger, and again surveyed student responses. Out of 60 students, 47 students preferred *10 Things*, 10 chose Zeffirelli, and 3 chose *Kiss Me Kate*. The few students who liked *Kiss Me Kate* were interested in the innovativeness of the play within a play setting and the presentation of back stage. One of the students also remarked, 'the music and dance is like a Disney musical and fun.' However, many students did not like the adaptation because the costumes, especially tights, were considered to be old-fashioned and unappealing.

The majority of the students liked *10 Things* once more because of the familiarity of high school setting, and also because the characters and plots have been changed to appeal to today's audience, especially women; the status and power of Kat and Patrick are equal; both of them are irritated by the idea of love; Patrick does not try to tame Kat. Accordingly, many female students felt it is the most romantic love story of the three adaptations. Also, they liked the star, Heath Ledger.

"others Liked zeffirelli generally because the plot, including the chase scene and the tug of war, is so funny that they were consistently amused throughout the play; they also Liked shakespeare's verse and rhythm and thought these should not be modernized."

Others liked Zeffirelli generally because the plot, including the chase scene and the tug of war, is so funny that they were consistently amused throughout the play; they also liked Shakespeare's verse and rhythm and thought these should not be modernized. Most of the students who preferred *10 Things* expressed their dislike of Burton's Petruchio as an ugly, nasty, old man, but to some students who preferred the Zeffirelli version, including both male and female students, Burton presents an ideal man, tough but sweet, and this was the principal reason for their preference. For example, a male student remarked, 'I like this Petruchio because he expresses the character's liberality and wildness the best.' A female student claimed, 'Petruchio is always cool and calm, so Kate came to



respect him. I reflected on my behavior and decided to become such an elegant lady like Kate.’ Another female student noted, ‘Petruchio looks like Domyoji, the hero in a Japanese comic *Hanayori Dango* or Chuck in *Gossip Girl*, an American TV drama. A man generally wants his girlfriend or wife to obey him more or less like Petruchio. Nowadays, in Japan the number of the so-called herbivore or grass-eating boys is increasing, and both young men and women are not interested in having girlfriends or boyfriends. Petruchio is too much, but women may like such selfish but manly, strong men guarding women. I felt the philosophy of love is universal across the time.’

This student’s comment is very interesting and thought-provoking. The Petruchio type is now rare in Japan; instead, as she discussed, there is an increasing number of sweet and feminine young men who are not interested in having romantic or physical relationships with others. Some young men, it is commonly held, are more interested in hobbies such as music, game, anime, and manga; and they prefer female characters in anime, manga, and the pop stars than women in the real world. But there are also other young men who may be interested in forming relationships but who are too inhibited or shy to initiate or develop such contacts. They are referred to as herbivores or grass-eating boys, like horses, sheep, and cows, while Petruchio-like men are called carnivores or meat-eating boys like lions and tigers. The suggestion from at least one student is that while such Petruchios may be inimical to some, there are young women who still find such figures attractive and interesting. Before showing the film to this class, I pointed out the similarities with Domyoji in *Hana yori Dango*. Some students, including the aforesaid female student, also agreed with the similarity between Petruchio and Domyoji, and thus preferred Zeffirelli’s film. One student also points out that Kate is similar to the heroine Makino in *Hana yori Dango*. Both stories describe the tug of war between a man and a woman. A couple of students suggested such theme is universal, and as the female student claimed, the philosophy of love seems to be universal across time and different nations.

Thus, these surveys show Japanese students tend to prefer teenage high school film adaptations of Shakespeare because the settings are familiar and easier to follow,

especially where they have not read Shakespeare. This requirement for familiarity seems particularly the case in the comedies, *Twelfth Night* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, where the high school settings seem to work especially well. In Japan there is a genre of school settings in comics and TV drama, and the students are familiar with such settings. Also, as some students mentioned with reference to *High School Musical*, Disney, and *Gossip Girl*, Japanese people have been familiar with such American school settings for film and TV drama from *Back to the Future*, the *Brat Pack* films by John Hughes and the *American Pie* and others. Thus, the American high school setting is familiar to Japanese students, though some students prefer traditionally set British TV drama such as *Downton Abbey* and *Sherlock*.

