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**TEACHING SHAKESPEARE AT *POLIMODAL*
THROUGH STAGING HIS PLAYS**

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Dissertation

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Dedication

To my beloved late father who asked me to follow this course of studies

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Abstract

Shakespeare's plays have been treated as texts to be studied and analysed by advanced students of English. However, Shakespeare did not write *texts* to be read; he wrote *scripts* to be acted out in front of an audience. Therefore, for a better understanding of his plays, it can be hypothesized that they should be taught through performing them. This research study is aimed to determine the extent to which the staging of Shakespeare's plays by *Polimodal* students who only have two periods of English per week is instrumental to their comprehension of this playwright's works. To this end, this study was carried out at a secondary school in Belen de Escobar (province of Buenos Aires), where seventy-four second-year-*Polimodal* students were observed while rehearsing a play by Shakespeare. During a period of two months a log field was kept. For the purpose of triangulation, the same students were administered two questionnaires: one before starting the rehearsals and a second one at the end. The results showed that there were some tasks that the students had to carry out to stage the play which seemed to have helped them understand certain categories, such as, the setting. However, there were other activities that the learners also had to perform to act out the play in front of their classmates which appeared not to have been of great help for them to comprehend the play.

Key words: Shakespeare's plays, texts, scripts, staging a play

Resumen

Las obras de Shakespeare han sido abordadas como textos para ser estudiados y analizados por alumnos avanzados de Inglés. Sin embargo, Shakespeare no escribió textos para ser leídos, él escribió libretos para ser actuados en frente de una audiencia. Por lo tanto, para comprender mejor sus obras, los alumnos deben actuarlas. Esta investigación tiene como objetivo determinar en qué medida la puesta en escena de las obras de Shakespeare por alumnos de *Polimodal* que solo tienen dos horas de Inglés por semana les ayuda a comprender las obras mejor. Con tal fin, se llevó a cabo una investigación en una escuela secundaria de la ciudad de Belén de Escobar (provincia de Buenos Aires) donde setenta y cuatro estudiantes de segundo año de *Polimodal* fueron observados durante dos meses mientras ensayaban una obra de Shakespeare. Durante ese tiempo, lo observado fue registrado en una grilla. Con el fin de establecer una triangulación, fueron implementados dos cuestionarios que esos mismos alumnos contestaron: uno antes de comenzar los ensayos y otro al terminar. Los resultados demostraron que hubo algunas tareas que los alumnos debieron realizar para poner en escena la obra que parecen haberlos ayudado a comprender ciertas categorías como el ambiente en que transcurre la obra. Sin embargo, hubo otras actividades que ellos también realizaron con el fin de presentar la obra a sus compañeros que parecen no haber sido de gran ayuda para que los alumnos lograran entender la obra.

Palabras claves: Obras de Shakespeare, textos, libretos, puesta en escena de una obra de teatro

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CHAPTER 1

1.1. Introduction

The treatment of Shakespeare's plays as texts has transformed them over time into dead bodies to be dissected in search of scientific evidence of their master's genius at creating effects through language, or at the best of times, into material to be used as reading comprehension in the language classroom (Gibson, 1998). The term “‘text’ implies a desk-bound student who passively reads” (Gibson, p. 7, emphasis in the original) and gets bored if s/he ever achieves a slight understanding of the play. Rocklin (1999) states that when teachers ask students who have been trained in the literary field to read a play by Shakespeare, these students tend to only use their eyes for reading and they forget they have ears to use, too. That is to say, they do not read the lines aloud so it is difficult for them to feel the rhythm of the verses. Rocklin (1999) also explains that:

One reason students have trouble reading Shakespeare is that they are not trained to transform the words on the page into imagined voices and imagined actions – or imagine how radically the meaning of the words uttered by such voices can be transformed through a performer's choice of action (p. 50).

Consequently, even students who possess an advanced level of English and are eager to read a play by Shakespeare encounter difficulties, such as the vocabulary, which is old-fashioned for them to comprehend, and the strange

way in which the characters speak, among others. These drawbacks in the end lead the students to wonder if Shakespeare really wrote his plays in English (Einenkel & Kliman, 1999). This situation seems to generate frustration in the students who, most of the time, resort to simplified versions of the plays to understand it or, even worse, abandon the task completely (Dessen, 1999).

However, Shakespeare did not write *texts*. He wrote *scripts* to be performed in front of an audience (Gibson, 1998). He produced playscripts which only can develop their maximum potentials if they are acted out (Bulman, 1999). As Saucer and Tribble (1999) state:

...the Shakespearean text is not a poem to be interrogated for its themes, its symbolism, its imagery, but a script: “to read a script well is to discover what at each moment it tells the actor or actors to do” (p. 35).

Therefore, to consider a play by Shakespearean as a *script* to be performed instead of a *text* to be read implies transforming a *Polimodal*¹ course of thirty-two – forty-two students into a theatre company. This fact, in turn, will most probably alter completely the roles of both, the teacher and the learners, within the classroom.

It is the aim of the present dissertation to examine the relationship that might exist between staging a play by Shakespeare in a private school, which is

¹ Term used (from 1999 till 2011) to name the last three years of the secondary school.

subsidized by the state, in the district of Belen de Escobar, and the students' understanding of the play. This study, consequently, is informed by the following research question:

To what extent does the staging of Shakespeare's plays help *Polimodal* students, who have only two periods of English per week, to comprehend this playwright's works?

As derived from the above question, the following hypotheses will also be explored:

1-To stage Shakespeare's plays helps *Polimodal* students to comprehend this playwright's works.

2-To stage Shakespeare's plays does not help *Polimodal* students to comprehend this playwright's works.

3-To work on the design of the sets and props to stage a play by Shakespeare may help *Polimodal* students to understand the setting of the play better.

4-To give life to the different characters of a play by Shakespeare might help *Polimodal* students to internalize what personages are like and what the relationship among them is.

5-To stage a play by Shakespeare could help *Polimodal* students to ponder on the themes that are dealt with in the play.

6-To adapt a play by Shakespeare to perform it in front of an audience may help *Polimodal* students to pay attention to the style and symbols which appear in the play.

In order to carry out the investigation, firstly, two courses -one second year *Polimodal* specialized in economy and one second year *Polimodal* specialized in humanities- were observed while rehearsing in their classrooms one hour per week for two months. During that time a log field was kept.

Secondly, these groups were administered two questionnaires: one at the beginning of the observation and a second one at the end. Both questionnaires consist of thirty multiple choice questions divided into four sections. Each section dealt with different aspects of the play. The second questionnaire differs from the first one in only one question which refers to the students' roles within the theatrical company.

Finally, the data obtained was analyzed to see if acting out Shakespeare's plays at *Polimodal* by students who only have two periods of English per week helped them to understand the play they had selected to perform.

1.2. Caveat

Due to the fact that there were no other teachers who applied the same methodology to teach Shakespeare at the school where this investigation was carried out, at the time it was carried out, and that the researcher did not know of any other institutions of the same characteristics where Shakespeare was taught following the same approach in the district of Belen de Escobar, she decided to observe her own courses. Therefore, among the methods used to accomplish this work, the researcher chose participant observation, which is “a research method in which the researcher becomes a part of and participates in the activities of the group or situation being studied” (Ary, Cheser Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996, p. 572).

CHAPTER 2

2.1. Literature Review

This literature review is made up of five sections. The first section displays an attempt to explain why to use a literary text in the English language classroom. The second one tries to describe how to use literature in the language classroom. Section three discusses what teachers should bear in mind when choosing a literary text to work on with their students. The fourth section concentrates on why to include Shakespeare's plays in the *Polimodal* syllabus, and the last section deals with why it is better to treat Shakespeare's plays as scripts to be interpreted and staged than to use them as texts for analysis and comprehension.

2. 2. Why Use Literature?

The role of literature in the EFL classroom has undergone a series of changes throughout the history of methodology. It started performing the leading part during the grammar-translation period, in which the “fundamental purpose of learning a foreign language [was] to be able to read literature written in it [, and as] literary language [was] superior to spoken language [,] students' study of the target culture [was] limited to its literature and fine arts” (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 15). Later, it found itself almost pushed out of the stage during the time when audioligualists dominated the scene. “They advocated a return to speech-based instruction with the primary objective of oral proficiency, and dismissed the

study of ... literature as the goal of foreign language teaching” (Richards & Rodgers, 1996, p. 52). Therefore during the time this method was applied:

...the formal properties of the language took precedence, and literature study was seen as part of the bad old ‘traditional’ methods. It was, moreover, difficult to justify the use of literary texts in a world where the grading of vocabulary and structures was given so much emphasis.” (Maley, 1990, p. 3)

When Communicative Language Teaching was first introduced, literature was also denied the limelight since “the emphasis was on pragmatics, efficient communication without frills” (Maley, 1990, p. 3). Therefore, literature was thought to be irrelevant. However, searching for authentic materials to expose learners to every day language in different situations (Larsen-Freeman, 2000), the followers of Communicative Language Teaching rediscovered the literary text as a tool which could trigger genuine communication among their students.

Task-Based Teaching let ‘literature’ return to the stage. This time, it became an assistant to be used as a tool among a variety of texts to foster appealing language tasks (Lazar, 1993). Speaking of text-based tasks, Willis (1996) explains that stories and tales may complement a course book and then he proceeds to recommend that teachers should encourage their students to continue reading at home just for pleasure as he explains that to expose the students to the target language is extremely important. He also states that “sometimes a class library of short stories, magazines, children’s books and

comics will help” (p. 69) to increase this exposure to the English language which seems to be so necessary while learning it. Similarly, Collie and Slater (1991) state that:

... literature, which speaks to the heart as much as to the mind, provides material with some emotional colour, that can make fuller contact with the learner’s own life, and can thus counterbalance the more fragmented effect of many collections of text used in the classroom (p. 2)

The fact that a literary text has not been written specially for teaching the language but for communicating something to the general public seems to have a refreshing effect which makes students more involved and, therefore, more eager to continue reading that.

It is important to recall that in our country, not many years ago, literature was allowed to audition for one of the leading roles in EFL and won one of the three leading parts (DGC y E, 2007). Therefore, according to the Dirección General de Cultura y Educación [DGC y E] (2007), it is now one of the three basic contexts which should be used for teaching English in the second cycle of the primary schools (EPB) of the Province of Buenos Aires. Furthermore, as might have been expected, it was also included in the curriculum design for the new Escuela Secundaria Básica (ESB) as one of the three main axes to be taken into account when planning what to include in the language classrooms of our province (DGC y E, 2006).

There are several reasons for the inclusion of literary texts as a resource for the teaching of the English languages. First of all, Wright (2000) states that:

We all need stories for our minds as much as we need food for our bodies: we watch television, go to the cinema and theatre, read books, and exchange stories with our friends. Stories are particularly important in the lives of our children: stories help children to understand their world Children's hunger for stories is constant. Every time they enter your classroom they enter with a need for stories (p.3).

Consequently, literature provides a comfortable space for students to enjoy reading and, in so doing it, motivates students to become better readers in the sense that it helps them to develop their taste for reading (Collie & Slater, 1991).

Secondly, it stimulates students to express their ideas and feelings freely by dealing with themes they are interested in. According to Lazar (1993)

A good novel or short story may be particularly gripping in that it involves students in the suspense of unraveling the plot. This involvement may be more absorbing for students than the pseudo-narratives frequently found in course books. A play may engage students in complicated adult dilemmas. A poem may elicit a powerful emotional response from students. If the materials are carefully chosen, students will feel that

what they do in the classroom is relevant and meaningful to their own lives (p. 15).

Moreover, Wright (2000) claims that:

listening and reading stories and responding to them through speaking and writing, drama, music, and art develop a sense of being and having an audience and of sharing and collaborating. Learning a language is useless if we do not know how to communicate –how to listen to others and how to speak and write so that listeners and readers will want to listen and read and be able to understand. Story sharing builds up this crucial sense of awareness of others (p. 5).

From the above quotations, it may be deduced that if the literary text is well chosen, it will stimulate the students' imagination making them pay more attention to *what* they want to express than to *how* they express it, which will eventually help the students to become more self-assured about stating their own opinions and impressions in the target language (Lazar, 1993). Moreover, literature may motivate students to see people and events from a different point of view. Literary texts, unlike television, let students develop their own mental image of what is happening in the story. Through reading tales and stories they may develop awareness of how other people live and feel. They will also increase a sense of compassion and, as a consequence, they will be able to understand themselves better (Foster & Johnson, 2004). According to Collie & Slater (1991), this personal involvement with the literary text may also help

students in their language learning process. They state that when students are able to connect imaginatively with a literary text, they stop paying attention to the mechanical aspects of the language system to get immersed in the plot of the story and they learn the language in an unconscious way.

When a novel, play or short story is explored over a period of time, the result is that the reader begins to 'inhabit' the text. He or she is drawn into the book. Pinpointing what individual words or phrases may mean becomes less important than pursuing the development of the story. The reader is eager to find out what happens as events unfold; he or she feels close to certain characters and shares their emotional responses. The language becomes 'transparent' – the fiction summons the whole person into its own world (pp. 5-6).

Another reason is that a literary text may supply a rich authentic context in which vocabulary and grammatical structures are made more significant (Collie & Slater, 1991).

Students may be so absorbed in the plot and characters of an authentic novel or short story, that they acquire a great deal of new language almost in passing. The reading of literature then becomes an important way of supplementing the inevitably restricted input of the classroom (Lazar, 1993, p. 17).

Extensive reading not only may help students to acquire new language but also to internalize structures and lexical items already taught as they will encounter them in new contexts.

At the level of written production, it is expected that reading literature will enable students to “become more creative and adventurous as they begin to appreciate the richness and variety of the language they are trying to master and begin to use some of that potential themselves” (Collie & Slater, 1991, p. 5). Moreover, if students are usually exposed to high quality literature, they will be able to develop high linguistic competence. Besides, if the amount of exposure to literature is increased, the students will become better at understanding plots and also at predicting upcoming events (Foster & Johnson, 2004). Furthermore, speaking of the value of authentic material in itself, Collie & Slater explain that:

...literature offers a bountiful and extremely varied body of written material which is ‘important’ in the sense that it says something about fundamental human issues, and which is enduring rather than ephemeral. Its relevance moves with the passing of time, but seldom disappears completely: the Shakespearean plays whose endings were rewritten to conform to late seventeenth-century taste, and which were later staged to give maximum prominence to their Romantic hero figures, are now explored for their psychoanalytic or dialectical import. In this way, though its meaning does not remain static, a literary work can

transcend both time and culture to speak directly to a reader in another century or a different period of history (p. 3).

On the other hand, the fact that reading the literature of a country may be useful to work on some aspects of its culture might be another reason to be mentioned. Taylor (2000), for example, explains that "... the cultural elements of folktales help both bridge common ground between cultures and bring out cultural differences –developing cultural awareness that is essential if we are to learn to think in another language and understand the people who speak it" (p. 3). Moreover, with respect to the same point, Lazar (1993) states that:

It can be argued that reading literature in English does encourage students to become broadly aware of the social, political and historical events which form the background to a particular play or novel. At the same time, literature does seem to provide a way of contextualising how a member of a particular society might behave or react in a specific situation. A description of a farm in the outback, for example, in a short story by an Australian author, might familiarise students with the typical scenery and social structures to be expected in such a setting. More interestingly, it could provide them with insights into the possible relationships, emotions and attitudes of the inhabitants of the farm. In other words, using literature with our students may enable them to gain useful and often surprising perceptions about how the members of a society might describe or evaluate their experiences (p. 17).

However, then she continues to explain that as most probably this description is likely to be partial, students should be encouraged to treat it critically (Lazar, 1993).

Another reason to include literature in the EFL classroom may be the fact that literature might help students expand their language awareness (Widdowson, 1975). It has been argued that exposing students to the language of poems, which break the rules of syntax, for example, is to confuse students or even worse to foster mistakes in the students' minds (Lazar, 1993). However, if students are helped to examine such literary licenses, they may become more aware of the grammar rules of the language. In other words, "... using literature with students can help them to become more sensitive to some of the overall features of English" (Lazar, 1993, p. 19). It is also worth mentioning here as a further possible reason that literary texts aid students develop their interpretative abilities. Lazar explains that "...by helping our students to grapple with the multiple ambiguities of the literary text, we are helping to develop their overall capacity to infer meaning." Collie & Slater agree with Lazar when they express that "the extensive reading required in tackling a novel or long play develops the students' ability to make inferences from linguistic clues, and to deduce meaning from context, both useful tools in reading other sorts of material as well." Furthermore, Taylor (2000) explains that folk tales and fairy tales are very useful for developing cognitive and academic skills in the students. He states that they are so since academic tasks, such as compare, contrast and evaluate can be required from students at any level by having them "read or listen to different versions of folktales ..., identify how they are

similar and different, and then consider how important the similarities and differences are” (p. 3). Moreover, it would be important for teachers to use the technique of storytelling in their classes because not only might they arouse interest and curiosity in their learners but also a good story has a suitable discourse organization. In other words, they have a sequence of events and a thematic structure which finishes with the resolution of a problem. Fairy tales, folk tales and fables normally have a moral that is not always explicit, which provides an excellent opportunity to make students think (Wright, 2000).

2.3. How to Use Literature?

This section will try to explain the difference between the *study* of literature for its own sake and the *use* of literary texts as an aid in the English language classroom.

On the one hand, Carter & Long (1991) make clear that:

The study of literature involves reading literature within an academic, institutionalised setting for purposes of obtaining qualifications in literary studies. It involves a considerable baggage of critical concepts, literary conventions and metalanguage and the requirement is often that students should show an ability to use such terms and concepts in talking and writing about literature (p. 3).

These same authors define three different models that teachers may use to teach literature. These three models are: the cultural model, the language model and the personal growth model. Each of them advocates a different group of learning objective and is related to certain methodological practices. Speaking of the reasons a teacher may have to adopt a cultural model, the authors explain that:

teachers working within such an orientation stress ... [that] literature expresses the most significant ideas and sentiments of human beings and teaching literature represents a means by which students can be put in touch with a range of expression – often of universal value and validity – over an historical period or periods. Teaching literature within a cultural model enables students to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space and to come to perceive tradition of thought, feeling, and artistic form within the heritage the literature of such culture endows (p.2).

Then, they state that:

One of the main reasons for a teacher's orientation towards a language model for teaching literature is ... to put students in touch with some of the more subtle and varied creative uses of language. ... The proponents of this model argue that language is the literary medium, that literature is *made* from language and that the more students can read in

and through language the better able they will be to come to terms with a literary text as literature (p. 2).

They state that to adhere to the personal growth model of teaching literature “is to try to help students to achieve an *engagement* with the reading of literary texts” (p. 3). They also claim that “what the teacher will have imparted in such cases is a lasting pleasure in reading and a deep satisfaction in a continuing growth of understanding” (p. 3). Moreover, they conclude by explaining that:

Helping students to read literature more effectively is helping them to grow as individuals as well as in their relationships with the people and institutions around them. To encourage personal growth the teacher has to stimulate and enliven students in the literature class by selecting texts to which students can respond and in which they can participate imaginatively, by promoting the kind of conditions for learning in the classroom which will make the reading of literature a memorable, individual and collective experience and, above all, by enthusiasm for ad commitment to the teaching of literature as literature (p. 3).

On the other hand, teachers who believe in the use of literature as a tool within the English language classroom propose a language-based approach to using literature whose main objective is to help learners increase not only their knowledge of, but also their proficiency in, the target language (Lazar, 1993). However, according to Lazar too, advocates of this approach do not agree on their ultimate goals. For some of them, the literary text is just another tool

among many different types of texts which may promote interesting language tasks. For others, a language-based approach to using literature should include

Techniques and procedures which are concerned more directly with the study of the literary text itself. The aim here is to provide the students with the tools they need to interpret a text and to make competent critical judgements of it (p. 27).

Still, there is another group who argues that although “students are not always ready to undertake stylistic analysis of a text, ... certain language-based study skills can act as important preliminary activities to studying literature” (Lazar, 1993, p. 28). One of these activities may be to ask students to predict what may happen next at certain points in the story they are reading in class. “This kind of procedure is likely to be familiar to students, and so provides an unthreatening way of bridging the gap between language study and the development of more literary-based skills” (Lazar, 1993, p. 28).

2.4. How to Choose a Literary Text?

According to Collie & Slater (1991), although “the criteria of suitability clearly depend ultimately on each particular group of students, their needs, interests, cultural background and language level” (p. 6), the most important factor to take into account when selecting literary works is their power to arouse the students’ interest. Therefore, they continue to state that “it is important to

choose books which are relevant to the life experiences, emotions, or dreams of the learner” (p. 6). Moreover, they conclude by explaining that:

enjoyment; suspense; a fresh insight into issues which are felt to be close to the heart of peoples’ concerns; the delight of encountering one’s own thoughts or situations encapsulated vividly in a work of art; the other, equal delight for finding those same thoughts or situations illuminated by a totally new unexpected light or perspective: all these are incentives which can lead learners to overcome enthusiastically the linguistic obstacles that might be considered too great in less involving material’ (pp. 6-7).