CONCLUSION

Some scholars may criticize Shakespeare’s film adaptations, especially teenage ones, for their massive divergence from the original, and insist on the importance of reading the text and watching the authentic performance based on original texts. However, as one student argued, Shakespeare himself could feel happy that his works are still enjoyed by audiences in today’s world, even though the language, plots, and setting have been altered. Another student suggested Shakespeare’s teenage films like *10 Things* should be shown as an introduction to Shakespeare in high school and university. According to her, this kind of film is casual, fun, and easier to understand for young people; therefore, those who hate reading Shakespeare and the classics come to like them. Furthermore, though this was not a view directly expressed by my students, in my opinion, Shakespeare should be taught in the contexts of both high and low culture. Reading and analyzing his works are of course important, but at the same time they should be enjoyed as entertainment. As Bob Dylan wrote, ‘Shakespeare may not have thought his works were literature. He meant to write them just for fun and money’. Analyzing students’ comments on Shakespeare’s films made me realize these fundamental *raison d’être* of his plays.

“as BOB DYLAN wrote, ‘shakespeare may not have thought his works were Literature. he meant to write them just for fun and money’.”



INTRODUCING HamLet & HENRY V

THROUGH FILM ADAPTATIONS OF SHAKESPEARE

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INTRODUCTION

Penny Marshall's *Renaissance Man* (1994) is a comedy about an unemployed advertising executive who temporarily becomes a teacher of English, and who gradually learns the joy of teaching. His students are a group of youths who are desperately behind in knowledge and skills; the twist on the movie being a stereotypical high school comedy set in a U.S. Army base camp. As a teacher who uses films to teach English in a Japanese university, I have found *Renaissance Man* to be a powerful tool in attracting students to English language and literature. There are perhaps certain analogies between the situation of being a new teacher developing his own teaching methods for undergraduates and, in the film's case, for underachieving students in a U.S. Military School. Moreover, the film offers a crucial opportunity for teaching Shakespeare using contemporary films since scenes and speeches from *Hamlet* and *Henry V* have important parts in the film. This paper discusses the ways in which *Renaissance Man* can illuminate the purposes of teaching Shakespeare in contemporary higher education for non-native speakers of English. Also, I'd like to explore the methods of students analyzing the film against the reviews of film critics.

EDUCATIONAL ISSUES IN U.S. SCHOOLS

Renaissance Man introduces a protagonist, hired mid-career as a teacher of English to eight underachieving, unmotivated army recruits, who is clearly perplexed by the educational issues he faces. Bill Rago (Danny DeVito) has previously worked in an advertising agency. Rago's students are in trouble, perceived as at the bottom of U.S. society; some have no families at all, while others have large numbers of relatives but come from dysfunctional environments, suffering abuse or neglect, particularly from their fathers. Rago perceives these problems, and is further enlightened by his superior officer, Captain Murdoch (James Remar):

You see, after their families let 'em down, they go to what's left of their schools. The teachers are underpaid. They're scared, so they stop teaching. But that doesn't stop 'em from handing out high school diplomas like they were toilet paper. So that means we gotta take 'em. Country better shape up soon, though. We're going to hell in a handcart.

This criticism echoes comments heard across higher education, and this feeling of social and educational malaise, in many different national systems, has if anything increased since the 1990s. The representation of racially diverse, economically disadvantaged communities in the U.S. helps Japanese students to understand social problems in the U.S. and to compare such matters with their country's own poverty issues.

RENAISSANCE MAN AND HAMLET

In the movie, as a class activity, Rago asks his students to bring in any reading material and make a presentation about it. The class does not succeed: some students bring comic books or columns from sports year books, and soon they start making fun of each other. However, a question from Pvt. Miranda Myers (Stacey Dash), the only female student in the class, gives Rago the opportunity to become a game changer. Asked about the book he has brought in himself, Rago begins a constructive conversation with his students for the first time:

Rago: *It's about . . . sex, murder, incest, insanity.*

Students: *Ohhh.*

Pvt. Jackson Leroy (Richard T. Jones): *Shoot.*

Pvt. Tommy Lee Haywood (Mark Wahlberg):

Beats the hell out of this garbage I'm readin'.

Rago: *Sure does. Pretty much beats the heck out of any book ever written . . .*

Pvt. Leroy: *Why don't you tell us more about your book? Sounds more interesting.*

Pvt. Donnie Benitez (Lillo Brancato):

Yeah, who wrote it?

Rago: *Well, it was written by William Shakespeare. You ever hear of William Shakespeare?*

Rago does not have a prior plan, but his simple and casual summary with four simple key words interests his students because such terms instantly leads them to realize that Shakespeare discusses their own real, familiar issues.