Lazar (1993) states that there are three principal areas that teachers should take into account when selecting literary texts: the type of course, the type of students and some factors which have to do with the text itself. When speaking of the type of course, she includes the following items: the level of the students, the reasons of the learners for studying English, the kind of English the students need, the length or intensity of the course, the age of the students, the students’ intellectual maturity, their emotional understanding and their interests are among the factors teachers ought to take consider when thinking about their type of students. The students’ linguistic proficiency is said by Lazar to be an area of some complexity. It is so since there are advanced students who “can communicate with ease in an English-speaking environment [and] yet they might not be able to cope with the language of the text” (p. 53) while there are others who, even if they are advanced, can cope with difficult texts because

they are motivated enough by the text itself to make an extra effort and bridge the gap which exists between their level and the lexical sophistication of the book. Lazar also mentions the students' cultural and literary background as important issues to include within the area of the type of students. To conclude, she explains that the factors connected with the text itself are its availability, its length, its exploitability and if it fits the syllabus.

For McRae (1991), "the selection of imaginative texts for use in language teaching is difficult, controversial and ultimately pretty subjective." However, he states that "to be usable and valid, a ... text must have a clear and readily identifiable setting, and/or situation, and/or characters" (p. 44). Moreover, he adds that a turning-point in the text is necessary, something that indicates a movement, suggesting a beginning, a middle and an ending. Then he explores three aspects of literary texts that teachers ought to pay attention to when choosing books for the English language classroom. Firstly, speaking of the accessibility of a literary text, he states that:

accessibility depends more on how the reading text is presented than on any of the multiplicity of linguistic and cultural factors which may render it inaccessible[Therefore,] accessibility is increased by careful instruction as to what the student should do with the text. The student gains a great deal of confidence if he or she can (a) get through to the end of the text, then (b) do the task, or answer the question, set on it (p. 45).

Secondly, he considers the difficulty of the text. McRae explains that the fact that only upper-intermediate and advanced language students can handle literary texts is a myth. He insists, as he has previously done when speaking of the accessibility of the literary text, that it is not the text in itself but the activities teachers tell their students to perform with it that makes the literary work more or less difficult. Consequently, he states that:

...the level of text that can be used depends very largely on what the students are asked to do with the text, rather than on any inherent grading problems. A text which would clearly be of Proficiency level if used as reading comprehension can be used at much lower levels if the apparatus and the demands made on the student are apposite to that lower level. Grading the *tasks* rather than the *texts* is vital (p. 47).

Finally, he explains that a literary text to be suitable must "... contain some element of story. ... Stories are a fundamental part of human experience. As George Steiner put it, no tribe on earth is so wretched that it does not express its dreams, its hopes, its ambitions, its fears in stories" (p. 48); therefore, for him as for Wright (2000), everybody loves a good story and this should be taken into account when choosing a text in the EFL classroom. Moreover, McRae continues to suggest that if the language of the original story is very sophisticated, a simpler version may be produced by the teacher. However, he believes

that once students have read whatever 'simplified' version the teacher decides to use, it is useful to have them compared with the original [because it] ... helps students into an understanding of how language can be richer/poorer, more complex/simpler, more or less modern, and son on (pp. 48-49).

As can be inferred from the above explanations, the most relevant factor that teachers should bear in mind at the time of choosing a literary text to be used in the English language classroom is the intrinsic power a text possesses to attract the students' attention. It must be able to engage the students' imagination. It has to motivate them in a number of ways and this seems to have more to do with the way teachers present it and the activities students have to do with it than with the lexical complexity of the text. If the students can accomplish the tasks the teacher asks them to do, the more sophisticated the text, the greater the satisfaction the students will derive from it (McRae, 1991). Furthermore, a literary text in the hands of an accomplished teacher will be suddenly enlightened, unfolding unsuspected and astonishing meanings (Epstein, 1990).

Moreover, according to Wright (2000) a teacher should elect a literary text he/she likes. If he/she does not enjoy the text, no one else will. This simple assumption implies that the teacher ought to feel comfortable with the literary work he/she selects. The chosen work does not have to paralyze the teacher with awe. No one takes pleasure in a book he/she is afraid of (Morgan & Rinvolucris, 2004). The effect of this feeling is appropriately described by McRae (1991, as cited in Ferradas Moi, 2006). He explains that "the institutionalizing

capital letter in Literature is one of the great inhibition factors which prevents teachers [from] using representational materials in language teaching” (p. 147).

2.4. Why Use Shakespeare’s Plays?

In the previous section, it has been discussed why teachers normally shun from including classical literature in their language classes (McRae, 1991). Unhappily, as Ferradas Moi states, this negative reverence is what the majority of the teachers of English in our country feel for Shakespeare’s plays. In other words, as she states, “the capital letter in Shakespeare has unfortunately become particularly intimidating, a fact that Shakespeare and his public would probably have found hard to understand” (p. 147). This feeling seems to have been caused by the status that Shakespeare has been given at Teacher Training Colleges. Ferradas Moi explains what happens in the majority of our institutions of higher education as follows:

after ‘covering’ the history of English Literature in two annual courses, Shakespeare’s dramatic production is ‘reserved’ for a whole course at the end of the students’ training, as a privileged –and presumably more complex- object of study. This seems to be based on the assumption that ‘Shakespeare’ is the ultimate aim of literary education Besides, students have to wait until the very end of their undergraduate training to do [this course] and their research is meant to lead to the writing of a long critical essay. This is also based on an underlying assumption: that

critical literary analysis is not only relevant to the training of EFL teachers but the touchstone that will decide their graduation (pp. 143-4).

This situation is worsened by some curriculum designers who enthusiastically proclaim “down with Shakespeare! Down with his plays!” at Conferences as if they were freeing Teacher Training College students from a medieval ordeal. Naturally, when future teachers of English are asked about Shakespeare’s plays, they seem to associate them with ‘high culture’ and a seriousness that forbids both enjoyment and pedagogical considerations (Ferradas Moi, 2006).

Therefore, this feeling, which appears to have been acquired by the teachers during their training, might have created a number of objections in the teachers’ minds which ultimately prevent the inclusion of Shakespeare’s plays in their lessons. This is apparently so because, as Tolaydo (1993) explains, when graduated teachers encounter a play by Shakespeare, they must face their own baggage and if they, as students, have not been motivated by Shakespeare’s plays, they will probably assume that the plays will not motivate their students. If they have considered his plays boring and irrelevant, that is what they might think their students would experience. Moreover, if Ferradas Moi’s (2006), McRae’s (1991) and Tolaydo’s (1993) concepts are combined, it can be deduced that if teachers have felt, or have been made to feel, that Shakespeare is too difficult to understand and that the language of his plays is too complex, too remote, that is what they would make their students feel if they ever consider including a play by Shakespeare in their classes. Besides, the notion of his plays being considered as part of the classical Canon makes them too

distant from the everyday situations which are supposed to occupy the core of the EFL classrooms. Nevertheless, with regards to this last issue, it is worth remembering here what Kahn (1999) points out in his prologue to *Teaching Shakespeare through Performance*. He states that “anyone who thinks of Shakespeare as the last repository of culture denies the reality of Shakespeare. There is violence in Shakespeare; there is sex in Shakespeare. His plays embody ambiguity in the powerful driving energy of human contradiction” (p. 19).

However, this overwhelming feeling that teachers seem to experience at the time of facing a play by Shakespeare may have more to do with the way the playwright’s works are presented to learners than with the works themselves (Tolaydo, 1993). Tolaydo’s experience as a student reading Shakespeare describes what apparently has created this feeling in teachers of English. That is to say, it is the method used that makes the plays dull and overwhelming.

We have often been confronted with a playtext featuring lines set out in verse form on a page further complicated by a glossary, either beneath or opposite the lines of the text. We are told this page layout is a help to us. We can tell the difference between verse lines and those in prose because verse lines don’t go to the edge of the page. We have received a lesson on iambic, trochaic, and other verse forms that, coupled with the number of notes on each page, screams to us that this is very, very complex stuff. For smart people only. As we are made to read the lines aloud, we may be corrected for pronunciation, while the rest of the class

following along stops to check the glossary for word meanings. We find ourselves looking up words we already know such as “yea” and “sayest.” Some of us have become entirely confused and dejected before we reach the end of the first page. Things plod on. We notice that there are many more pages to go until the end, and at this rate, the task seems impossible (p. 27).

This approach is also mentioned by Gibson (1998). This time he not only writes about the method used by the teachers but also the kind of editions that the teachers choose to use with their students. He provides an example with an edition of *Macbeth*:

One highly respected scholarly edition [of *Macbeth*] begins with fifty-three pages of introduction. Much of that information, of great interest to professional Shakespeare scholars, is inappropriate to school students' needs or interests. When the play begins, the first page contains only four lines of Shakespeare:

FIRST WITCH When shall we three meet again?

In thunder, lighting, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH When the hurly-burly's done,

When the battle's lost and won.

These four lines are followed by fifty-two half-lines of explanation and mention of twelve named 'authorities'. The contrast between the imaginative invitation of the language and the sober commentary of the notes, is stark (p. 8)

Gibson continues to claim that properly presented and with an appropriate edition:

Shakespeare's characters, stories and themes have been, and still are, a source of meaning and significance for every generation. Their relevance lies in the virtually endless opportunities they offer for reinterpretation and local application of familiar human relationships and passions. The plays are peopled with fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, wives, husbands, brothers and sisters. ... Students of all ages can recognize and identify with such relationships (p. 2).

Therefore, if teachers are able to make their students feel that they are the owners of the plays, if they encourage the learners to give their opinions freely without the fear of making mistakes, and if they can help their students understand that there is no single message, that there are no right answers to the many questions, students will discover that they can have fun working with Shakespeare (Roberts, 2006). That is to say, when students "become aware of the fact that the author does not "own" the meaning of the text –and nor does the teacher" (Ferradas Moi, 2006 p. 146),

When the reader adds his or her voice to the host of voices present in the text, s/he experiences the particular intimacy of reading and each reader constructs the meaning of the text afresh. Just as words do not mean without context, the literary text does not contain meaning,

determined by the writer, which is the reader's task to extract.
(Pulverness as quoted in Ferradas Moi)

Speaking of Shakespeare's language Reynolds (1991) explains that:

...the main barrier constantly cited by students of all ages (as well as their teachers) that initially prevents them from coming to terms with Shakespeare is not the range or complexity of the ideas, the philosophy, or historical context, but the language of the late sixteenth century (p. 5).

However, although Gibson (1998) does not deny the fact that the language of Shakespeare's plays is difficult, he emphasizes that "its difficulties are 'enabling difficulties'. Students gain a sense of achievement and satisfaction as they respond to its challenge" (p. 6). He continues to explain that Shakespeare's language is 'energetic, vivid and sensuous ... [and that]

by understanding Shakespeare's craftsmanship and using it to assist their own writing, students can develop their own voices in writing, As students come to grips with the language in active exploration, they gain insight into the power of language and become enfranchised as readers, writers, speakers, listeners and actors,

In addition, Thomas (2004) states that:

Shakespeare's cleverness with language is not just his ability to write beautiful poetry. He also wrote amusing dialogue, common slang, rude insults and the thoughts of people under pressure. He wrote script that uses the sound of words to convey emotion, and the associations of words to create vivid images in our heads (p. vii)

Consequently, from the above quotations, it can be deduced that to help students comprehend Shakespeare's language is an effort worth making. Moreover, students seem to love words that are not easy to understand, provided they appear in a context that catches their attention and the teacher shows them that they are interesting words (Foster & Johnson, 1990). Furthermore, learners have to be told that it is not necessary to understand every single word to enjoy the plays. As Collie & Slater (1987) state, learners have to be encouraged to read for gist and general understanding, "to feel they can appreciate a scene even if they do not understand every single thing about it" (p. 164). Furthermore, when students get to know that "Shakespeare ... was not afraid to make up a word occasionally when no existing word served his purpose" (McEvoy, 2000, p. 15) and that even scholars do not agree on the meaning of some words, this initial barrier which prevents them from enjoying Shakespeare is overcome and they are ready to live a rich experience (Gibson, 1998).

Moreover, O'Brien (1993) exclaims that "Shakespeare is for all students: of all ability levels and reading levels, of every ethnic origin, in every kind of school" (p. xii), and then she explains why this is so by reminding teachers that:

In 1623, John Heminge and Henry Condell –two members of Shakespeare’s acting company- compiled thirty-six plays and had them published in a volume called the First Folio. Their introduction to the book is entitled “To the great Variety of Readers”. The introduction itself begins “From the most able, to him that can but spell ...” (p. xii)

If the people who published the First Folio meant that Shakespeare’s plays were for everybody in 1623, why couldn’t teachers mean it now? (O’Brien, 1993). Furthermore, if teachers, as McRae (1991) recommends, grade the tasks and not the texts, it is clear that Shakespeare can be introduced to students with all levels of proficiency. Furthermore, teachers can be sure that if Shakespeare’s plays are used within “the context of their learning situation, students will assume that the text is, at least, relevant to their language-learning competence, and that they should normally be able to get something beneficial out of their reading” (pp. 46-47). Therefore, they will be willing to make that extra effort which is required to bridge the gap between their level and the complexity of the text.

To the question: can younger pupils cope with Shakespeare? Gibson (2000) answers:

Yes! Never underestimate how intelligently and imaginatively your pupils can respond to Shakespeare. High teacher expectation is one of the keys to successful school Shakespeare, and younger pupils have the

ability and potential to rise to the challenge. ... Mastering [the] difficulties gives pupils a palpable sense of achievement and self-esteem. You will find that the results can be thrilling and electrifying, as pupils make the language their own and bring the characters and stories to life in your classroom (p. 2).

Another reason for including Shakespeare in the syllabus is that his plays may help students develop their inner selves. "To use the language of developmental psychology, Shakespeare can increase students' competence and confidence across the widest range of developmental possibilities. To express it less prosaically, Shakespeare develops the understanding heart" (Gibson, 1998, p. 4). Shakespeare, as Bloom (1998) explains, teaches us to understand human nature. He states that "what Shakespeare invents are ways of representing human changes, alterations not only caused by flaws and by decay but effected by the will as well, and by the will's temporal vulnerabilities" (p. 2). While reading about all these separate selves created by Shakespeare, students will be able to see themselves reflected in the plays and derive an essential understanding from the characters' successes and failures which may be of great importance in their future life as human beings (Gibson, 1998). Gibson also explains that:

Interest in character is an abiding human preoccupation, its study a necessary part of any education. Character study is a potent source of learning. Students can recognize, understand, and identify with fictional

characters, and empathise with their emotional and moral predicaments (p. 110).

And then he continues to state that “Shakespeare’s plays present an immense range of memorable characters who spring to life afresh in every performance, every active lesson” (p. 109).

Moreover, according to Gill (1998), Shakespeare is memorable since even people who do not like him seem to remember tragedies such as *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*. He is also enjoyable as most of the students eagerly want to do Shakespeare every year. He is adaptable. His plays have caught the imagination of all sorts of artists and his influence has spread all over the world. The director Kurosawa, for example, created *Ran* based on *King Lear* and set it in historical Japan (Claybourne & Treays, 1997). He is part of the students’ world since they can easily identify with the feelings and predicaments of some of the characters as well as their stories. They can perfectly understand what Helena is feeling in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* because some of them have loved someone who does not love them. He is varied too. Among his plays there are comedies, tragedies, histories and even romances from which the students can choose to play. He is haunting. He holds a powerful presence in the students’ mind. One of the strange things about doing Shakespeare is that after performing one of his plays, whenever a student has a memorable experience, like falling in love, they discover that Shakespeare has already written about their feelings (Gill, 1998).

If the already mentioned reasons are not enough to include Shakespeare as a tool in the EFL classroom, it might be important for teachers to bear in mind at the time of selecting the material to supplement their language courses what Gibson (1998) proclaims:

A powerful argument for studying Shakespeare exists in his extraordinariness, his strangeness, his unfamiliarity. His appeal lies in a unique blend of the familiar and the strange, his relevance and his remoteness. All education is about 'opening doors', extending opportunities and experiences. It is concerned that individuals should not be imprisoned in a single point of view, confined solely to local knowledge and beliefs. Education shows that 'there is a world elsewhere' beyond the familiar and everyday (p. 6).

And then he concludes by stating that:

Every student is entitled to make the acquaintance of genius. Shakespeare remains a genius of outstanding significance in the development of English language, literature and drama. All students should have opportunities through practical experience, to make up their own minds about what Shakespeare might hold for them (p. 6)

As O'Brien puts it, in the introduction to *Shakespeare Set Free*, "teaching Shakespeare to all kinds of students is not only possible; it's *essential* [italics added]" (p. xii).

2. 5. Why Teach Shakespeare through Staging his Plays?

Once Shakespeare's plays have been chosen to be used in the EFL classroom, the way in which they will be implemented has to be considered. According to Metzger (2004), if teacher only choose to make their students read the plays by Shakespeare to answer a set of questions or to complete a chart, for example, they will fail. However, according to McCarthy (1996), to succeed in engaging your students with plays as a text of spoken language seems not an easy task.

Considering plays in general, Collie & Slater (1991) state that to motivate the students teachers should take them to the theatre to see a play or to bring a video to the class for them to see. Moreover, they claim that "putting on one scene, or a short play, can be both enjoyable and rewarding. Many students love planning costumes, sets, props, lights, and so on" (p. 163).

Speaking about the pleasure that students can derive from doing a play, Metzger (2004) states that, this feeling should always come first. Students ought to experience 'delight' while working with any literary text. Moreover, if the students are working with a Shakespearian play, the best way to create this emotion within their hearts is by getting them to walk in the characters' shoes on stage. That is to say, to make the students embody their happiness and problems. Furthermore, Tolaydo (2006) explains that when a play is read silently, part of its magic is lost. He claims that:

A line of text on a page does not exist as a piece of theatre. A whole play does not come into being when it's in print. It breathes only when it is performed, and for that moment only. When we attend a theatrical performance, the words, pauses, vocal and technical sounds, movements, music, facial expressions, gestures, stage pictures, lighting, actors, costumes and more are all working together to tell us something (p. 27).

Therefore, if the fact that Shakespeare never wrote his plays to be read but to be seen by a group of spectators is taken into account, one of the most logical options is to encourage students either to perform them in class in front of their mates or to act them out in a theatre in front of an audience. Gibson (1998) enlarges this idea by explaining that:

Shakespeare was essentially a man of theatre who intended his words to be spoken and acted out on stage. It is in that context of dramatic realization that the plays are most appropriately understood and experienced. The consequence for teaching is clear: treat the plays as plays, for imaginative enactment in all kinds of different ways (p. xii).

With respect to this notion, Kahn (1999) agrees with Gibson in stating that “these plays were meant to be played by a bunch of actors and to appeal to a very large and a very diverse audience. That is finally where they live” (p. 29) What is more, to avoid ending “up teaching the playwright’s words without the

other half of his art – his staging” (Cohen, 1999, p. 79), teachers should “think of Shakespeare’s plays as performing texts” (Rocklin, 1999, p. 53). In other words, Shakespeare’s plays should be treated as scripts not as texts. A script, as Gibson (1998) states, “suggests a provisionality and incompleteness that anticipates and requires imaginative, dramatic enactment for completion. A script declares that it is to be played with, explored, actively and imaginatively brought to life by acting out” (p. 8). In addition, “... having students perform or stand in for the parts gives them a feeling of ownership that is likely to make the work more memorable for them than even the most polished performance” (Cohen, 1999, p. 80). Consequently, when considering which approach might be better to teaching Shakespeare’s plays, Gibson (1998) advocates active methods. He states that these kinds of methods “... comprise a wide range of expressive, creative and physical activities” (p. xii). Moreover, he explains that:

The dramatic context demands classroom practices that are the antithesis of methods in which students sit passively, without intellectual or emotional engagement. Shakespeare is not a museum exhibit with the large ‘Do Not Touch’ label, but a living force inviting active, imaginative creation (p. xii)

He also adds that:

Active methods dissolve the traditional oppositions of analysis and imagination, intellect and emotion. They encourage informed personal responses which are both critical and appreciative. In active work,

students combine critical thought with empathy, confidence with a willingness to suspend judgement. Interpretations do not have to be of the narrowing 'either ... or' type but can be the more expansive and imaginative 'both ... and' variety (p. xiii).

O'Brien (2006) agrees with Gibson on the type of method that should be adopted to introduce Shakespeare's plays in the classroom and points out that:

Shakespeare study can and should be active, intellectual, energizing, and a pleasure for teacher and student. Students and Shakespeare have a great and natural affinity for each other; the classroom is the perfect and necessary place for its discovery. With a teacher as coach and collaborator, students learn Shakespeare by meeting him on his own ground-inside the play (p. xii).

For Tolaydo (2006), it is best to start by helping the students act out the easiest scene of the play. It does not matter if it is not the first one. He claims:

...that Shakespeare's plays are ... about explorations into human nature, about language, and about the ambiguity that much of the language presents. Without question, some of this language is difficult; however, not all of it is. Each play contains a large amount of material that is easily comprehensible to virtually all age groups. By beginning in the classroom with what is approachable, we can learn –through

performance- to take on more complex areas of study and make them absorbing for teachers and students alike (p. 28).

He states that the first thing teachers should do is to print in large types the easiest scene from the play they will be dealing with. He adds that it is important not to include a glossary or explanatory notes to the scene. Then, once in the classroom, the teacher should hand out the copies and choose some students to read aloud the different parts. He explains that the students ought to pay more attention to what the words mean than to how they should be pronounced since he adds that “there are no Elizabethans around to tell us how words were pronounced” (p. 29). After the same scene has been read aloud two or three times by different groups of students, the teacher should ask some questions whose answers may be found in the text. That is to say, the students should support their replies with parts of the text. At this time the teacher may answer questions about vocabulary. Then, a general discussion about characters and motivation is carried out. After this, the students are ready to act out the scene. As most probably there will be not enough characters for all the students, the ones who do not want to act will direct the scene. Everybody has to be involved in one way or another. He concludes by explaining that this process of “getting the scene from the page into performance” (p. 31), will aid the students not only to obtain essential tools that will help them to comprehend more difficult parts of the play but also to establish a vivid relationship with Shakespeare.

When explaining how a teacher should set about doing Shakespeare’s plays in the classroom, Gibson (1998) claims that:

Successful Shakespeare teaching is learner-centered. It acknowledges that every student seeks to create his or her own meaning, rather than passively soak up information. The Shakespeare teacher's task is to enable students to develop a genuine sense of ownership of the play. That entails active expression: helping students to ask their own questions, to create and justify their own meanings, rather than having to accept only the questions and interpretations of others (p. 9).

Moreover, he states that the attitudes of the teacher are crucial. Then, he enumerates five attitudes that he considers essential for a teacher to be successful when dealing with a play by Shakespeare. These are: first, the teacher should be willing to continue learning. That is to say, s/he should be convinced that "one never finishes with Shakespeare" (p. 153), that there are always new things that can be learned. Second, students may be a source of learning, in the sense that "fresh insights can come from active work on the play in the classroom" (p. 153). Third, a teacher should encourage his/her students to give their views on the play freely, without being forced to reproduce other people's opinions. Fourth, if a teacher is enthusiastic about his/her subject and teaches it in an interesting way, s/he will motivate his/her students and they will share that enthusiasm. Fifth, a teacher should avoid praising Shakespeare too much because "students often react unfavorably to being told that Shakespeare is the greatest" (p. 154). Finally, he adds a last consideration that should be taken into account. He states that teachers should shun the temptation to become the owners of the play. He explains that this feeling is sometimes too

great for teachers who decide to encourage their students to perform Shakespeare's plays. Most of the time, these teachers plan to have the plays acted out by their students at the school auditorium in front of the parents at the end of the year and naturally they do not want the students to make mistakes or to present a not acceptable version of the play. In this approach to teaching Shakespeare's plays, which is teacher-centered, the teacher directs the play and has the last word on every detail and consequently s/he will be the responsible one for the outcome of the task, meaning s/he will be the creator of this new production.

However, Gibson, among other scholars, proposes another approach. One which is learner-centered, one in which the students are the owners of the play while the teacher is simply an observer who can or cannot be consulted by the students. Thus, the students will be the responsible ones for the staging of the play and the only creators of this new putting on stage. This approach at teaching Shakespeare through putting on stage his plays will change the roles of the teacher and students radically. "Role' refers to the part that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as the social interpersonal relationships between the participants" (Nunan, 2004, p. 64). In this option the teacher's role turns towards a more collaborative position. S/he will become a facilitator who will try to help his/her students feel that they are the possessors of the script which is open for them to reinvent and interpret. A teacher who is a facilitator should approach the plays as spoken language rather than as text for discourse analysis (McCarthy, 1996). The teacher will have to explain to his/her learners that "each new production must rework the

play, and when this reworking happens, the position from which the play is viewed is always different” (Saucer & Tribble, 1999, p. 39).

Moreover, the teacher should bear in mind that “a script approach to Shakespeare necessarily implies choice and variety in responses, resources and activities. It assumes that there is no ‘one right way’ to perform, teach, or experience the plays” (Gibson, 1998, p. 23). Therefore, to let his/her students feel free to develop the task of staging a Shakespearean play the teacher should step aside and allow the students to choose their own director from among their mates. Once the director has been chosen by his/her companions, it is the director the one who will in turn select his/her assistants. Thus, the ones in charge of transforming the whole course into a theatre company are the director and the assistants not the teacher. They will try to find a place for each of their companions within the company, a place in which each of them will feel comfortable enough to excel at its fulfilling. This “...dynamic pedagogical strategy ... [is supposed to involve] all the students equally in a collective and collaborative enterprise” (Reynolds, 1991, p. 4). The most important thing is that nobody will be left without a position and will work together towards the same end. This task may lead to create new bonds among them and even to discover the hidden talents of some of them. The teacher will be always ready to assist if his/her advice is required, if not s/he will be just a spectator of the whole creative process.

In conclusion, to encourage students to perform Shakespeare’s plays seems to be the best way of dealing with the playwright’s works, not only because they

were written to be acted out but also because, this approach will make the plays more memorable for the students and will also take into account their different ways of learning (Oxford,1990). Even more important, having to put one of his plays on stage, students seem to make an extra effort to understand the plot since they have to decipher the motives different characters have to act and speak the way they do. Moreover, they will have to become deeply involved in the play to comprehend it better (Gielgud, 1997).

CHAPTER 3

3.1. The Study

The study consists of three parts: the context, the methodology and the analysis of instruments. In the context a brief history of a project called ‘Shakespeare Day’ is retold, followed by the description of the participants and the school where the investigation was carried out. The methodology deals with the different methods applied to conduct this study and in the last section a detailed description of the instruments the researcher used is presented.

3.2. The Context

3.2.1. A Brief History of a Project Called ‘Shakespeare Day’

The main objective of the present dissertation was to analyze if the project called ‘Shakespeare Day’, which was carried out at a school called ‘Escuela Secundaria General Belgrano’ in Belén de Escobar had fulfilled its purpose: to help *Polimodal* students who only had two periods of English a week understand Shakespeare’s plays. To achieve the latter, the researcher decided to make her students feel that the plays Shakespeare wrote were not ‘texts’ but ‘scripts’.

Back in 1998, it was decided to include a bit of literature in the old *comercial*² syllabus of fifth year to give students, who were basically working with numbers and logic, a topic to exercise their imagination. The researcher wanted her

² A course with an orientation in commerce.

students to become acquainted with classic literature and, at the same time, she wanted her students neither to be passive readers nor to work with simplified material. Therefore, the first scene from *Macbeth* was selected for the students to work on and, more importantly, to perform in front of their classmates. The following year, the teacher felt that only one scene was not enough for the students to be able to understand what a play was really about, so she decided to make her students work on more than one scene. In fact, they were given the main scenes from the five acts of *Macbeth* to produce a summary of the complete play. Moreover, not only fifth year courses but also fourth year courses with an orientation in commerce were asked to work on the play. The teacher had at that time three fourth years and three fifth years. The experience was so successful that the students asked the researcher to repeat the task in 2000. However, that year the teacher decided to make her students perform not only in front of their classmates but also in front of other courses. Later, the head of the school asked the teacher to make her students perform not only in front of their school mates but at a local theatre so that their parents could see what their children had been working on during the year. The teacher accepted on the condition that the students were not going to be evaluated or criticized for their acting or pronunciation since the aim of the project was not to stage a perfect production but to make the students understand an original play by Shakespeare while enjoying the experience. Nevertheless, competition among the groups was introduced so as to encourage them to pay more attention to their performance. By that time the fourth years had become the so called second years *Polimodal*. Therefore, this year not only the three fifth year courses specialized in commerce but also one fifth year with an orientation in

humanities, two second years *Polimodal* specialized in Economy, two specialized in Humanities and one specialized in Science participated in the event which was called for the first time: 'Shakespeare Day' and took place at a small theatre called 'Girona' in Belen de Escobar. Due to the enormous success of the event, in 2001 it became part of the 'Proyecto Educativo Institucional' (PEI) of the school. Unluckily, many parents had not been able to see the plays the previous year because of lack of space so the researcher spoke to the mayor of Belen de Escobar and asked him for permission to use the local theatre, which was much bigger than Girona Theatre. The project grew in dimension as more teachers from other departments were eager to participate. The teachers of Spanish were the first to join the project. In 2002 the first years *Polimodal* were invited to produce a scene from a play by Shakespeare in Spanish and in 2003 the ninth years also participated covering the event as reporters to produce a newspaper in Spanish and English about the event.

In 2004, due to problems with the new local authorities in charge of the local theatre, the project went back to our school. However, this time the students voted to produce a video instead of acting live. Therefore 'Shakespeare Day' was transformed into 'Shakespeare Awards', an event in which all the videos produced by the different courses were shown at school followed by a ceremony in which awards were given to the winners of the different categories. This project continued until 2007 when the authorities of the school were changed. In 2008 the new authorities decided to cancel all the projects and 'Shakespeare Awards' disappeared as such together, with all the other projects

of the school. The students eagerly asked for the project to be continued, which made her keep the production of a Shakespearean play in the English syllabus of her courses (three second years *Polimodal* and three third years *Polimodal*). However, competition among the groups was withdrawn and the students could choose whether to produce a video to be shown in class or to act the play live in their classrooms in front of their mates.

Even though the procedure to implement the project in the courses was slightly changed year after year after the result of the each event was thoroughly evaluated, the basic steps were the same as the ones followed in 2010, the year in which this study was carried out. First, in April the two second-year classes selected were divided into six groups and given the summaries of six plays by Shakespeare taken from a book called *The World of Shakespeare*. Only two groups were given seven plays. From among the plays given, each group chose the one they liked the best to work on. The students were given three weeks to prepare the presentation about the play they had selected. During their presentations, the members of each group tried to explain and convince the rest of the class why the play they had chosen would be the best to be performed at the end of the year. The presentations took place during the month of May. When all the groups had finished with this task, the students voted for the play they would like to act out. In 2010, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was chosen by both courses. The fact that both of them had chosen the same play was not surprising since this comedy had been a favourite one among students during the previous years. The following step was to decide by vote whether they wanted to produce a video or act the play out in the

classroom in front of their mates. As both courses voted for the second choice, the groups were transformed into theatre companies and they selected their directing teams. That is to say, the students who were interested in becoming the director and the producer of the play were given a week to promote themselves. At the end of this week a vote was held and the elected director and producer chose their assistants. Once the directing teams were formed, the teacher gave each company a copy of the original play by Shakespeare so that they could start with the adaptation. To find at least two adaptors per company was the task of the directing teams. During the process of adaptation the teacher could be consulted at any time. By the end of August, the directors had to hand in the final version of their adaptations for the teacher to correct. After that, the students were given one period per week for the rehearsals of the play, which took place in class. In 2010 seven classes were devoted to this task. Finally, in November the courses performed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in front of their mates. Second year Economy performed the play in front of third year Economy and second year Humanities performed it in front of third year Humanities. Both thirds knew the play since they had performed the same play the previous year. All the students agreed that the experience had been challenging but fascinating, though this year there was no competition between the courses.

3.2.2. Participants

The participants were seventy-four second-year-*Polimodal* students. There are five second-year classes in the school where this investigation was carried out:

two specialized in Economy, two specialized in Humanities and one specialized in Science, but only two of them were selected for the present study. Thirty-two of the mentioned above students, eleven boys and twenty-two girls were attending a course specialized in Economy, while forty-two (nine boys and thirty-three girls) had chosen to follow a course specialized in Humanities. All the students were adolescents, that is to say, their ages ranged from fifteen to seventeen. Even though their level of English was heterogeneous, most of the students had a pre-intermediate level of English. The seventy-four students voted in favor of acting out one of Shakespeare's plays in 2010. It is important to recall here that these students had only two periods of English per week.

3.2.3. The School

The school chosen to carry out this study is now called 'Escuela General Belgrano' and is situated in Belen de Escobar, a city to the north of the capital city of Argentina, in the province of Buenos Aires. It is a private school which receives a subsidy from the state to pay the teachers' salaries. Although it is a private school, the students do not receive extra periods of English. Moreover, most of the students who attend this school belong to middle and lower middle class families.

3.3. The Methodology

In order to determine whether the staging of Shakespeare's plays aids *Polimodal* students, who have only two periods of English per week, to understand this playwright's works, different methods were selected.

According to Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh in *Introduction to Research in Education* (1996:576) "Confirming data using multiple data-gathering procedures ... used in qualitative research" is called triangulation. Therefore, to establish trustworthiness in this study, two different types of triangulation were used: time triangulation, since information was collected from the same groups of subjects at two different points in time sequence, and methodological triangulation, as different methods were used on the same object of study.

First of all, a survey was applied since, as it 'is a research technique in which data are gathered by asking questions of a group of individuals called respondents' (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996, p. 427), it allowed the researcher to obtain information from a big group of students in only one class. In this case, a panel study was implemented because the same groups of subjects were going to be surveyed at different points in time, as has already been mentioned above. Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh explain that 'the two basic types of data-gathering instruments are interviews and questionnaires' (1996:433). A questionnaire, which is "an instrument in which respondents provide written responses to questions or mark items that indicate their responses" (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996, p. 573), was selected as the most suitable for the present study. Therefore, after having chosen the play the students were going to work on but before starting to read and adapt it, the two groups elected were

administered a questionnaire which consisted of 30 multiple-choice questions (see Appendix A). This quantitative method was chosen to measure the students' previous knowledge of the play. To produce this questionnaire the researcher used a priori knowledge which, for Selinger and Shohamy in *Second Language Research Methods* (1989: 15), "is ... [a kind of knowledge] founded on some previous systematic empirical work or observation". Therefore, the questions devised were divided into four sections. Each of these sections dealt with different aspects of the play. The first one was dedicated to the setting of the play. The second set of questions concentrated on characters and the relationship among them. The aim of the third set of questions was to find out if the students understood the style of the play and the last question was included to see if the students could deduce which were the themes of the play.

Secondly, participant observation was implemented. This qualitative method was thought to be the most appropriate one for the present study for it allows the researcher to become a member of the group and to take part in the tasks of the classes under observation (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996). Two second year *Polimodal* groups were observed in their classrooms one hour per week while rehearsing the Shakespearean play they had chosen to perform in 2010. During this period of time a grid (see Appendix B) was completed with the comments and remarks which were relevant.

Finally, these same two groups were administered a second questionnaire (see Appendix A). This one only differs from the first one in a single question, which

refers to the students' position within the theatrical company. That is to say, it is directly related to what they did during the rehearsal period.

3.4. Analysis of Instruments

3.4.1. First Questionnaire

With a view to establishing how much previous knowledge the students had of the play they had chosen to stage in 2010, the following items were taken into account to write the first questionnaire administered to them:

- a. The relationship between the title and the play.
- b. The importance of the setting.
- c. The characters and the way in which they are described.
- d. The style and the symbols which appear in the play.
- e. The themes which are explored in the play.

a. The relationship between the title and the play.

Question 1

- ¿Que relación tiene el título de la obra con la historia? Marque con una cruz la(s) opción(es) correcta(s).

- a. Se refiere a que lo ocurrido durante una noche de mucho calor en un bosque puede ser interpretado como un sueño.
- b. Se refiere a que durante las noches de verano uno tiene sueños.
- c. Se refiere a que lo que ocurra una noche de verano calurosa sólo puede ser un sueño.³

The first question focuses on the connection between the title of the play and the plot. The aim of this question is to see if the students can perceive the relationship that exists between the title of the play: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the essence of the plot.

- b. The importance of the setting.

Question 2

- ¿Dónde y cuándo transcurre la mayor parte de la obra?
 - a. En la ciudad de Atenas durante el día.
 - b. En la ciudad de Atenas durante la noche.
 - c. En un bosque cerca de la ciudad de Atenas durante la noche.⁴

³ 1. What is the relationship between the title of the play and the plot? Choose the correct option(s).

- a. It refers to the fact that what happened during a very hot night in a wood may be interpreted as a dream.
- b. It refers to the fact that during a summer night one has dreams.
- c. It refers to the fact that what happens during a hot summer night could be only a dream.

⁴ 2. Where and when does most of the play take place?

- a. In the city of Athens during the day.
- b. In the city of Athens during the night.
- c. In a wood near the city of Athens during the night.

The second question aims at finding if the students can determine the setting. Option 'c' is the correct one. Only Act 1, part of Act 4 and 5 take place in the city of Athens during the day. Option 'b' is completely wrong.

Question 3

- ¿Cuáles son los actos que transcurren en ese lugar?
 - a. 2,3, y parte del 4.
 - b. 2,3, y 4.
 - c. 2, 3, 4, y parte del 5.⁵

The objective of question three is to narrow down the scope of question 2. While in question 2 the students are asked to choose from a variety of settings in general, in question 3 they have to specify which acts take place in the setting they have chosen in question 2. This is to verify if the students have paid attention to the division of the play into acts and scenes. The correct option is 'a'. Options 'b' and 'c' are wrong.

Question 4

- ¿Durante que período histórico transcurre la obra?
 - a. La Edad Moderna.

⁵ 3. Which acts are set in that place?

- a. 2, 3, and part of 4.
- b. 2, 3, and 4.
- c. 2, 3, 4 and part of 5.

- b. La Edad Antigua.
- c. El siglo XIX.⁶

The objective of this question is to make the respondents think about the historical period during which the comedy, which Shakespeare wrote, takes place. Through this question the researcher will be able to determine if the students have read the play or if they have just seen one of the films available. If the students choose option 'c', for example, they may have seen Michael Hoffman's film instead of reading the play.

Question 5

- ¿Cómo dedujo la respuesta anterior?
 - a. Por la ropa que usan los actores.
 - b. Por las instrucciones que Shakespeare escribió para la obra.
 - c. Por la información que proporcionan los personajes.⁷

Question 5 is included to verify what the students have taken into account to answer the previous question. That is to say, if students have chosen option 'b' to answer question 4, question 5 will show the researcher if they have answered

⁶ 4. During which historical period does the action take place?

- a. The Middle Ages.
- b. The Ancient Era.
- c. The XIX century.

⁷ 5. How have you inferred the previous answer?

- a. Because of the actors' clothes.
- b. Because of Shakespeare's instructions for the play.
- c. Through what the characters say.

it by chance or because they have read and understood what the characters of the play express.

Question 6

- ¿Qué importancia tiene el lugar y el tiempo histórico? Marque con una cruz la(s) opción(es) correcta(s).
 - a. El lugar es importante, no tendría el mismo efecto si no transcurriera en un bosque. El tiempo histórico es relativo.
 - b. El lugar es importante y el tiempo histórico también lo es porque sería difícil imaginar a un padre moderno llevando a la corte a su hija debido a que ésta no se quiere casar con el hombre que él eligió.
 - c. La obra podría tener el mismo impacto si transcurriera en el futuro en un lugar y tiempo imaginario pero se debería cambiar el lenguaje renacentista.⁸

In question 6 the students have to evaluate the importance of the setting for them. They are asked to choose one or more options from the three presented

⁸ 6. What is the importance of the historical setting? Tick off the correct option(s).

- a. The place is important. It wouldn't have the same effect if it didn't take place in a wood. The historical time is irrelevant.
- b. Both, place and time are important because it would be difficult to imagine a modern father taking his daughter to court due to her refusal to marry the man he has chosen.
- c. The play would have the same impact if it was set in the future in an imaginary place and during an imaginary time but the renaissance language should be changed.

to them. The three options are equally correct. The question has been included to find out how flexible the students could be at the time of adapting the play.

Question 7

- ¿Cuánto tiempo transcurre entre la primera escena y la última?
 - a. 3 días.
 - b. 4 días.
 - c. Una semana.⁹

Question 7 focuses on the span of time covered by the play. Similar to question 3, the students are asked to pay attention to details of the play. In this case, to find the contradiction that exists between what Theseus says in act I scene I and what really happens. If the students only pay attention to what Theseus says, they will choose option 'b'. However, option 'a' is the correct one.