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Going through some of the key parts of the plot of the play, moreover, encourages the students to start to show spontaneous reactions. For instance, Rago introduces Gertrude’s lines:

*Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not forever with thy vailèd lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust. (1.2.68–71)*

When Rago explains Gertrude’s meaning as ‘don’t glare at me as though you hate me’, Pvt. Myers crudely comments ‘Why should he? His father’s body’s not cold yet and she’s given the punani to Uncle Joe’. Her reaction expresses her own family problem that her mother cannot keep a stable relationship with partners. Roused from the nap he usually takes, Pvt. Melvin finds something evocative in the play’s plot and speaks up for the first time in class: ‘When my daddy split on my mama, he moved in . . . with her sister, who is, of course, my auntie. And I got a baby cousin who’s also my baby sister. That’s sort of the same thing.’ Listening to his student’s reactions and comments, Rago, who was half in doubt about the possibility of hearing such fresh responses, comes to realize teaching Shakespeare actually works. If you have a literature class for first year students and they do not know even the name of Shakespeare, and you look for a way to stimulate them with the Bard’s works, *Renaissance Man* illustrates the point: teachers can facilitate their discussion by connecting to contemporary social, realistic issues and what the playwright writes about through his plays.

After the second class, Sergeant Cass (Gregory Hines) finds Rago walking in the yard, calls to him and strongly complains about his English class:

*I’d appreciate it if you’d employ a bit more discipline
in your classroom. Would that be too much to ask?
I mean, this isn’t Harvard yard . . . I think your whole
class thing is a bunch of bullshit . . . I don’t think
they’re gonna learn that, writing a bunch of
touchy-feely little papers for the English teacher.*

As an example of narrative archetype, this sergeant is a type of character who thinks the liberal arts are less important than the teaching of practicality and pragmatism in school. He thus represents one of the obstacles the

hero has to overcome in the narrative; and ironically or inevitably, Sergeant Cass’s argument inspires Rago’s spirit as a teacher. To the next class, he brings printed copies of *Hamlet* for each student. Excited about teaching something he loves, he announces: ‘Lady and gentlemen, it’s show time! . . . This is *Hamlet*. I figured that since we have to do something, we might as well do something that I love, and that you showed a little bit of interest in.’

USING EBERT’S CRITICISM IN CLASS FOR STUDENTS’ DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE FILM

If our students show a positive response to the story of *Renaissance Man*, it is time to introduce reviews by film critics as referential material facilitates their further discussion – even if the reviewer insists on criticizing the film mercilessly. Roger Ebert was one critic to review the film harshly at the time of its release. Calling it ‘a labored, unconvincing comedy’, he argues that Penny Marshall made a film ‘cobbled together out of the half-understood remnants of its betters’. One of the points he makes is the dishonesty of the fiction; mentioning Rago’s seminar on *Hamlet*, Ebert argues the audience is ‘subjected . . . to the dishonest fiction that academic knowledge can somehow be gained by enthusiasm’. However, enthusiasm is not the most important factor in stimulating Rago’s students. Although Rago’s summary of *Hamlet* with the four key words is both interesting and unique, a much more important factor in the arousal of his students’ interests is the way in which Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* portrays a number of social issues disadvantaged U.S. youths face in reality. Rago, indeed, comes to show his own enthusiasm from the third class on, and this transformation of the teacher’s motivation works well, but it comes about because in the second class he was lucky to have a student who happened to ask him about *Hamlet* and his initially reluctant presentation unexpectedly clicked with the students.

“I reference Ebert here not to criticize him but to illustrate the point that using a critic’s comment about a film our students see in class may stimulate them in turn.”

I reference Ebert here not to criticize him but to illustrate the point that using a critic’s comment about a film our students see in class may stimulate them in turn. In my process, students watch a scene, read the article, observe the scene again, compare what they watch (*Renaissance Man*) and what they read (*Hamlet*), and then finally discuss their impressions in a group or a pair. Their conclusions are not necessarily the same or similar to my criticism of Ebert, but the more famous and powerful the critic, the more likely students are to oppose his assertions critically.

“THEIR CONCLUSIONS ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME OR SIMILAR TO MY CRITICISM OF EBERT, BUT THE MORE FAMOUS AND POWERFUL THE CRITIC, THE MORE LIKELY STUDENTS ARE EXCITED TO OPPOSE HIS ASSERTIONS CRITICALLY AND TO REFUTE THEM IN SOME WAYS.”