Question 8

- ¿Cómo obtiene esta información?
 - a. Se puede deducir de lo que dicen Theseus e Hippolyta en la primera escena del primer acto.

⁹ 7. How long does the play last?

- a. 3 days.
- b. 4 days.
- c. A week.

- b. Lo explica Puck en la primera escena del segundo acto.
- c. Se puede deducir comparando lo que le dice Lysander a Hermia en la primera escena del primer acto y lo que dice Theseus in la primera escena del cuarto acto.¹⁰

As in question 5, the students in question 8 are asked to explain what they have taken into account to answer question 7. The aim of this question is to find out if the students remembered only what Theseus said in Act 1 Scene 1 or if they were able to deduce the correct answer through paying attention to what Lysander told Hermia in Act 1 Scene 1 and what Theseus said in the first Scene of Act 4.

c. Characters and Characterization.

Question 9

- ¿De qué manera se entera de cómo son los personajes físicamente?
 - a. Por las instrucciones que Shakespeare escribió para el director.
 - b. A través de cómo se describen ellos mismos y como los describen los demás personajes.

¹⁰ 8. How do you get the information to answer question 7?

- a. It can be deduced from what Theseus and Hippolyta say during the first scene of the first act.
- b. Puck explains this during the first scene of the second act.
- c. It can be deduced comparing what Lysander tells Hermia during the first scene of the first act and what Theseus says during the first scene of act four.

- c. Por la forma de vestirse.¹¹

The ninth question focuses on the physical appearance of the characters. This question makes the students think of how they get to know what the characters look like. Option 'a' has been included to see if the students have realized that Shakespeare did not write instructions about what the characters looked like. If the students choose option 'b', which is the correct one, they have paid attention to what the characters say about each other. The objective of option 'c' is to see if the students have only seen a film of the play.

Question 10

- ¿Qué tiene en cuenta para describir a los personajes emocionalmente?
 - a. Lo que dicen y cómo actúan.
 - b. Las notas que Shakespeare escribió al comienzo de cada escena.
 - c. Por sus gestos.¹²

¹¹ How do you get to know what the characters are like?

- a. By mean of the instructions that Shakespeare wrote for the director of the play.
- b. Through the way the characters describe themselves and the way they describe each other.
- c. Because of the clothes they wear.

¹² What do you take into account to describe the characters emotionally?

- a. What they say and how they act.
- b. The notes that Shakespeare wrote at the beginning of each scene
- c. Because of their gestures.

In question 10 the students are asked to evaluate what they have to consider if they want to describe the characters emotionally. Option 'a' is the correct one. Option 'b' is wrong since Shakespeare did not write notes describing the characters emotionally. The aim of option 'c' is to verify if the students have read the play or have just seen a film.

Question 11

- ¿Cómo definiría a Theseus?
 - a. Como un guerrero de edad mediana, ceremonioso y formal pero amable al mismo tiempo, quizás por estar muy enamorado y a punto de casarse.
 - b. Como un hombre que fue soldado pero que ahora se dedica a gobernar su ciudad sin mucho entusiasmo.
 - c. Como un hombre joven y apuesto que está muy enamorado de Hippolyta.¹³

Question 11 is the first one of a series of questions aimed at the analysis of the main characters of the play. The purpose of this question is to make students consider what Theseus is like. Option 'a' is the correct one. Option 'b' describes Theseus' wrong emotional attitude and option 'c' centers on the wrong age of

¹³ How would you describe Theseus?

- a. As a middle-aged warrior, ceremonious and formal but amiable at the same time, perhaps because of being in love and about to get married.
- b. As a man who used to be a soldier but who is now dedicated to rule his city without much enthusiasm.
- c. As a handsome, young man who is deeply in love with Hippolyta.

Theseus. The aim of this question is to find out if the students have been able to create the correct image of Theseus.

Question 12

- ¿Qué tuvo en cuenta para contestar la pregunta anterior?
 - a. La descripción que Egeus hace de Theseus.
 - b. La forma en que habla, el vocabulario que utiliza, y su forma de actuar.
 - c. Que Hippolyta está muy enamorada de él.¹⁴

The students are asked to account for the option they have chosen to answer the previous question in question 12. The end of this question is to help the students reflect on what they have taken into account to answer question 11. Option 'b' is the correct one. Options 'a' and 'c' are misleading alternatives.

Question 13

- ¿Cuál de los siguientes personajes se arriesga más por amor?
 - a. Hermia.
 - b. Titania.
 - c. Helena.¹⁵

¹⁴ What did you take into account to answer the previous question?

- a. The description of Theseus that Egeus provides.
- b. The way Theseus speaks, the vocabulary he uses and the way he acts.
- c. The fact that Hippolyta is very much in love with him.

In question 13, three female characters are presented: Hermia, Titania and Helena. This question has been included for the students to compare the situations which the three characters undergo and evaluate who, for them, risks more for love.

Question 14

- ¿Por qué eligió la respuesta anterior?
 - a. Porque se escapa de la casa de su padre con su amado.
 - b. Porque decide perseguir al hombre que ama de noche a través de un bosque sabiendo que él la desprecia.
 - c. Porque se enamora de un hombre con cabeza de burro.¹⁶

In this question the students are asked to support their previous choice. They will have to think about the elements they have taken into account to choose the option to answer question 13. The aim of this question is to see if the students are able to distinguish the different characters.

Question 15

¹⁵ Which of the following characters risks the most for love?

- a. Hermia.
- b. Titania.
- c. Helena.

¹⁶ Why did you choose the previous answer?

- a. Because she elopes with her beloved.
- b. Because she decides to follow the man she loves at night though a wood knowing that he despises her.
- c. Because she falls in love with a man with the head of an ass.

- ¿Por qué cree que los artesanos son malos actores? Puede elegir más de una opción.
 - a. Porque quieren escribir prólogos para explicar todo lo que pasa en escena.
 - b. Porque son todos hombres.
 - c. Porque son un recurso que utiliza Shakespeare para que la audiencia no se tome tan en serio los problemas del amor.¹⁷

The purpose of question 15 is to make students reflect on the function that the Mechanicals have within the play. Among the possible answers provided, the researcher has included two correct ones: 'a' and 'c'. However, option 'c' will be too difficult for the students to discover without the help of the teacher.

Question 16

- ¿Cuál de los artesanos le parece mejor caracterizado?
 - a. Quince.
 - b. Bottom.
 - c. Snug.¹⁸

¹⁷ Why do you think the workers are bad actors? You can choose more than one option.

- a. Because they want to write prologues to explain everything.
- b. Because they are all men.
- c. Because they are a device that Shakespeare uses for the audience not to take the problems of love so seriously.

¹⁸ Which of the workers has been better characterized?

- a. Quince.

As in question 13, here the students are presented with three Mechanicals from whom to choose. In this case, the characters are: Quince, Bottom and Snug. The aim of this question is to see if the students are able to distinguish between round and flat characters.

Question 17

- ¿Por qué?
 - a. Porque es el director de la obra.
 - b. Porque a pesar de tener una experiencia extraordinaria tiene el buen sentido de no contarla a sus compañeros.
 - c. Porque sólo tiene que rugir.¹⁹

Question 17 asks them to consider why they have chosen Quince, Bottom or Snug. For that, they will have to think about the role that each of these characters has in the play. As in question 14, the way in which the students support their views will shed light on their understanding of the character.

Question 18

-
- b. Bottom.
 - c. Snug.

¹⁹ Why?

- a. Because he is the director of the play within the play.
- b. Because despite having an extraordinary experience, he has the good sense not to retell it to his partners.
- c. Because he only has to roar.

- ¿Por qué Titania y Oberon están peleados al principio del segundo acto?
 - a. Porque Oberon quiere al pequeño niño indio que Titania adoptó.
 - b. Porque Titania fue la amante de Theseus.
 - c. Porque Oberon fue el amante de Hippolyta.²⁰

The aim of question 18 is to help students pay attention to what has caused Titania to leave Oberon's company. Moreover, since Titania is the queen and Oberon is the king of the fairies, they have been chosen as representatives of their fantastic world. This time the students will have to concentrate on the kind of problem that affects them. The correct option is 'a'. Options 'b' and 'c' have been included for the students to realize that unfaithfulness is not the cause of their dispute.

Question 19

- ¿Qué señala este hecho?
 - a. Que son demasiado celosos.
 - b. Que no están realmente muy enojados el uno con el otro.
 - c. Que no se quieren.²¹

²⁰ Why are Titania and Oberon at odds at the beginning of the second act?
 a. Because Oberon wants the little Indian boy that Titania has adopted.
 b. Because Titania was Theseus' lover.
 c. Because Oberon was Hippolyta's lover.

²¹ What does this fact show?
 a. That they are too jealous.

Question 19 focuses on the kind of relationship that these two characters, Titania and Oberon, have. What is more, it aims at finding out if the students are able to see the difference that exists between this couple and human ones.

Question 20

- ¿Qué clase de personaje es Oberon?
 - a. Caprichoso y vengativo pero compasivo al mismo tiempo.
 - b. Celoso y vengativo.
 - c. Celoso pero muy tierno.²²

The importance of Oberon as one of the main characters has been considered when writing question 20, whose end is to make students think about the principal features of this character.

Question 21

- ¿Cómo dedujo la última respuesta?
 - a. Por las cosas que le dice a Titania.
 - b. Por las cosas que quiere que haga Puck.

-
- b. That they aren't really very angry with each other.
 - c. That they don't love each other.

²² What kind of character is Oberon?

- a. Stubborn and vengeful but sympathetic at the same time.
- b. Jealous and vengeful.
- c. Jealous and very sweet.

- c. Porque a pesar de sus actitudes extravagantes, ayuda a los enamorados.²³

As in questions 5, 8, 12 and 14, the purpose is to ask the students to explain why they have chosen the last answer. This will allow the researcher to verify if they have thoroughly thought before choosing the option to answer question 20.

Question 22

- ¿Cómo describiría a Puck?
 - a. Como un duende pícaro pero sin mala intención.
 - b. Como un duende pícaro y mal intencionado.
 - c. Como un ser burlón e interesado.²⁴

Puck is also an important character that represents the fairy world. Therefore, this question has been included for the students to consider what makes him such a rich character.

Question 23

- ¿Qué tuvo en cuenta para elegir la última respuesta?

²³ How have you inferred the last answer?

- a. Through the things that he says to Titania.
- b. Through the things that he asks Puck to do.
- c. Because despite his extravagant attitudes, he helps the lovers.

²⁴ How would you describe Puck?

- a. As a mischievous but well-intentioned fairy.
- b. As a mischievous and ill-intentioned fairy.
- c. As a mocking and interested being.

- a. Porque se equivoca pero sin querer.
- b. Porque todo lo que hace lo hace con doble intención.
- c. Porque trabaja para Oberon sólo porque es el rey de las hadas.²⁵

Question 23 focuses again on making the students reflect on what they have taken into account to select the correct option for their last answer. This question has been included to see if the students are consistent with their choice in question 22.

d. Style and Symbols.

Question 24

- Los personajes pueden ser divididos en cuatro grupos diferentes. Cada uno de estos grupos usa una forma particular de hablar. ¿Qué forma pertenece a cada grupo?

a. La corte de Atenas	1. prose
b. Los amantes	2. blank verse
c. Las hadas	3. rhyming couplets
d. Los artesanos	4. lyrical, short-lined poetry ²⁶

²⁵ What did you take into account to choose the previous answer?

- a. Because he makes mistakes but not on purpose.
- b. Because he does everything with ulterior motives.
- c. Because he works for Oberon only because he is the king of the fairies.

This question opens a section dedicated to the analysis of the particular manner in which Shakespeare creates the atmosphere of this comedy. The objective of question 24 is to see if the students are able to distinguish the different prosody used by Shakespeare in this play. This is why they are given the four main groups of characters on one column (the nobles, the lovers, the fairies and the mechanicals) and the names of four different types of verse forms (blank verse, rhyming couplets, lyrical, short-lined poetry and prose) on another column. The students will have to match each group of characters with the form of verse that they generally speak.

Question 25

- ¿Qué representaría Theseus?
 - a. Autoritarismo.
 - b. Orden y estabilidad.
 - c. Aburrimiento.²⁷

²⁶ The characters can be divided into four different groups. Each of these groups uses a particular way of speaking. Which form belongs to each group? Join with arrows.

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. The court of Athens | 1. prose |
| b. The lovers | 2. blank verse |
| c. The fairies | 3. rhyming couples |
| d. The workers | 4. lyrical, short-lined poetry |

²⁷ What does Theseus stand for?

- a. Authoritarianism.
- b. Order and stability.
- c. Boredom.

Symbols and metaphors are important in this play. The aim of question 25 is to be informed to what extent students have paid attention to this and, for example, are able to understand what Theseus stands for.

Question 26

- ¿Qué significado le daría a la poción de amor?
 - a. El poder de la magia.
 - b. Los deseos de Cupido.
 - c. Lo impredecible del amor.²⁸

In question 26 students are asked to focus on the metaphorical meaning of the flower called 'love-in-idleness'. The researcher wants to find out if the students are able to comprehend what this flower represents.

Question 27

- Elija una o más opciones que le parezcan adecuadas para describir la atmósfera mágica de la obra.
 - a. Oberon se puede hacer invisible.
 - b. Egeus acusa a Lysander de haber hechizado a su hija.
 - c. Puck puede controlar los fenómenos de la naturaleza.

²⁸ What do you think the love potion symbolises?

- a. The power of magic.
- b. Cupid's wishes.
- c. The unpredictability of love.

- d. Los artesanos dan explicaciones de todo lo que sucede en escena.
- e. La metamorfosis de Bottom en asno.²⁹

In question 27 there are five options out of which only three ('a', 'c' and 'e') have been used by Shakespeare to create the magic atmosphere of the play. The end is to make the students consider the different resources that are used to contrive this enchanted effect.

Question 28

- ¿De qué manera anticipa el autor los acontecimientos que habrán de desarrollarse en el transcurso de la obra?
 - a. A través de las reiteradas alusiones a la luna en el primer acto.
 - b. Situando la acción en la ciudad de Atenas.
 - c. Lo explica Egeus en el primer acto.³⁰

²⁹ Which of the following options do you think describes the magic atmosphere of the play?

- a. Oberon can become invisible.
- b. Egeus accuses Lysander of having bewitched his daughter.
- c. Puck can control the phenomenon of nature.
- d. The workers explain everything that takes place in their play.
- e. Bottom's metamorphosis into an ass.

³⁰ In what way does the playwright foreshadow the events that will be developed through the play?

- a. Through the repetitious allusions to the moon during the first act.
- b. Setting the action in the city of Athens.
- c. Egeus explains this during the first act.

This question focuses on the way Shakespeare foreshadows what is going to happen during the play. It aims at finding out whether the students have paid attention to the meaning of the vocabulary used by the characters during the first act.

Question 29

- ¿Qué significado le atribuye a la famosa frase: *The course of true love never did run smooth?* (1.1.134)
 - a. Que el amor de las mujeres es más constante que el de los hombres.
 - b. Que para que los sueños se hagan realidad deben intervenir las hadas.
 - c. Que si el amor es verdadero, puede vencer cualquier obstáculo.³¹

Question 29 deals with the interpretation of one of the most famous quotes from this play. According to the students' answers the researcher will see if they are capable of explaining the meaning of this phrase within the play.

e. Themes.

³¹ What do you think is the meaning of the famous phrase: *The course of true love never did run smooth?* (1.1.134)

- a. Women's love is more constant than men's love.
- b. If we want dreams to become true, fairies should intervene.
- c. True love will overcome any obstacles.

Question 30

- ¿De qué trata la obra? Elija la(s) opción(es) que crea correctas.
 - a. Las dificultades que el verdadero amor debe enfrentar para llegar a buen término.
 - b. Racismo.
 - c. Realidad y apariencia.
 - d. Discriminación.
 - e. Distintos tipos de relaciones.
 - f. El poder de la oratoria.
 - g. El misterio de la muerte.
 - h. Las convenciones del teatro.
 - i. El poder de la magia.
 - j. Piedad vs. crueldad
 - k. La corrupción que produce la ambición desmedida.
 - l. Colonialismo.
 - m. Contrastes entre distintas clases sociales.
 - n. Sexualidad e incesto.
 - o. Venganza.³²

³² What is the play about? Choose the correct option(s)

- a. The difficulties that true love should overcome to have a happy ending.
- b. Racism.
- c. Reality and appearance.
- d. Discrimination.
- e. Different kind of relationships.
- f. The power of speech.
- g. The mystery of death.
- h. The conventions of theatre.

In this last question the students are given fifteen options and are asked to choose the ones that they think describe what the play is about. Only six of the fifteen options are connected in some way with the plot. The purpose of this question is to make the students reflect on the play as a whole and see how much they have understood. Through this question the researcher will be able to find out if the students are able to deduce abstract concepts from the plot.

3.4.2. Observation Grid

During the seven days the students used to rehearse the play, a grid was used to write down anything which could help the researcher find out what the students had taken into account to interpret the play. This grid was specially designed to register anything which the researcher considered useful for the present study. That is to say, all the comments and remarks that the students uttered, actions that they performed or questions that they asked among themselves or of the teacher, since, as has already been explained, she could be consulted.

The grid consists of nine sheets of paper: one for each scene of the play. Each sheet of paper is divided into two categories: one for the setting and one for the

-
- i. The power of magic.
 - j. Piety vs. cruelty.
 - k. The corruption that produces boundless ambition.
 - l. Colonialism.
 - m. Contrast among different social classes.
 - n. Sexuality and incest.
 - o. Revenge.

characters. The setting section is divided into time and place and the section for the characters has the names of those personages who appear in the scene. For example, in the sheet of paper dedicated to Act 1 Scene 1, the following names appear: Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius and Helena. In addition to these nine sheets of paper, the researcher keeps another one to record anything connected to the style and themes of the play.

The different categories included in the grid were selected so as to match the labels in the questionnaires. This was done so as to facilitate triangulation.

3.4.3. Second Questionnaire

The second questionnaire is exactly the same as the first one. It has only one more question. At the beginning, after completing the questionnaire with the date, their course, names and surname, the students are asked to write down which has been their role in the theatre company. That is to say, they have to specify to which department they have belonged and, if they have been part of the cast, which character they have performed. This question has been added to see if there is a connection between the role they have played and what they have learned about this play. More precisely, the researcher wants to know if the members of certain departments such as costume, make-up, lights and music, who do not need to know what the play is about to participate in the project, are also acquainted, not only with the plot, but with the style and main themes of the play as well.

CHAPTER 4

4.1. The Results of the Study

4.1.1. Students' Questionnaires

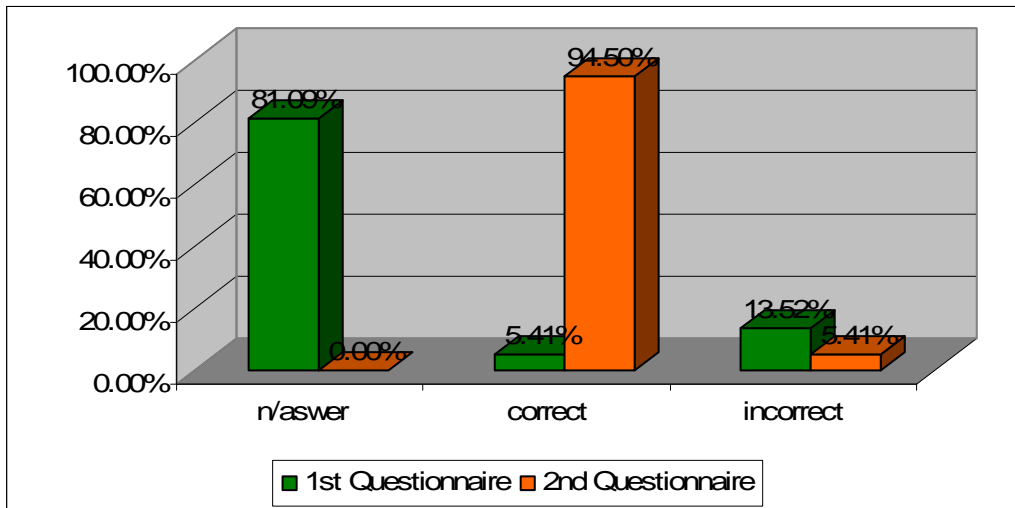
Since the results of the first questionnaire showed that most of the students did not know what the play was about, the results of both questionnaires, the first one and the second one are compared in this section.

Question 1

¿Que relación tiene el título de la obra con la historia? Marque con una cruz la(s) opción(es) correcta(s).

- a. Se refiere a que lo ocurrido durante una noche de mucho calor en un bosque puede ser interpretado como un sueño.
- b. Se refiere a que durante las noches de verano uno tiene sueños.
- c. Se refiere a que lo que ocurra una noche de verano calurosa sólo puede ser un sueño.

Out of the seventy-four students surveyed the first time, 81.09 % did not answer question 1. They did not have any idea about the relationship between the title and the play. 13.52 % of the students answered it wrongly and only 5.41 % answered it correctly. Nevertheless, the second time they were administered the questionnaire, everybody answered this question well. However, only four students, 5.41 %, answered it wrongly. The rest answered it correctly.

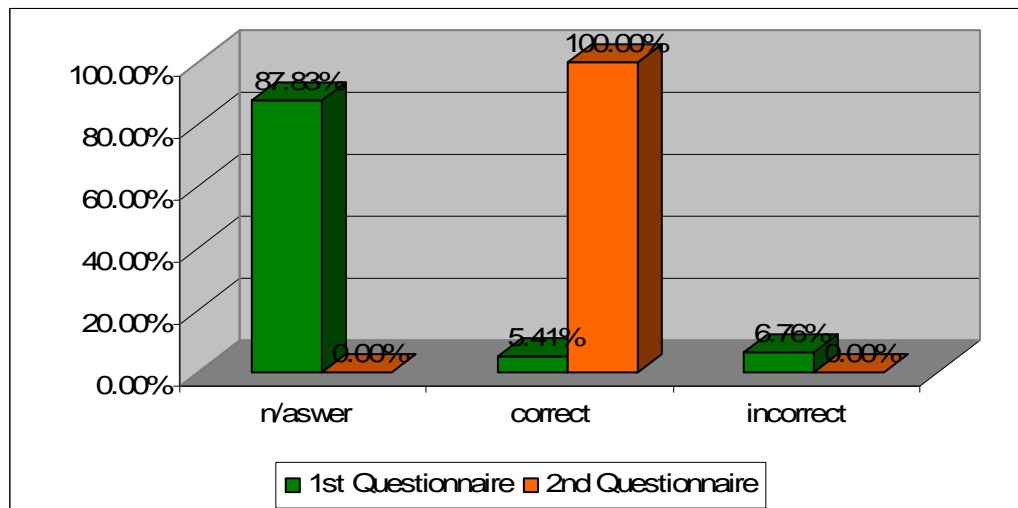


Question 2

¿Dónde y cuándo transcurre la mayor parte de la obra?

- a. En la ciudad de Atenas durante el día.
- b. En la ciudad de Atenas durante la noche.
- c. En un bosque cerca de la ciudad de Atenas durante la noche.

The first time this question was administered to the students, 87.83 % did not answer it, 6.76 % answered it wrongly and only 5.41 % of the students seemed to know the answer since they answered it correctly. The second time the students responded to this question, everybody knew where and when the majority of the scenes took place.



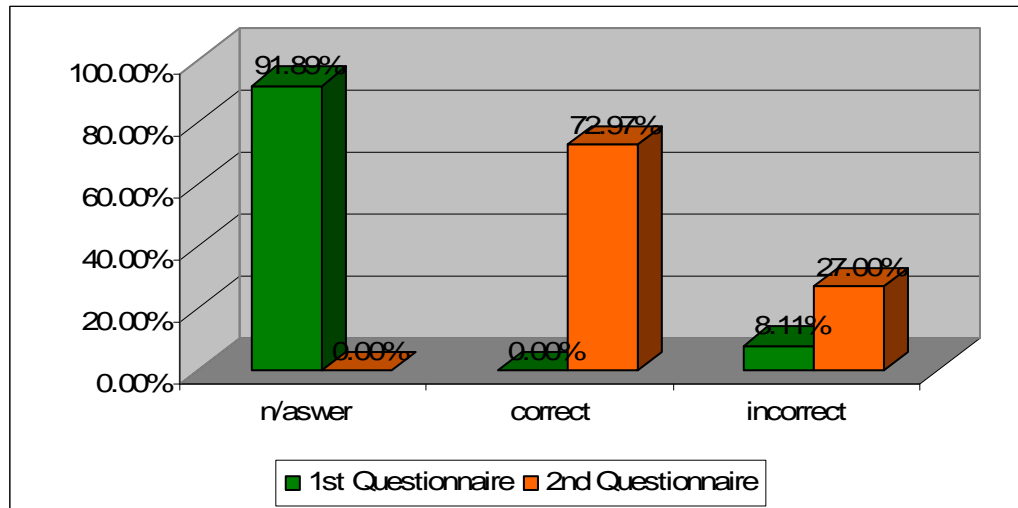
Question 3

¿Cuáles son los actos que transcurren en ese lugar?

- a. 2, 3, y parte del 4.
- b. 2, 3, y 4.
- c. 2, 3, 4 y parte del 5.

Nobody answered this question correctly the first time they were given the questionnaire, since 68 students did not answer it and the rest answered it wrongly. This question proved to be a difficult one for the students, as twenty students did not answer it correctly the second time. The majority of the students, seventeen out of the twenty who answered it wrongly, chose option 'b' instead of option 'a'. The reason for this choice could have been that the adaptors of one of the courses observed decided not to include Scene 2 from Act 4 in their production. Therefore, those students who did not take the time to read the original version of the play assumed that Act 4 had only one scene

which took place in the woods, completely ignoring that this act has a second scene which takes place in the city.

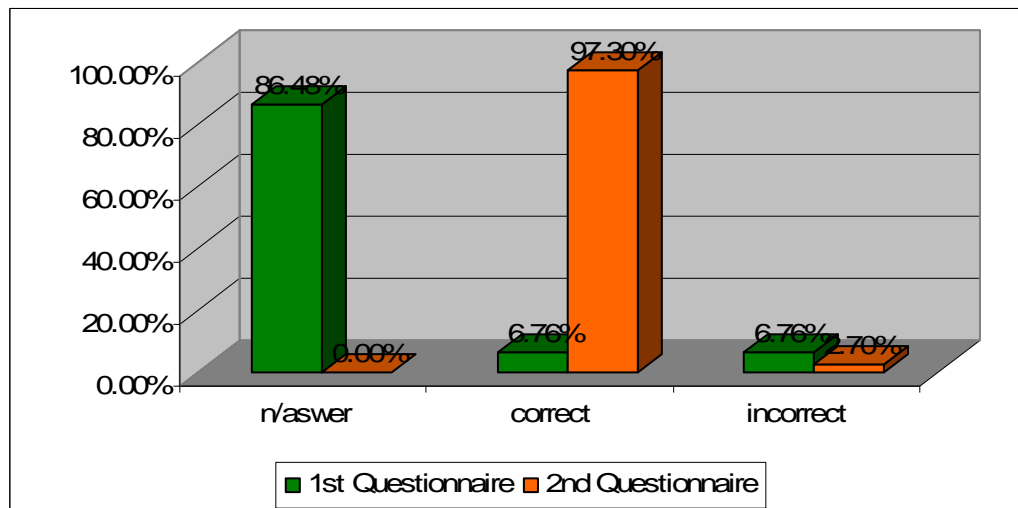


Question 4

¿Durante que período histórico transcurre la obra?

- a. La Edad Moderna.
- b. La Edad Antigua.
- c. El siglo XIX.

Sixty-four students did not answer question 4, five answered it correctly and five wrongly the first time. While the second time only two students answered this question wrongly. Both of them chose option 'c' which shows that they had paid more attention to the film directed by Michael Hoffman than to the play written by Shakespeare.

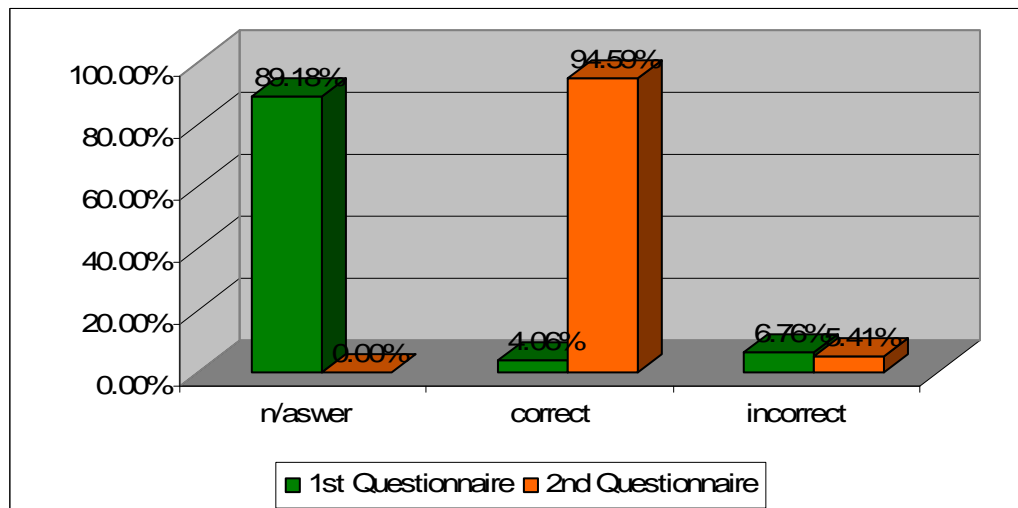


Question 5

¿Cómo dedujo la respuesta anterior?

- Por la ropa que usan los actores.
- Por las instrucciones que Shakespeare escribió para la obra.
- Por la información que proporcionan los personajes.

89.18 % of the students surveyed the first time did not answer this question while 6.76 % answered it wrongly and only 4.06 % answered it correctly. The second time, however, 4 students still answered it wrongly. all of them chose option 'a' from which it might be deduced that they had paid more attention to the clothes their mates wore for the performance than to what the actors actually said, since both groups decided to reproduce the ancient setting of the play.



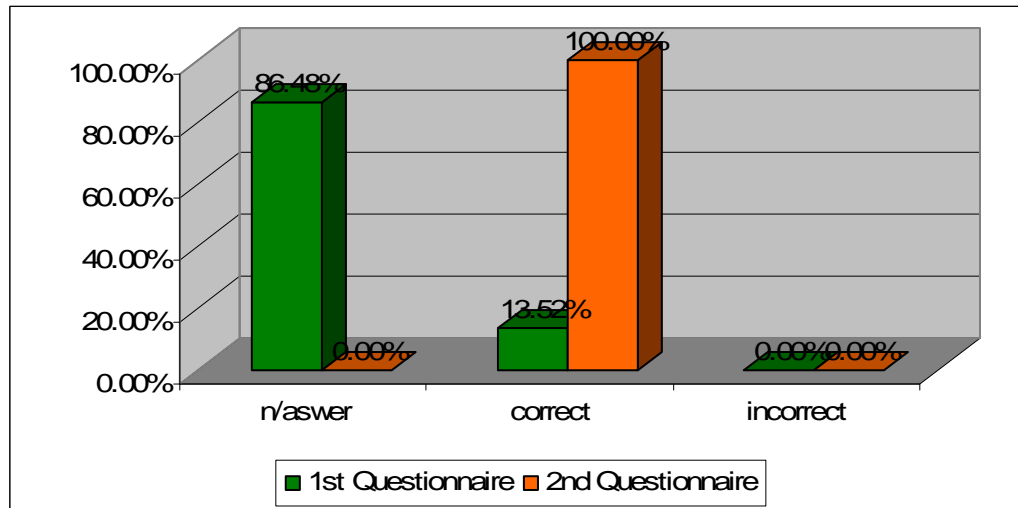
Question 6

¿Qué importancia tienen el lugar y el tiempo histórico? Marque con una cruz la(s) opción(es) correcta(s).

- a. El lugar es importante, no tendría el mismo efecto si no transcurriera en un bosque. El tiempo histórico es relativo.
- b. El lugar es importante y el tiempo histórico también lo es porque sería difícil imaginar a un padre moderno llevando a la corte a su hija debido a que ésta no se quiere casar con el hombre que él eligió.
- c. La obra podría tener el mismo impacto si transcurriera en el futuro en un lugar y tiempo imaginario pero se debería cambiar el lenguaje renacentista.

As this is a question which offers more than one correct option, out of the seventy-four students interrogated, the only ten students who chose to answer

it the first time they were administered the questionnaire, did it correctly. All of them answered question 6 correctly the second time they had to do it.

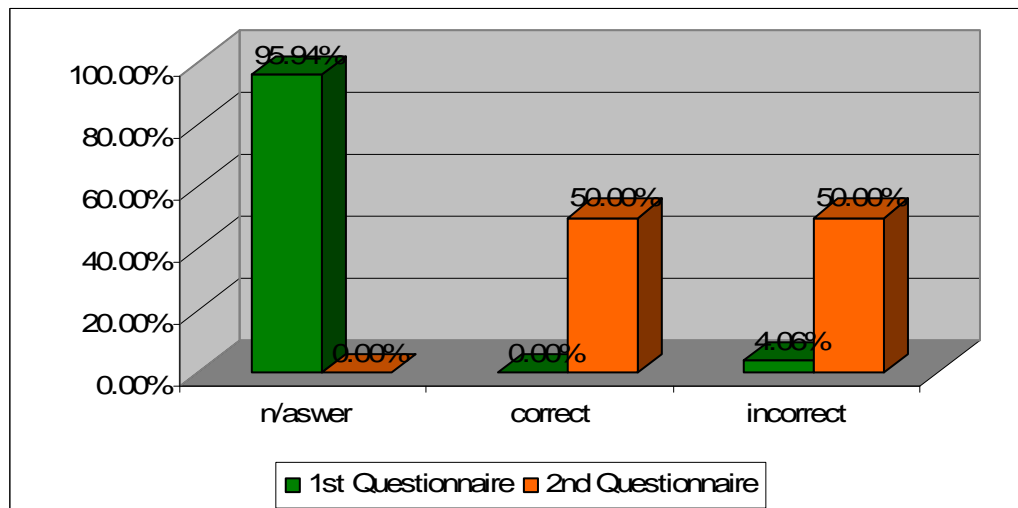


Question 7

¿Cuánto tiempo transcurre entre la primera escena y la última?

- a. 3 días.
- b. 4 días.
- c. Una semana.

95.94 % of the students did not answer this question and the rest did not answer it correctly the first time. 50% of the students chose option 'b' which was the correct one, according to what Theseus says in Act 1 Scene 1. While the other 50 % of the students noticed the contradiction that exists between what Theseus says and the time covered by the play.

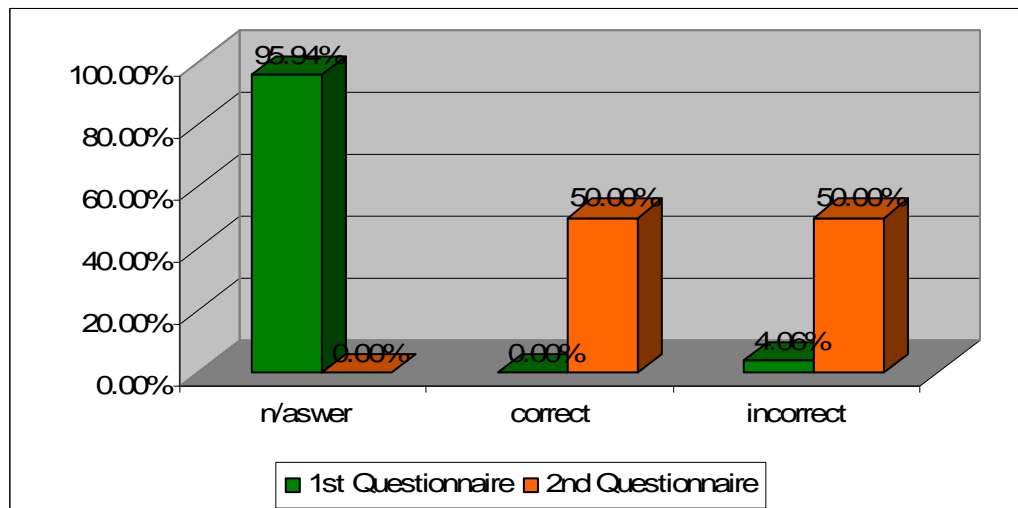


Question 8

¿Cómo obtiene esta información?

- a. Se puede deducir de lo que dicen Theseus e Hippolyta en la primera escena del primer acto.
- b. Lo explica Puck en la primera escena del segundo acto.
- c. Se puede deducir comparando lo que le dice Lysander a Hermia en la primera escena del primer acto y lo que dice Theseus in la primera escena del cuarto acto.

The first time the same 95.94 % who did not answer question 7 did not answer question 8 either. The rest did not answer it correctly. The same 50 % who chose the correct option in the previous question, answered it correctly the second time too; the rest chose option 'a' showing that they only paid attention to what Theseus said in Act 1 Scene1.

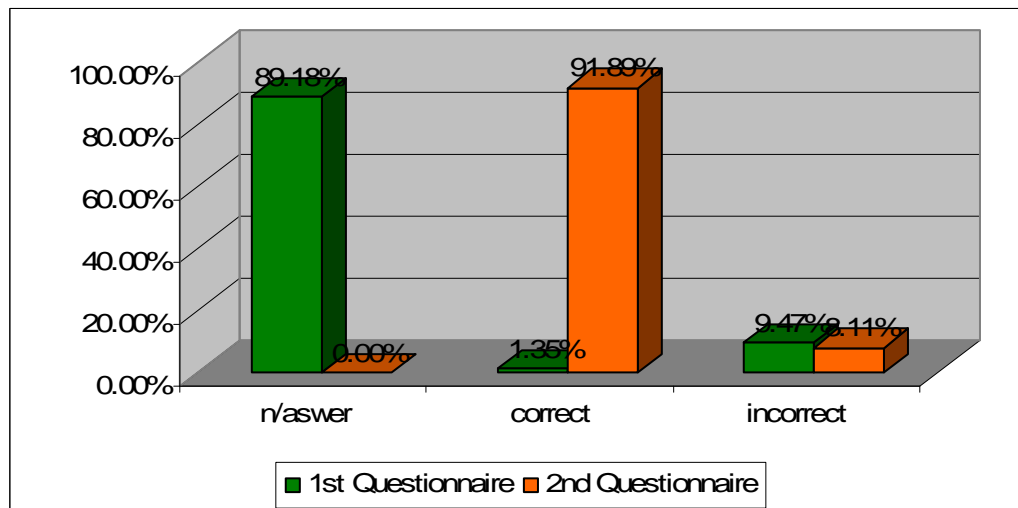


Question 9

¿De qué manera se entera de cómo son los personajes físicamente?

- a. Por las instrucciones que Shakespeare escribió para el director.
- b. A través de cómo se describen ellos mismos y cómo los describen los demás personajes.
- c. Por la forma de vestirse.

This question was not answered by sixty-six students the first time, while seven students answered it wrongly and only one student answered it correctly on that occasion. While, the second time the students answered the questionnaire, 68 of them answered it correctly and only 6 answered it wrongly.



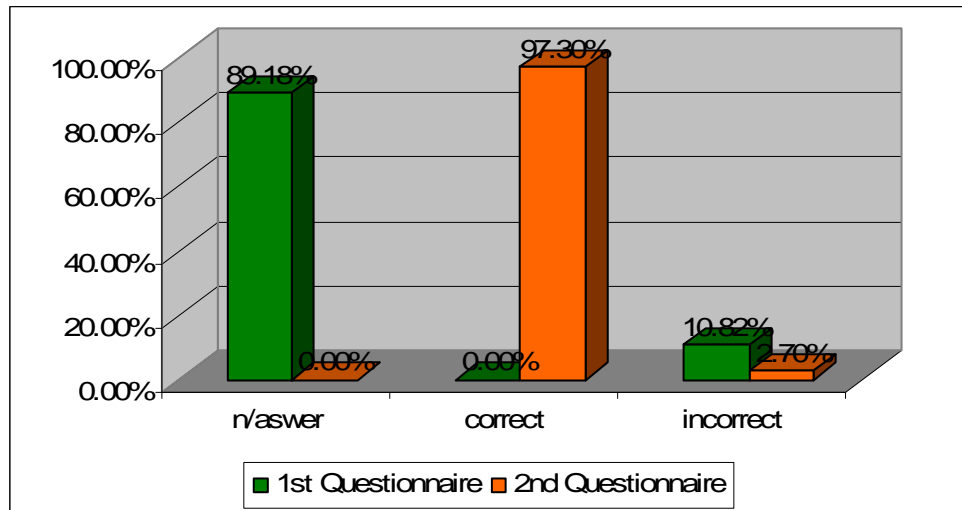
Question 10

¿Qué tiene en cuenta para describir a los personajes emocionalmente?

- a. Lo que dicen y cómo actúan.
- b. Las notas que Shakespeare escribió al comienzo de cada escena.
- c. Por sus gestos.