Students criticize Ebert’s derisive dismissal of the film as ‘a labored, unconvincing comedy’ because Rago’s character, first and foremost, is what makes *Renaissance Man* a comedy with a twist. He is not the character type of dignified, intelligent literary giant the audience may expect from previous teachers of English in films, though he is a Princeton graduate and likes to read Shakespeare; in fact he is an ex-company man fired for his absence from a meeting, a father who cannot communicate with his daughter, a man who accidentally happens to have a class in the Army as his next job. Citing a couple of influential movies made prior to *Renaissance Man*, Ebert suggests:

Renaissance Man could also inspire a source study. It is obviously a cross between Dead Poets Society (un-promising students inspired by unconventional teacher) and Private Benjamin (desperate unemployed civilian joins the Army). Advanced students might want to research the sources of those films – which were retreads, yes, but at least less labored than Renaissance Man.

I would add other examples, such as *To Sir, with Love* (1967) whose protagonist, Mark Thackeray (Sidney Poitier), is an engineer-trainee who wants to be professional in that field but comes to teach in a high school where most of the students are from the slums of London’s East End.

“HIS APPARENTLY THROWAWAY COMMENT OF ‘SEX, MURDER, INCEST, AND INSANITY’ HAS AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON HIS STUDENTS’ CONSCIOUSNESS THAT SUCH CLASSIC LITERATURE DOES NOT LIE SO VERY FAR FROM THEIR OWN SOCIETY.”

The point I would like to emphasize here is that Rago is no John Keating (the Robin Williams character in *Dead Poets Society*) with strong individuality or Thackeray (Poitier) with a charismatic dignity. He is more like a trickster who stimulates students with his own non-academic view of Shakespeare, particularly in the discussion he generates about *Hamlet* in the first part of the film. His apparently throwaway comment of ‘sex, murder, incest, and insanity’ has an immediate impact on his students’ consciousness that such classic literature does not lie so very far from their own society. Ken Robinson, the educational polemicist and theorist, argues that all students are inherently eager to learn and to think.

Children are naturally curious. Stimulating learning means keeping their curiosity alive. This is why practical, inquiry-based teaching can be so powerful. In place of offering answers to questions they haven’t asked, expert teachers provoke questions in students so that they are inspired to explore them (107).

Some students may think *Renaissance Man* is a thoughtful comedy because it is Bill Rago/Danny DeVito – neither a Keating nor a Thackeray – who achieves this level of education. Interestingly enough, Robinson, in *Creative Schools*, describes how Rafe Esquith teaches Shakespeare in a Los Angeles school where most students are ‘from immigrant Asian and Latino families, and many do not speak English when they start school’. Despite such an environment, ‘most of the students who pass through Rafe’s classroom go on to graduate from high school, speaking perfect English’. As Robinson observes, it is astonishing that Rafe achieves this by teaching Shakespeare. Rafe’s case is a real case of what Rago attempts to achieve in *Renaissance Man*.

Yuto Koizumi’s article continues on the Education Network blog considering the way in which Henry V features in and might be explored through Renaissance Man.

www.britishshakespeare.ws/education/education-network-blog/

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ENCOURAGING VARIOUS POINTS OF VIEW

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Various kinds of adaptations (prose, film, and manga and so on) are widely used as introductory materials to teach Shakespeare in Japanese universities. For example, Kenneth K. P. Chan describes the effective use of prose and audio-visual adaptations of Shakespeare's play in his introductory Shakespeare class (4–5). As he argues, citing several comments from students, these versions are easy-to-follow materials for Japanese students, for most of whom reading Shakespeare's text directly is too tough a task. (In my own experience, I took an hour to read and understand 10–20 lines of Shakespeare when I was an undergraduate student!).