The same sixty-six students who did not answer question 9 did not answer question 10 either. However, this time all the other students left chose the wrong options. An interesting point here is that the same three students that had chosen the option which stated that to get to know the characters physically we had to read the instructions that Shakespeare had written for the directors of the play again chose the option which referred to the same idea in this question.

The second time the students answered question 10, only 2 students chose the wrong option. The rest chose the correct one.

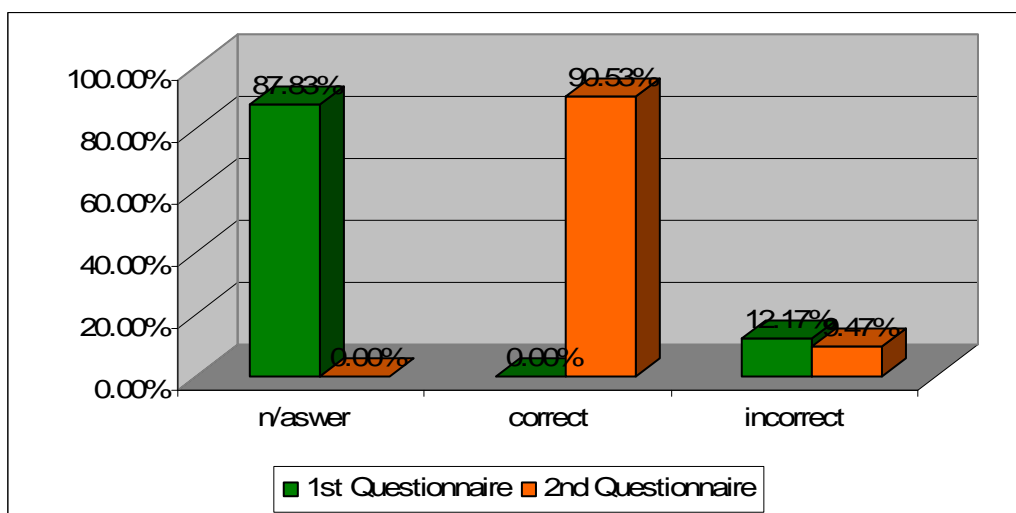


Question 11

¿Cómo definiría a Theseus?

- a. Como un guerrero de edad mediana, ceremonioso y formal pero amable al mismo tiempo, quizás por estar muy enamorado y a punto de casarse.
- b. Como un hombre que fue soldado pero que ahora se dedica a gobernar su ciudad sin mucho entusiasmo.
- c. Como un hombre joven y apuesto que está muy enamorado de Hippolyta.

Sixty-five students chose not to answer this question the first time they were presented with the questionnaire and the rest chose the wrong options. The second time, only seven students answered it wrongly. The rest answered it correctly.



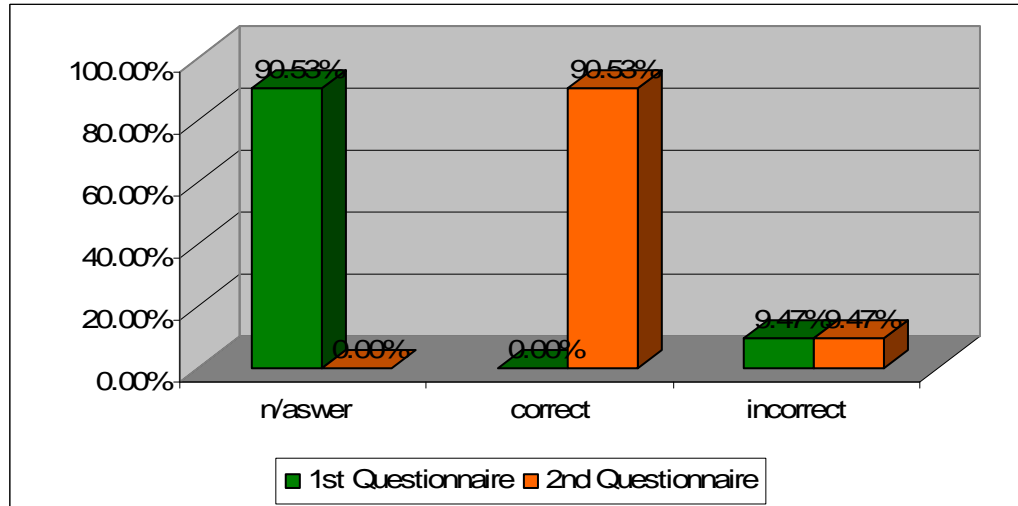
Question 12

¿Qué tuvo en cuenta para contestar la pregunta anterior?

- La descripción que Egeus hace de Theseus.
- La forma en que habla, el vocabulario que utiliza, y su forma de actuar.
- Que Hippolyta está muy enamorada de él.

90.53 % of the students did not answer question 12 the first time, while the rest answered it wrongly. The second time, however, 90.53 % of the students

answered it correctly, while only seven students did not answer it in the correct way.



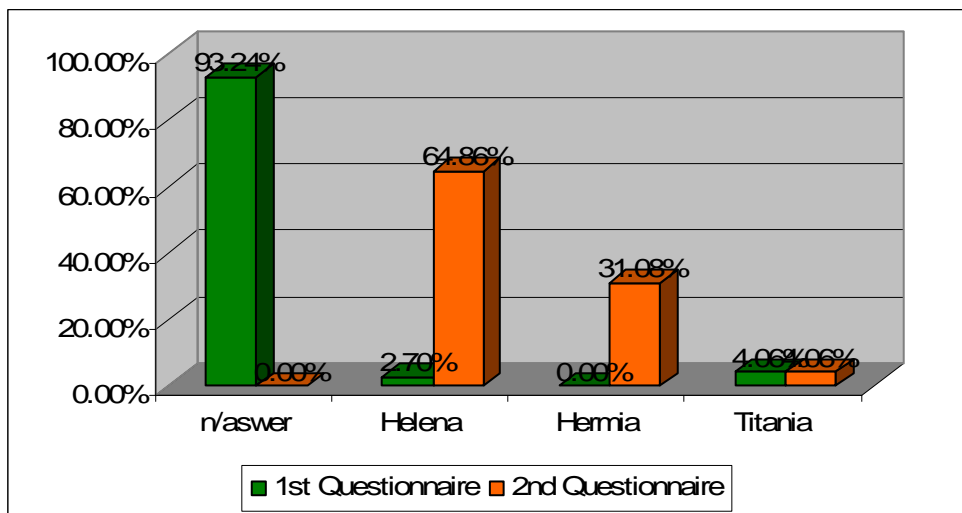
Question 13

¿Cuál de los siguientes spersonajes se arriesga más por amor?

- a. Hermia.
- b. Titania.
- c. Helena.

Out of the seventy-four students surveyed, sixty-nine did not answer this question, four answered it wrongly and only one chose the correct option the first time they were administered the questionnaire. Surprisingly, the results from the second questionnaire showed that only forty-eight students, 64.86 % of the group surveyed, considered that Helena was the one who risked more for

love, twenty-three students thought that it was Hermina the one who risked the most and only three students chose Titania.



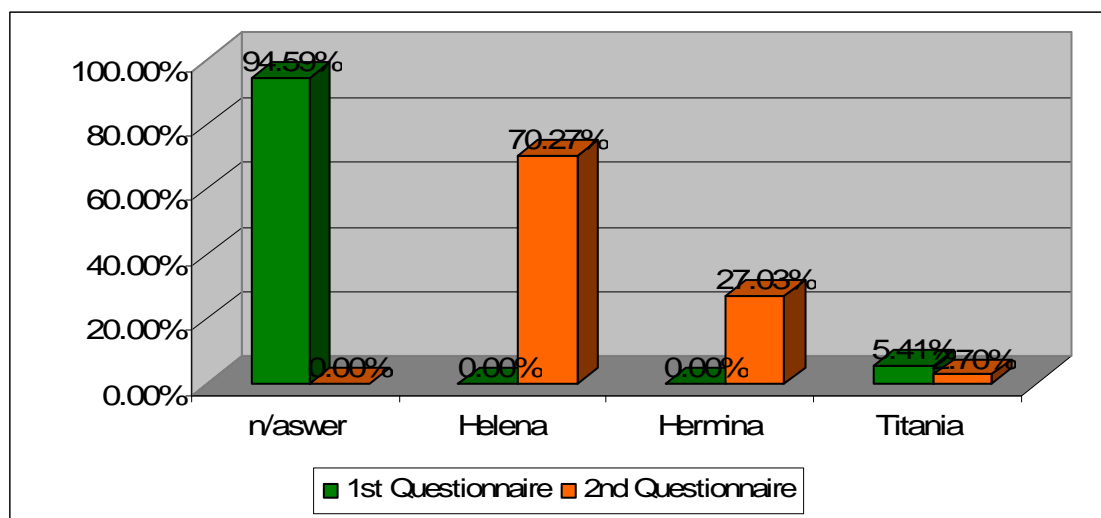
Question 14

¿Por qué eligió la respuesta anterior?

- a. Porque se escapa de la casa de su padre con su amado.
- b. Porque decide perseguir al hombre que ama de noche a través de un bosque sabiendo que él la desprecia.
- c. Porque se enamora de un hombre con cabeza de burro.

94.59 % of the students did not choose any option for this question while the rest picked the wrong answer from the first questionnaire. Interestingly enough, almost the same students, twenty out of the twenty-three, who had chosen Hermia as the correct option for question 13, were consistent and chose option 'a', the one that referred to what Heremia decided to do during the play, as the

correct option. In this way they showed that when they had selected Hermia as the one who risked more for love in question 13; they knew what they were doing. Only three students must have confused the names as they had chosen Hermia in question 13 but option 'b' in question 14, the one which retold the experience that Helena underwent. Only two students did not remember the plot and chose the option that described what happened to Titania during the play.

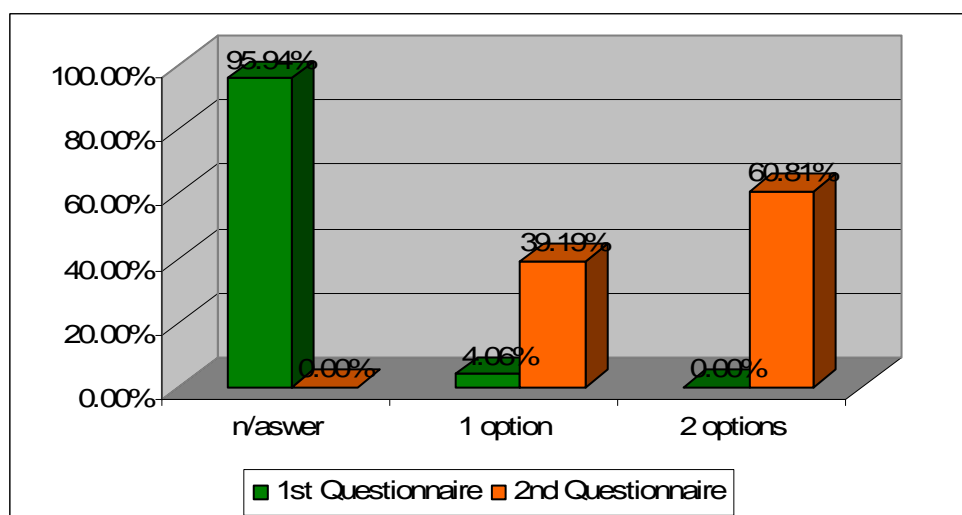


Question 15

¿Por qué cree que los artesanos son malos actores? Puede elegir más de una opción.

- a. Porque quieren escribir prólogos para explicar todo lo que pasa en escena.
- b. Porque son todos hombres.
- c. Porque son un recurso que utiliza Shakespeare para que la audiencia no se tome tan en serio los problemas del amor.

In this question, 95.94 % of the students decided not to answer and the rest answered it correctly, as two of the options are correct. The second time the students were consulted, all of them answered it correctly. However, it is important to mention here that only 60.81 % of the students chose the two correct options. The rest chose only option 'a', which was the easiest to recognize.

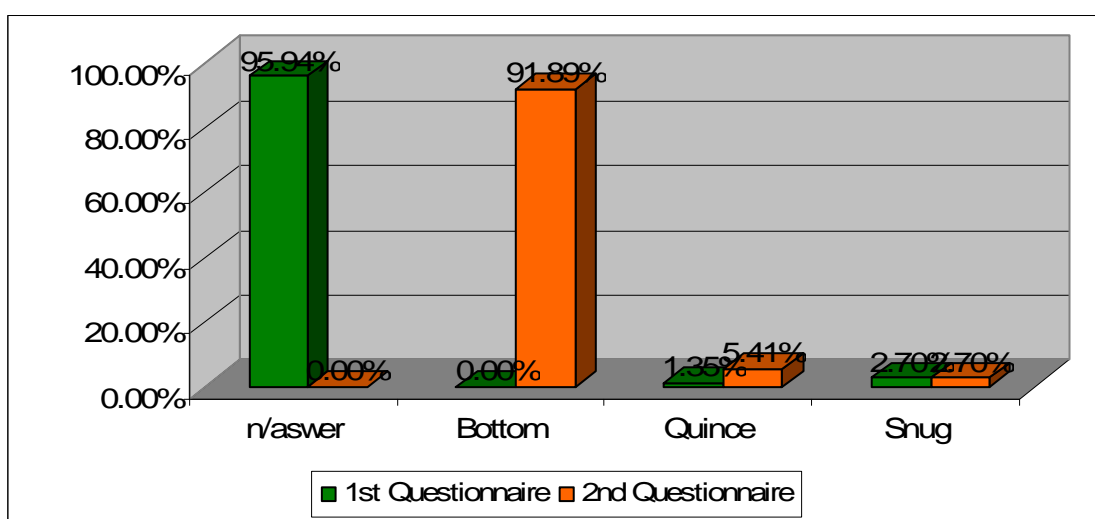


Question 16

¿Cuál de los artesanos le parece mejor caracterizado?

- a. Quince.
- b. Bottom.
- c. Snug.

95.94 % of the students involved in this study did not choose any options to answer question 16 and the rest, that is to say, 4.06 % of the students chose the wrong answer. However, when answering the second questionnaire, 91.89 % of the students chose Bottom as the best characterized while 5.41 % chose Quince and only 2.70 % chose Snug.



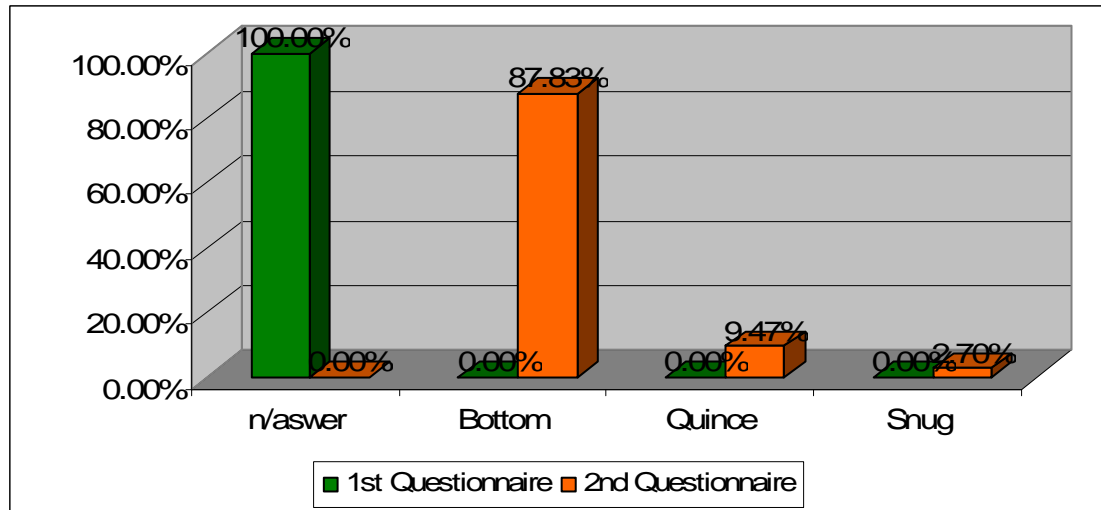
Question 17

¿Por qué?

- a. Porque es el director de la obra.
- b. Porque a pesar de tener una experiencia extraordinaria tiene el buen sentido de no contarla a sus compañeros.
- c. Porque sólo tiene que rugir.

Question 17 was not answered by any student. However, the second time the students were given the questionnaire, 87.83 % of the students answered it

correctly, showing that three students that had chosen Bottom in question 16 had mistaken him as the director of the play within the play and chose option 'a' in this question. The 02.70 % that had chosen Snug in the previous question was consistent and chose option 'c', the one which referred to him.

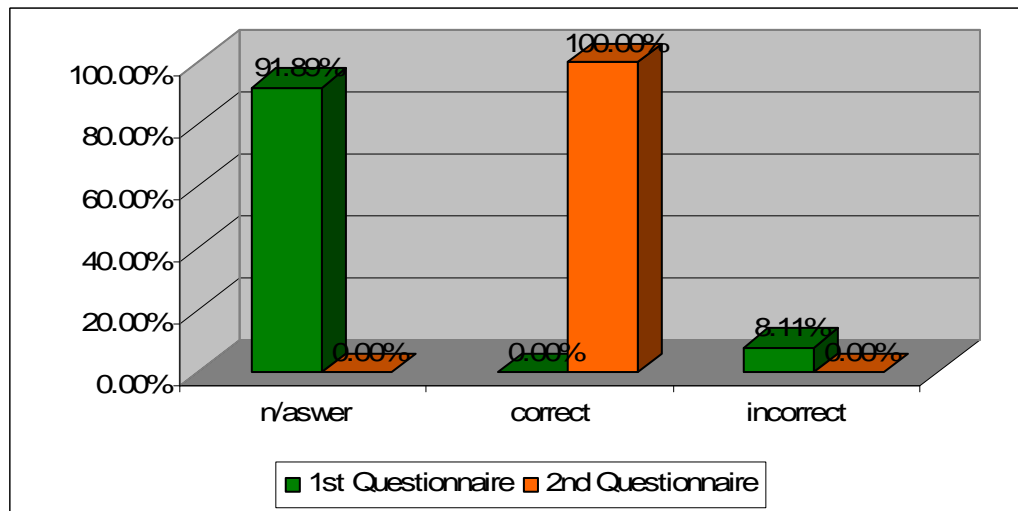


Question 18

¿Por qué Titania y Oberon están peleados al principio del segundo acto?

- a. Porque Oberon quiere al pequeño niño indio que Titania adoptó.
- b. Porque Titania fue la amante de Theseus.
- c. Porque Oberon fue el amante de Hippolyta.

Sixty-eight students did not answer this question the first time and the rest answered it correctly. The second time, all the students chose the correct answer.

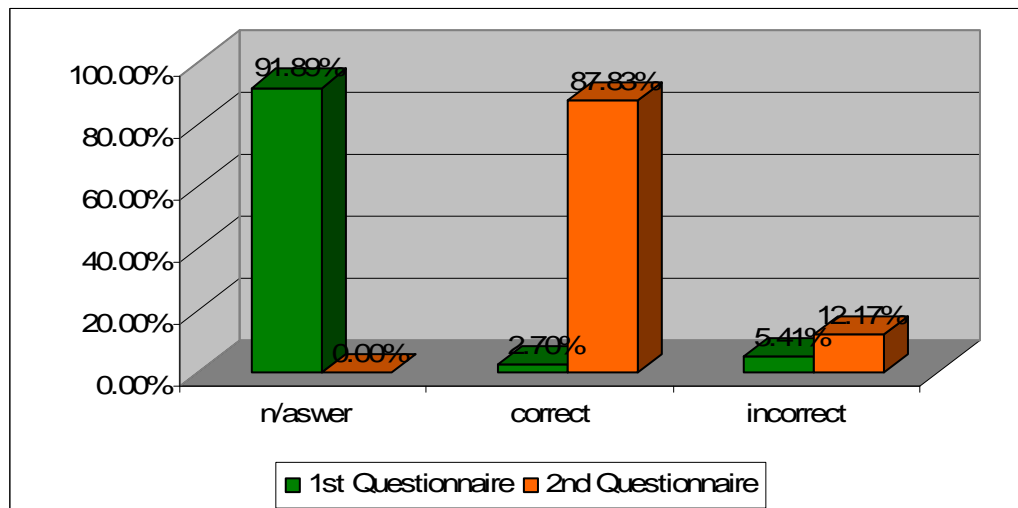


Question 19

¿Qué señala este hecho?

- Que son demasiado celosos.
- Que no están realmente muy enojados el uno con el otro.
- Que no se quieren.

Two students chose the correct option for this question, four chose the wrong one and sixty-eight chose not to mark any answer, when they completed this questionnaire the first time. When answering this question for the second time, sixty-five students, that is to say, 87.83 % of the total number of students, ticked the correct answer while the rest answered it wrongly, showing that they did not understand what Titania and Oberon felt for each other.

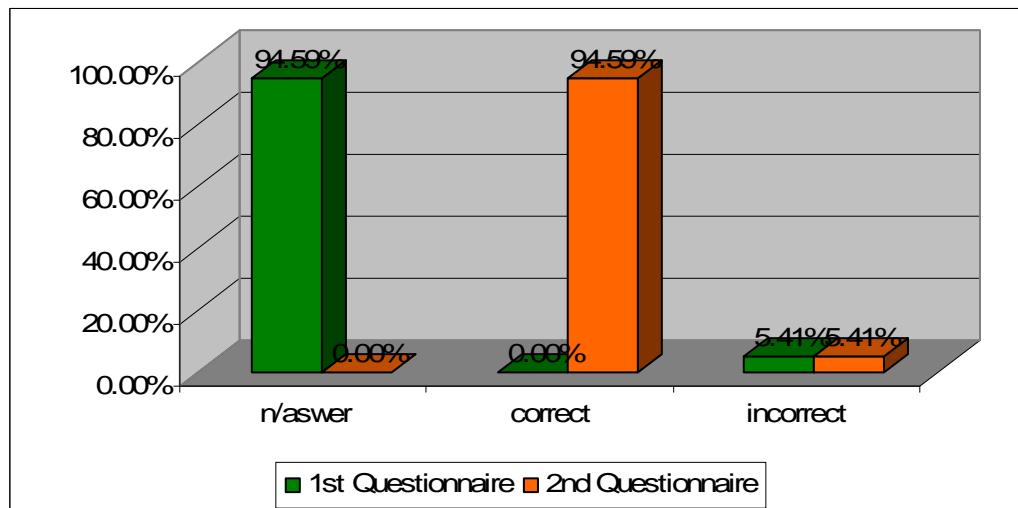


Question 20

¿Qué clase de personaje es Oberon?

- a. Caprichoso y vengativo pero compasivo al mismo tiempo.
- b. Celoso y vengativo.
- c. Celoso pero muy tierno.

Seventy students did not answer this question the first time and the rest answered it wrongly. Seventy students answered it correctly while the rest chose the wrong answer the second time they were administered the questionnaire.

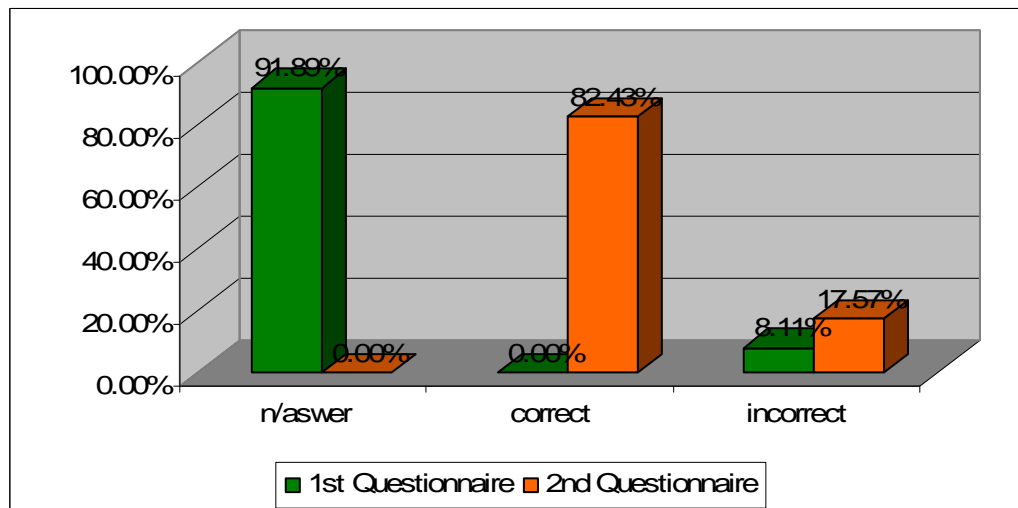


Question 21

¿Cómo dedujo la última respuesta?

- Por las cosas que le dice a Titania.
- Por las cosas que quiere que haga Puck.
- Porque a pesar de sus actitudes extravagantes, ayuda a los enamorados.

Similarly to what happened in question 18, sixty-eight students did not tick any options, while the rest chose the wrong options. However, the second time, only 82.43 % of the students chose the correct option. This result seems to point out that while many students knew why Oberon and Titania were not together at the beginning of the play, most learners still did not understand why Oberon acted the way he did.

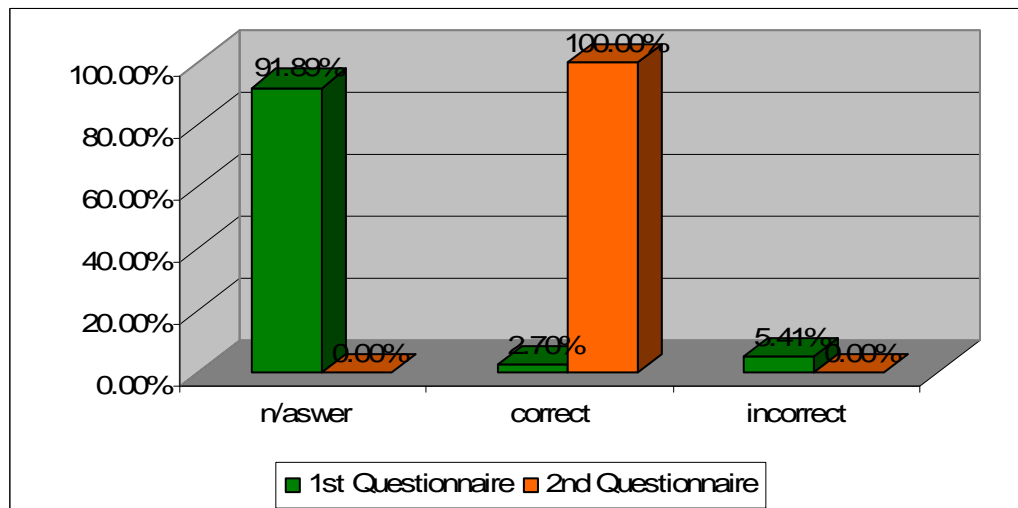


Question 22

¿Cómo describiría a Puck?

- a. Como un duende pícaro pero sin mala intención.
- b. Como un duende pícaro y mal intencionado.
- c. Como un ser burlón e interesado.

Sixty-eight of the students surveyed during the first time did not answer this question, four answered it correctly and four did it incorrectly. However, the second time the students were presented with this question, all of them answered it correctly, showing that they had understood what Puck was like.

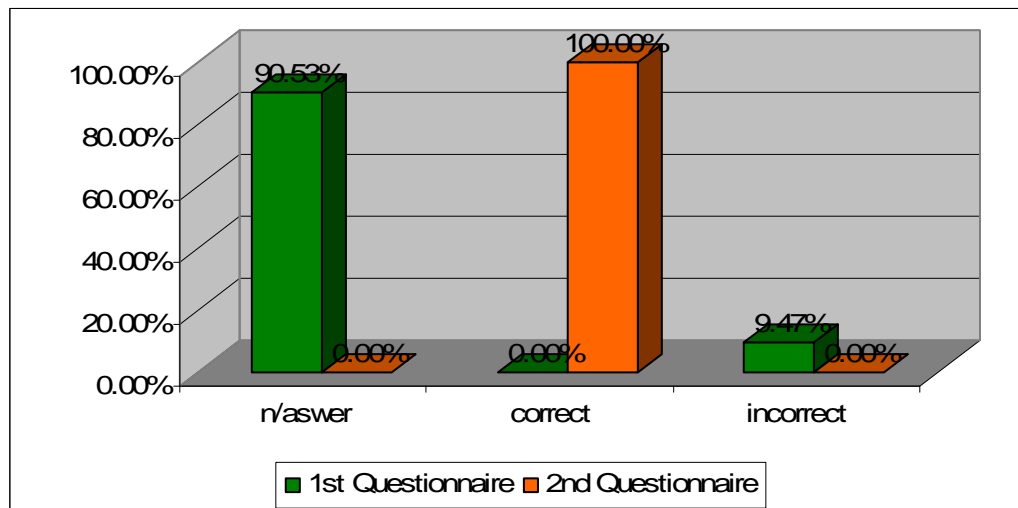


Question 23

¿Qué tuvo en cuenta para elegir la última respuesta?

- a. Porque se equivoca pero sin querer.
- b. Porque todo lo que hace lo hace con doble intención.
- c. Porque trabaja para Oberon sólo porque es el rey de las hadas.

In question 22, sixty-seven students chose not to answer it, and the rest of the students answered it wrongly the first time. The second time the students faced this question, again, all the students answered number 22 correctly. This shows that all the students had clear picture of Puck.

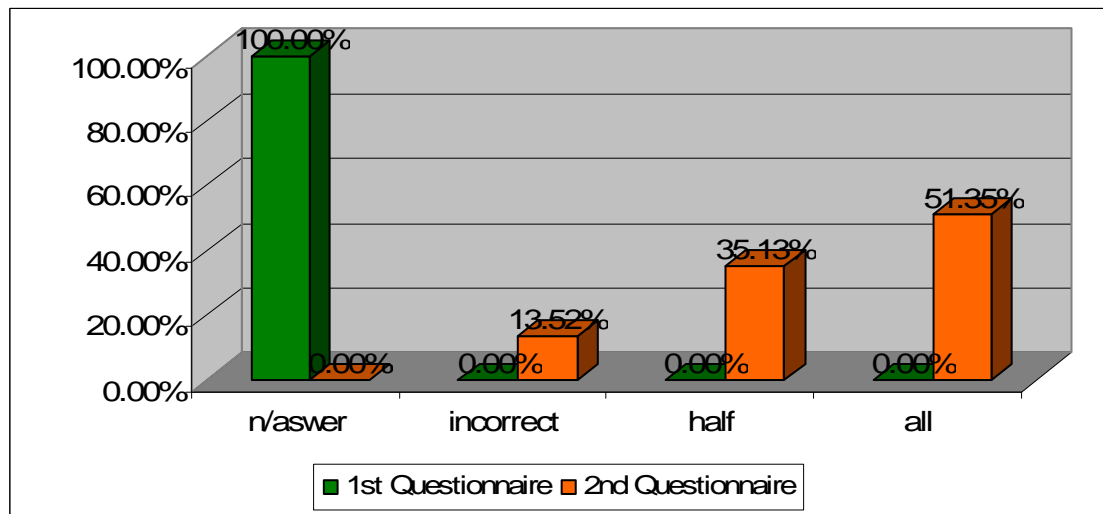


Question 24

Los personajes pueden ser divididos en cuatro grupos diferentes. Cada uno de estos grupos usa una forma particular de hablar. ¿Qué forma pertenece a cada grupo?

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. La corte de Atenas | 1. prose |
| b. Los amantes | 2. blank verse |
| c. Las hadas | 3. rhyming couplets |
| d. Los artesanos | 4. lyrical, short-lined poetry |

Nobody answered this question the first time they encountered it. As the students are asked to match the different groups of characters with the verse forms Shakespeare used to make them speak, twenty-six students got only half of the answers correctly. Surprisingly, because of the degree of difficulty of the question, only ten students were not able to get any of the matches correctly. The rest of the students were able to match all the options accurately.

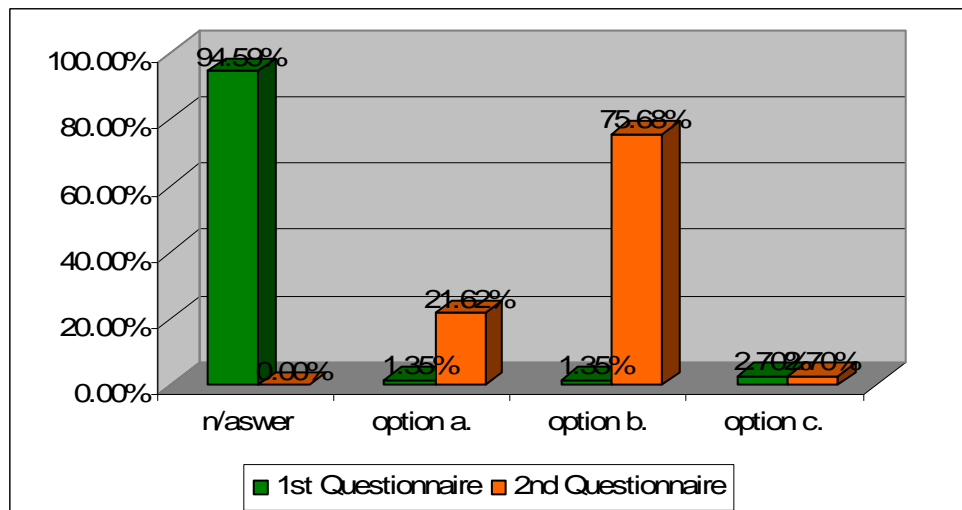


Question 25

¿Qué representaría Theseus?

- a. Autoritarismo.
- b. Orden y estabilidad.
- c. Aburrimiento.

Only one student answered this question in a correct way, three did it wrongly and seventy did not answer it the first time. The second time, sixteen students decided that Theseus stood for 'authoritarianism' while fifty-six decided that he represented 'order and stability'. Only two students chose to state that he stood for 'boredom'.

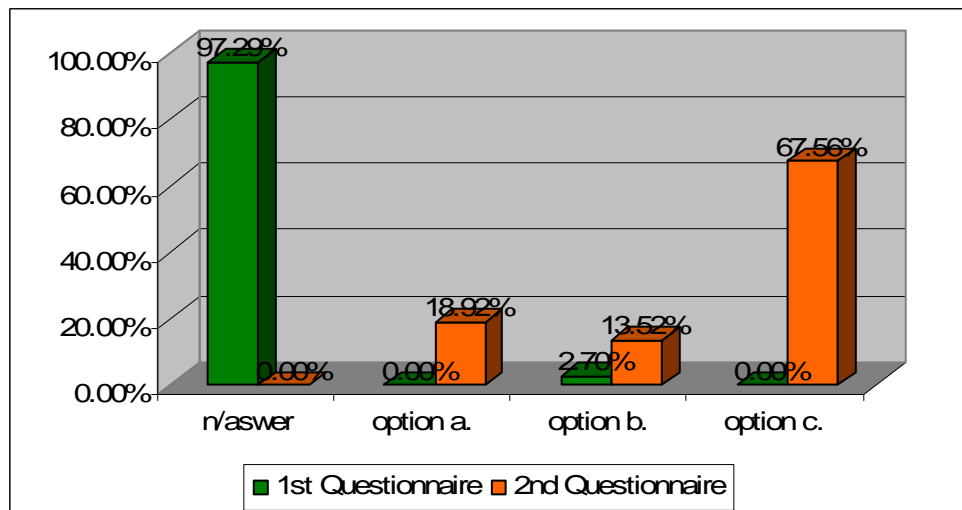


Question 26

¿Qué significado le daría a la poción de amor?

- a. El poder de la magia.
- b. Los deseos de Cupido.
- c. Lo impredecible del amor.

97.29 % of the students surveyed chose not to answer this question and the ones who did answer it, did not do it correctly the first time. The second time they had to answer question 26, the majority of the students, 67.56 %, marked option 'c' which may be interpreted as the most appropriate one. 18.92 % chose option 'a', 'the power of magic', and the rest chose option 'b' the least appropriate one.



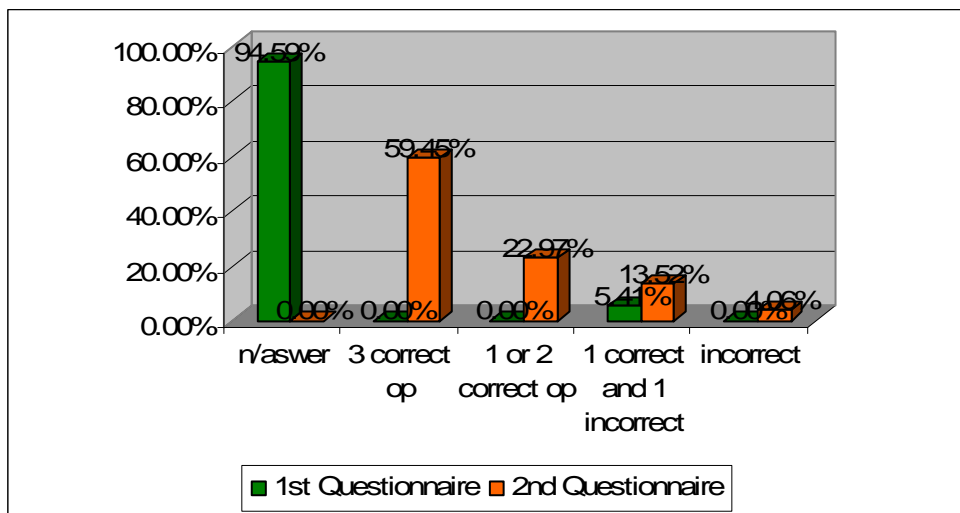
Question 27

Elija una o más opciones que le parezcan adecuadas para describir la atmósfera mágica de la obra.

- a. Oberon se puede hacer invisible.
- b. Egeus acusa a Lysander de haber hechizado a su hija.
- c. Puck puede controlar los fenómenos de la Naturaleza.
- d. Los artesanos dan explicaciones de todo lo que sucede en escena.
- e. La metamorfosis de Bottom en asno.

Seventy students did not choose any options and four students chose the wrong ones when they first encountered this question. The second time they answered the questionnaire, as there is more than one correct possibility in this question, seventeen students marked one or two out of the three correct options, while ten students ticked one of the correct ones and one of the wrong

ones. Only three students chose one of the wrong answers. The rest, forty-four students, ticked the three correct options.



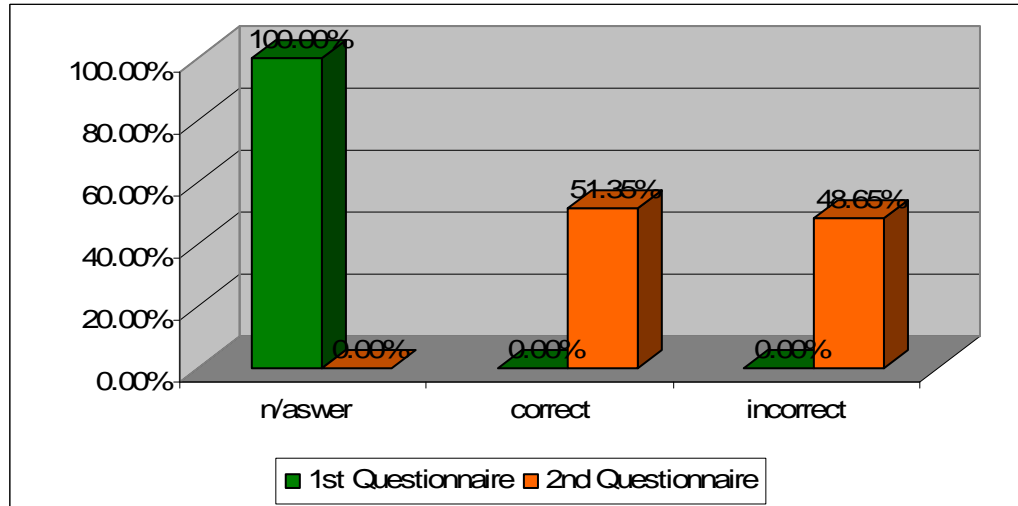
Question 28

¿De qué manera anticipa el autor los acontecimientos que habrán de desarrollarse en el transcurso de la obra?

- a. A través de las reiteradas alusiones a la luna en el primer acto.
- b. Situando la acción en la ciudad de Atenas.
- c. Lo explica Egeus en el primer acto.

The first time the students were asked to complete this questionnaire, nobody chose to answer question 28, which seemed to be one of the most difficult ones, since only thirty-eight students answered it correctly the second time. The rest of the students answered it wrongly. This showed that the students were

not able to connect the allusions to the moon during the first act to what happened later.