For students majoring in English language and literature, I find it better if I can provide not only this introductory step to Shakespeare but also some academic aspects of literary reading at the same time, because of the limitation of the time we can spend on literary subjects at the Department of English Language and Literature in most Japanese universities and colleges (as in my own Gifu City Women's

College). Students in this department are, of course, also English [as an Additional Language] learners. Even though their major is in an English-related area, mostly their English skills are not at a very high level (probably about the same level as Chan's students (4)). For this reason and because of students' strong desire to improve their English skills, the English Language and Literature Departments in Japanese universities tend to devote a lot (around half or more) of classes to English language skills in their curriculums. For example, our department provides 68 courses including required and optional ones in two years: 19 for general studies and 49 for the department's major subjects. Among the 49, 8 are assigned to literature: "British Literature I," "British Literature II," "American Literature I," "American Literature II," "History of British Literature," "Rhetorical Criticism," "Seminar I," and "Seminar II." This means that it is very difficult to cover enough areas of literary studies: it is necessary to be efficient if we intend to make students familiar not only with literary texts but also with the academic aspects of literary reading.

By the phrase "an academic aspect of literary reading", I mean reading (or watching) the same literary text from different points of view, an aptitude which Robert Eaglestone considers to be of primary importance in literary studies. Many Japanese students have never had the experience of reading literary text in such a way.



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TABLE ONE: STUDENTS' IMPRESSION OF THE FILM	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Tragic ending	20	32.3%
Happy ending	15	24.2%
Both tragic and happy ending	5	8.1%
Too complicated to follow	5	8.1%
Others	17	8.1%

“BY THE PHRASE ‘AN ACADEMIC ASPECT OF LITERARY READING’, I MEAN READING (OR WATCHING) THE SAME LITERARY TEXT FROM DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW, AN APTITUDE WHICH ROBERT EAGLESTONE CONSIDERS TO BE OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE IN LITERARY STUDIES.”

I think this purpose can be achieved at the same time as an introduction to Shakespeare, through showing various adaptations of Shakespeare – for example, Michael Radford’s film of *The Merchant of Venice* and Charles and Mary Lamb’s *Tales from Shakespeare* in my case – as the results of adapters’ interpretations. This article describes the class I have held in a subject entitled “British Literature II” to achieve this purpose and analyses its effectiveness, by showing the results of questionnaires and comments from the students. The course consists of 15 classes, each of which is 90 minutes long and held once a week. I assign the first class to outlining the entire plan of this subject, then 7 classes for *Romeo and Juliet*, and 7 for *The Merchant of Venice*. In this paper I want to deal with the latter 7 classes on *The Merchant of Venice*.

In the first 2 classes on *The Merchant of Venice*, I show Michael Radford’s film. This is intended, first, as introduction to the entire play. This seems to work very well, as 66.1 % of 62 students (41 students) rated the use of material used in the class as being “very effective” and 17.7% (11 students) “effective,” in the final term questionnaire which the college carries out. Some students gave favourable reactions to this in the free comments space: “As we saw the film version first, it was easy to understand the story” and “Seeing the film version before reading in English help me follow the story easily.” The second purpose of showing the film version is to have students gain an initial impression of *The Merchant of Venice*, which about 83% of the students had never read or

watched previously. After showing the film, I required the students to put down their comments on it freely. I sorted their free comments by their recognition of the ending. The table above (TABLE ONE) is the result.

This table shows that most students (32.3%) regarded the film as a tragedy, giving such comments as “I feel sorry for Shylock.” Many students (24.2%, more than I expected) thought it to be a happy-ending comedy: “Though the atmosphere is dark, I am glad to see the happy ending of the story” and similar comments; 5 students (8.1%) showed they had ambivalent impressions such as “I am impressed with Portia, who is trying to save her husband’s friend for Bassanio. She must have a beautiful heart . . . but Shylock’s loneliness makes me feel sorry for him.” 5 students said that they could not understand it at all, as the film was too complicated to follow. The rest 17 (27.4%) comprise comments that I cannot detect which type of ending the students thought the film to have. After showing the film, we start reading Charles and Mary Lamb’s *The Merchant of Venice* along with excerpts from Shakespeare’s text. We read about 3 pages a week, giving the students a worksheet listing questions on the outline of the story. Reading the Lambs, we deal with some scenes which have important differences from Shakespeare’s text and Radford’s film.

The first point I pick up on is the beginning. I show that the adjectives which give readers a negative impression of Shylock are repeatedly used in the Lambs’ version, such as “hard-hearted,” “covetous,” and that Antonio is at the same time described as “generous” (82). Then we watch again the beginning of Michael Radford’s film version, which opens with text scrolling across the scene describing ‘intolerance of the Jews’ as ‘a fact of 16th century life’. The opening also includes an episode in which a Jewish

TABLE TWO: DOES THIS CLASS INCREASE YOUR INTEREST IN THE TOPIC	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Increased very much	30	48.4%
Increased	23	37.1%
I do not know	8	12.9%
Does not increase very much	1	1.6%
Does not increase at all	0	0%

“BY COMPARING THE BEGINNINGS OF EACH VERSION, I INTEND TO MAKE THE STUDENTS AWARE THAT EACH ADAPTED VERSION TAKES A DIFFERENT STANDPOINT TO LOOK AT THE SAME TEXT.”

man is pushed over a bridge and features Antonio spitting on Shylock. Finally, we look at Shakespeare's beginning and note that Shakespeare does not give any explanatory scene about the situation of the Jews in Venice. By comparing the beginnings of each version, I intend to make the students aware that each adapted version takes a different standpoint to look at the same text.

The next instance considered is Shylock's aside when Antonio comes to ask him to lend 3,000 ducats: “If I can catch him once upon the hip,/ I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him” (1.3.43–44). Reading the Lambs, we observe that *Tales from Shakespeare* reproduces this speech faithfully (83) while Radford's film omits it. The difference of course concerns whether Shylock can be interpreted as a figure who thinks of revenge against Antonio from the first. Comparing the various treatments of this speech, I ask the students whether it is possible to read Shylock's intention to take revenge on Antonio in each version. Many of the students say that they can in the Lambs and they cannot in the film. Thus we discuss and analyse which revenge plot of the two versions is more serious. Students are generally aware that premeditated revenge (the Lambs) is the more serious crime, hence that Shylock's desire for revenge as portrayed in the film is represented as being less serious.

We also consider the Lambs' and Radford's treatment of Jessica's elopement (2.6), Shylock's reaction to it (2.8), and Shylock's “Hath not a Jew eyes?” speech. All of these are omitted in the Lambs and faithfully represented, indeed emphasized, in Radford. Thus we pay attention to the Lambs' neglect of those episodes and speeches which could evoke sympathy for Shylock and Radford's emphasis on the same. Finally, we analyse the last scenes of the Lambs, Radford, and Shakespeare versions. The Lambs' *Tales* ends with Gratiano's couplet as in Shakespeare (5.1.306–7), while Radford's film shows Antonio's loneliness, Shylock's loneliness, and Jessica's wearing her father's ring following Gratiano's last speech.

After reading through the Lambs, I require the students to write a paper on the different interpretations of these two versions as an assignment. Probably because I have explained the differences of each version, almost all the students argue that Radford's version can be interpreted as Shylock's tragedy, while *Tales from Shakespeare* can be interpreted as a happy-ending comedy. Judging from their papers, this class's aim to make students aware of the

possibility of various interpretations of the same text from various points of view – by using, and comparing, film and prose versions of *The Merchant of Venice* – seems to be fulfilled, though further analysis could be made of their responses.

“JUDGING FROM THEIR PAPERS, THIS CLASS'S AIM TO MAKE STUDENTS AWARE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SAME TEXT FROM VARIOUS POINTS OF VIEW – BY USING, AND COMPARING, FILM AND PROSE VERSIONS OF THE MERCHANT OF VENICE – SEEMS TO BE FULFILLED, THOUGH FURTHER ANALYSIS COULD BE MADE OF THEIR RESPONSES.”

In conclusion, TABLE TWO (see opposite) shows that 53 students felt that their motivation to study Shakespeare and literature was greatly increased (30 students, 48.4%) and increased (23 students, 37.1%). Several students wrote in the free space such comments as “I became more interested in Shakespeare,” “I became interested that there can be lots of interpretations of the same literary text,” “Comparing *Tales from Shakespeare* with Shakespeare's text and the film version helped me understand more deeply,” and “I enjoyed interpreting the text from various points of view”. This feedback indicates, to some extent, that the use of multiple adaptations of Shakespeare's text is very profitable in multiple ways, helping the students follow the class more easily, and encouraging the students to develop various interpretations of the same text from various points of view.

“THIS FEEDBACK INDICATES, TO SOME EXTENT, THAT THE USE OF MULTIPLE ADAPTATIONS OF SHAKESPEARE'S TEXT IS VERY PROFITABLE IN MULTIPLE WAYS, HELPING THE STUDENTS FOLLOW THE CLASS MORE EASILY, AND ENCOURAGING THE STUDENTS TO DEVELOP VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SAME TEXT FROM VARIOUS POINTS OF VIEW.”

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