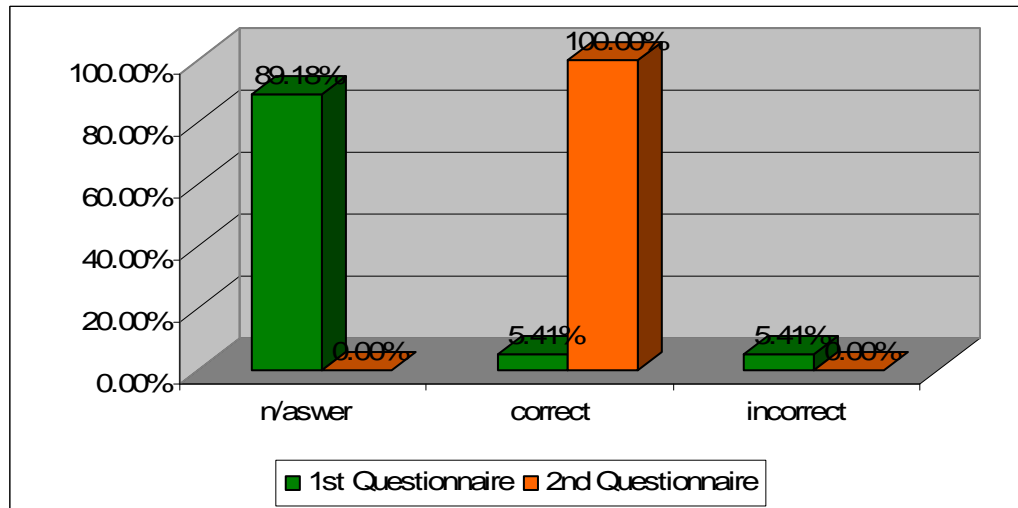
Question 29

¿Qué significado le atribuye a la famosa frase: *The course of true love never did run smooth*? (1.1.134)

- a. Que el amor de las mujeres es más constante que el de los hombres.
- b. Que para que los sueños se hagan realidad deben intervenir las hadas.
- c. Que si el amor es verdadero, puede vencer cualquier obstáculo.

89.18 % of the students did not mark question 29, 5.41 % marked it correctly and the rest marked the wrong answer the first time they were presented with

this questionnaire. However, the second time, everybody knew what the phrase 'The course of true love never did run smooth' meant.



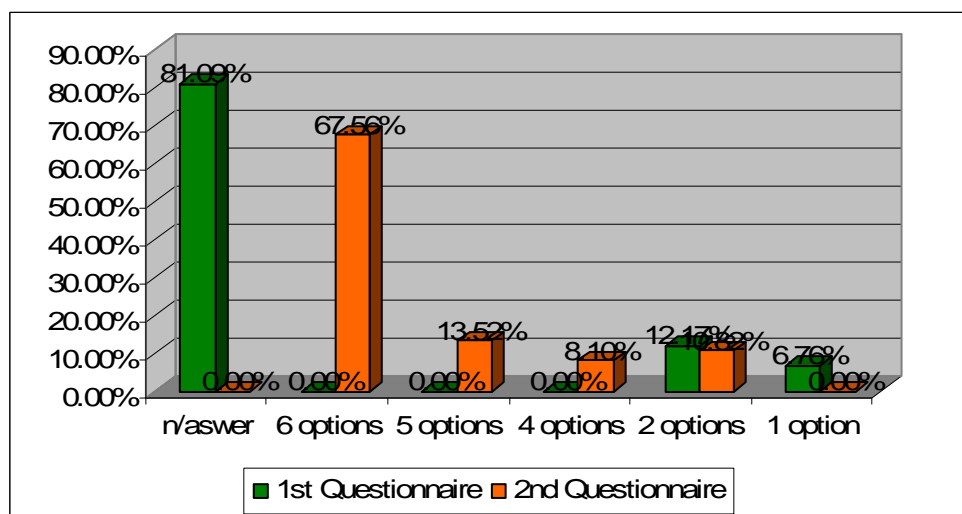
Question 30

¿De qué trata la obra? Elija la(s) opción(es) que crea correctas.

- Las dificultades que el verdadero amor debe enfrentar para llegar a buen término.
- Racismo.
- Realidad y apariencia.
- Discriminación.
- Distintos tipos de relaciones.
- El poder de la oratoria.
- El misterio de la muerte.
- Las convenciones del teatro.
- El poder de la magia.

- j. Piedad vs. crueldad.
- k. La corrupción que produce la ambición desmedida.
- l. Colonialismo.
- m. Contrastes entre distintas clases sociales.
- n. Sexualidad e incesto.
- o. Venganza.

As this is a question which offers many correct alternatives from which to choose, only sixty students decided not to mark any options when they read it the first time. Only nine students were able to mark some of the correct options, though not all, and five students ticked only the wrong ones. The second time, although nobody marked wrong options, not all of them ticked the six correct ones. The majority, i.e. fifty students marked the six correct ones, while ten marked five, six marked four, and the rest marked only two. Option 'h', the one which deals with the function of the mechanicals in the play, was the most difficult for them to detect.



In general, after comparing the results obtained from the two questionnaires, a few interesting facts could be deduced.

Firstly, the majority of the students chose not to answer any of the questions the first time they were given the questionnaire, showing that they did not know anything about the play. Whereas, the second time they had to answer it, everybody ticked at least one alternative even though some of them made mistakes. This means that, at least, all the students felt that they knew most of the answers.

Secondly, only ten of the questions out of thirty were answered correctly by all the students the second time they were administered the questionnaire. This may show that although they thought they knew all the answers, they were not right.

Thirdly, the setting seems to be the area that the students understood the best. In fact, from seven questions dedicated to this topic, four were answered correctly by all the students. However, it must be said that question 3, which deals with the division of the play in scenes and acts was not understood by a great number of students (twenty out of seventy-four).

Fourthly, the greatest contradictions can be found in the section that deals with characters and characterization. Even though the questions on Puck were answered appropriately by all the students, the relationship between Titania and

Oberon was not fully understood and, to the researcher's surprise, many students felt that Hermia was the one who risked more for love.

Fifthly, the section on style appeared to be the one that the students found the hardest, since the highest percentages of wrong answers can be found here. Nevertheless, everybody understood the meaning of the phrase: *The course of true love never did run smooth.*

Lastly, it is important to point out that nobody made mistakes when choosing the themes of the play. What is more, everybody was able to select, at least, two of the six themes connected to the play which were included in the last question. Even more importantly, the majority of them were able to detect the 6 correct alternatives. Moreover, only four students seemed not to have understood the relationship between the title and the plot.

One last consideration should be included here in this section. Surprisingly enough, the results obtained from the question added at the beginning of the second questionnaire showed that there is not a direct relationship between the part that the student chose to perform within the theatre company and the amount of knowledge that s/he got about the play. What is more, a member of the directing team, for instance, made more mistakes than the members in charge of make-up.

4.1.2. Observation

What follows is a summary of what was observed in the two courses during the seven rehearsal lessons.

Second Year *Polimodal* Specialized in Humanities

As there were several students who wanted to play the same role, the directing team of this course decided to hold a cast. The adaptors of the script gave the students who wanted to act out some lines to practise at home and the director told them that there was going to be an audition the following class.

Day 1: The audition took them half the period. While the director and her assistants evaluated the different performances, the two script adaptors sat alone to finish working on the last act of the play. At the time of choosing who was going to play the part of Helena, the director told her assistants that they had to select a girl taller than the one who played the part of Hermia. She said, “Helena tiene que ser más alta que Hermia porque leí que en el acto 3 Hermia se enoja con Helena porque ella la llama ‘puppet’, algo así como muñequita.”³³ A script adaptor interrupted the director to explain the meaning of ‘puppet’. When the audition finished the director gave the actors who appeared in Act 1 a photocopy with their lines. These photocopies, which had only the lines of Act 1, had been prepared by her assistants.

³³ “Helena should be taller than Hermia because I read that in Act three Hermia gets angry with Helena because she calls her ‘puppet’, something like little doll.”

Before starting with the rehearsal of Act 1 Scene 1, the director told the rest of the students to separate into departments and ask the script adaptors for their copies of the play to start working. As she saw that the students were not moving, she gave her copies of Act 1 Scene 1 to her assistants and told them to start reading aloud the lines while she organized the different departments. The assistants and the two prompters asked the students who acted as Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius and Helena to sit down forming a semicircle in front of them. After that, they started reading out their lines. While doing so, one of the prompters corrected the way the students who played the character of Theseus pronounced 'apace' but the other told him that he was not pronouncing the word correctly either. As they were not sure how to pronounce the word, they consulted the teacher. Then, the student playing the part of Theseus asked, "¿y qué quiere decir 'apace'?"³⁴ After that, he also asked the meaning of 'waned'. Then, the student who played the part of Egeus asked about the meanings of 'vexation' and 'bosom', which were explained by one of the prompters. Then the student playing the role of Egeus asked if he could change the words, so a script adaptor was called and consulted. The adaptor of the script agreed so he changed the word 'vexation' for 'anger' and 'bosom' for 'heart'. Then, he returned to his task.

After reading their lines for the first time, the bell rang so the director told the actors to memorize their lines for the following class. She also handed out the copies with the lines of Act 1 Scene 2 to the students who were going to play

³⁴ "What is the meaning of 'apace'?"

the parts of Quince, Bottom, Flute and Snug and told them to read the lines and look up the meaning of the words they did not know. The script adaptors of this group decided that Quince was going to play the part of Snout too.

Day 2: Before starting with the rehearsal of Act 1, the director divided the rest of the students into departments and told them that she was going to check what they had done during the previous week. As most of the students did not remember their lines and, what is more, some of them did not know the meaning of what they were saying, the director got angry and wrote down the names of the students who had not prepared the lines in her notebook. Therefore, she started working with the people from different departments and let the two script adaptors and one assistant sit down with the actors to work with their lines.

First, she spoke with stage design team. They showed her some drawings they had produced. After looking at them, she told the students, “En el escenario tiene que haber una casa o por lo menos un lugar donde Hermia y Lysander hablan además del bosque hacia donde se escapan al día siguiente.”³⁵ Then, the stage design department continued working on their own. They discussed whether to produce one set or two. In the end, they agreed on only one. In fact, they decided to recreate the palace -where the first scene of Act 1 and the last scene of the play took place in one corner, the wood in the middle and a sort of hut for the workers in the other corner of the stage and to use the curtains to

³⁵ “On stage there should be a house or at least a place where Hermia and Lysander speak, apart from the wood where they escape to the following day”.

show the part of the stage that they needed. While speaking about the wood, one of them said, “además de árboles atrás tiene que haber algo para que Oberon y Puck se escondan cuando aparecen Helena y Demetrius, no sé, unos arbustos.”³⁶ Another student interrupted them and said, “Pero si son invisibles!”³⁷ After talking about this for a while, they decided to give the students who played the parts of Oberon and Puck a branch each to hide their faces so as to show the audience that they could transform themselves into trees when people appeared. Meanwhile, the director spoke with the costume designers. One of them told the director, “queremos hacerlo moderno, porque ponerle calzas a los varones”³⁸ The director interrupted and said, “pero si en aquella época no usaban calzas. En Grecia en aquella época usaban togas. – ¿Qué es una toga? – Ago así como una sábana. – Ah! Eso es fácil de conseguir!”³⁹ Therefore, they decided to keep the setting in time. Finally, the director sat down next to the script adaptors to listen to the actors. After the bell rang, she told the actors to study their lines for the following class and handed out the lines of Act 2 to the students playing the roles of the lovers and the fairies.

Day 3: This rehearsal took place at the video room since the students had decided to use this room instead of the classroom to present their production at the end of the year. First, the director listened to some music that the members

³⁶ “Apart from some trees behind there should be something for Oberon and Puck to hide when Helena and Demetrius appear. I don’t know, maybe some bushes”.

³⁷ “But if they are invisible”.

³⁸ “We want to make it modern, because to make the boys wear tights”.

³⁹ “But if at that time they didn’t wear tights. In Greece at that time they wore togas. – What is a toga? –Something like a sheet. – Ah! That’s easy to get!”

of that department wanted to play every time the magic flower was used. Then, she told everybody to stop what they were doing and to pay attention to the rehearsal of Acts 1 and 2. Therefore, all the students sat down to see the performance. Again some of the students did not remember their lines so the director stopped the rehearsal and told everybody that if they did not study their lines they would have to meet for extra rehearsals outside school. After that, she told the actors that for the sake of fluency this time they could read their lines.

Later, one of the script adaptors stopped the rehearsal to tell the student playing the character of Egeus to show more anger and explained the situation to everybody. The fact that the students who played the part of Egeus did not know much English could be the reason for his misinterpretation of the character. The student who played the part of Helena was also interrupted by the same script adaptor who told her, “Tenés que mostrarte triste y enojada al mismo tiempo pero al final tenés un plan así que cambias de actitud.”⁴⁰ He also explained to her that she was in love with a man who used to love her but that now he wanted to marry her best friend. This time the students did not know her lines so she did not know what she was reading. Later, the student asked the script adaptors if they could shorten her last soliloquy.

Before starting with Act 1 Scene 2, the director explained the role of the workers and gave the students who played their parts some instructions about how they

⁴⁰ “You have to show that you are sad and angry at the same time, but in the end you have got a plan so you have to change your attitude”.

had to act. For instance, she said that the student playing the part of Bottom had to interrupt the student who played the character of Quince all the time because he was very bossy but she emphasised that the director of this “little” play was Quince. The students took advantage of this situation and asked her the meanings of some words they did not understand. For example, the student playing the part of Quince asked the meaning of ‘scroll’ and ‘interlude’ and the one playing the part of Snug wanted to know what ‘joiner’ and ‘roar’ meant. The director and the script adaptors answered all the questions. This time the students remembered their lines so the rehearsal of Act 1 Scene 2 took less time. However, it was interrupted by the director twice. The first time was to tell the students who played the part of Flute that he had to touch his chin when he said, ‘I have a beard coming’ and explained why Flute did not want to play the part of a woman. The second time he told the student playing the part of Bottom to speak like a woman when he said, ‘Thisne, Thisne!’

As the students had wasted too much time because they had not studied their lines, the teacher allowed them to use two extra periods that same week. After the break, the rehearsal of Act 2 started. The student playing the character of Oberon pronounced his first lines, but the action was stopped to explain to him that it was not “I’ll” but “Ill” the first word he had to pronounce. The script adaptor said, “No es I’ll es Ill de enfermo. Te enferma encontrarte con Titania porque estaban peleados por un chico Indio que ella tiene y vos querés.”⁴¹ Even though the part of Puck was acted by a student who did not know much

⁴¹ “It isn’t ‘I’ll’, it’s ‘ill’, like sick, because you are ill to meet Titania since you have been quarrelling over an Indian boy that she has got and you want”.

English, he remembered his lines and was able to produce a very convincing character. However, the director took some time to explain what kind of character Puck was.

At the end of the rehearsal, when the Costume team explained to the actors that they were going to wear togas, the director reminded them that the students playing the parts of Demetrius and Lysander had to wear similar garments because the student playing the part of Puck had to mistake one for the other. At this moment the student who played the part of Oberon told the costume designers that he wanted to wear a crown since he was the king of the fairies. They told him that they had designed one made of little twigs for him and one made of flowers for the student playing the part of Titania. They said that the following lesson they would bring the clothes they had made for the actors to try them on. Before leaving, the director handed out the rest of the lines to all the actors and told them to memorize their lines.

Day 4: Today the director decided to rehearse only Act 3 since she considered it the most complicated one to interpret. Therefore, the students who did not have to act asked for permission to try on the clothes the Costume team had brought. Before starting with the rehearsal, some students asked the prompters the meaning and the pronunciation of some words. For instance, the student playing the part of Bottom asked how to pronounce the phrase 'odious savours sweet'. He also wanted to know its meaning. This time most of the students remembered the lines so the director was able to concentrate on the interpretation of those lines. First of all, she pointed out that the workers were

not only very bad actors but also they did not know what a play was about so they wanted to write prologues to explain everything that happened on stage. She added that “Bottom se confunde las palabras. Dice una por otra pensando que esta actuando superbien y eso lo hace mas gracioso.”⁴² Then, she told the student playing the part of Puck that he had to enjoy the moment he decided to change Bottom’s head. At this moment the director reminded everybody what kind of being Puck was.

As the student playing the character of Bottom thought he had to wear the head of a monster, she explained to him and the rest of the actors that the student playing the part of Puck transformed his head into an ass’ head, which made everybody laugh. He also explained to the Costume team what the student playing the part of Bottom had to look like after the transformation. Then, she told them that all this part of the play had to be very funny. She said, “el público se tiene que reír.”⁴³ And she added, “En realidad, los workers y Puck son la parte graciosa de la obra.”⁴⁴ She made the student playing the character of Bottom sing very badly and told the student who played the part of Titania to look at him as if he were the best of singers. She also explained to the student playing the part of Titania the effect that the magic flower had to have on her. When the students playing the parts of fairies appeared to wait upon the student playing the role of Titania, she told them to look at the student playing Titania as if they were shocked at what she had asked them to do.

⁴² “Bottom confuses words. He says one instead of another and he thinks he is a great actor and that makes him even funnier”.

⁴³ “The public has to laugh”.

⁴⁴ “In fact, the workers and Puck are the funny part of the play”.

The fight among the students playing the roles of the lovers was the most difficult part to perform because they were not able to picture who was talking to whom or when they had to say what to whom. Besides, the director felt that it was too long so she called the script adaptors and asked them to shorten the actors' lines. Therefore, the rest of the class was dedicated to reading the lines again and seeing which of them were not so important. This activity was done by the director, the actors and the script adaptors together so, when something was not clear the latter explained the lines to the actors.

Day 5: They started rehearsing the fight again. Even though the actors remembered their lines, it was still not so easy for them to produce a convincing performance. Therefore, the director told them that they would have to meet during the weekend to practise this part because she said they had to continue with the other acts. Then, she called the students playing the parts of Bottom, Titania and the fairies to start with the first part of Act 4 Scene 1. As the students who played the parts of the lovers did not take part in this scene, they asked the teacher for permission to continue rehearsing the fight outside the classroom. The teacher let them go to the yard but she told them that she could check on them at any moment and that they had to be working. While they were rehearsing, the director interrupted them to tell the student playing the character of Titania "Tenés que mirar a Bottom con más amor. Estás enamorada de él y vos tenés que ir y volver corriendo con lo que te pide, las demás se sientan al

rededor y le acarician la cabeza.”⁴⁵ Here one script adaptor corrected the director and said, “Le *rascan* las *orejas*.”⁴⁶ When she felt satisfied with this part of the scene, she called the students playing the parts of the lovers back to continue the scene.

The teacher perceived that the director was having problems with the student who played the part of Lysander. He was not taking the task seriously. The director told him that if he was not serious and responsible enough she was going to replace him. As this student had a very high level of English and the part of Lysander was quite long, he might have thought that the director was joking. Therefore, he did not pay much attention to her warning and continued disturbing.

When the student playing the part of Bottom had to say his soliloquy at the end of the scene, he confessed that he had not studied it. This situation did not help to relax the atmosphere. Therefore, the director told everybody that they were not going to continue rehearsing that day.

One script adaptor sat down with the student playing the role of Bottom to practise his lines and she explained some of the words to him. For example, he did not know the meaning of ‘cue’ and ‘wit’. She also helped him with the pronunciation of words like ‘cue’, ‘rare’ and ‘heigh ho!’ Since he did not

⁴⁵ “You have to look at Bottom with more love. You are in love with him and you have to go away and return in a hurry carrying what he has asked for, the rest sit around him and stroke his head”.

⁴⁶ “You have to *scratch* his *ears*”.

understand why Bottom said that he was going to call his dream 'Bottom's Dream' because it had no bottom, the script adaptor also explained that phrase to him. She helped him with the intonation of some phrases too and told him that even though he was a normal man he had undergone an extraordinary experience. Before the end of the class, the director reminded everybody that in three weeks' time they were going to perform the play for the students of third year.

Day 6: Before the class began, the director told the teacher that she had replaced the student that played the part of Lysander since they had decided to meet during the weekend to practise the part of the fight and he had not turned up. She added that she had consulted the rest of the members of the directing team before reaching the decision. The teacher told her that it was their play and that she, as the director, had to follow her own instincts. The teacher added that she was going to speak with the student in private since the teacher had noticed that he had not been behaving properly during the last two classes.

The director showed the student playing the role of Quince who also acted the part of 'wall' how he had to form a hole with his fingers to allow the students playing the characters of Thisbe and Pyramus to speak through "him". In this course the parts of the workers were played by students who did not know much English so they needed constant assistance from the prompters who helped them with the pronunciation of some words and the intonation of some phrases. The script adaptors even cut some of the lines to make them easier for them. However, the director was not very worried about the fact that these

students were not able to pronounce some of the words properly, since she said that the workers' part was a funny one. She thought that this could make the play within the play even more comic.

Then, the director explained that as Thisbe's last words were sad, "es importante que cuando entre Puck, quede claro que se trata de un sueño y nada malo paso. Acuerdense que es una comedia no una tragedia."⁴⁷ After that, the student who played the part of Puck delivered his last soliloquy and the rehearsal finished for that day. Before the bell rang, the director reminded everybody that the following class would be the last one before the presentation so there would be a general rehearsal with the sets, props, lights, music, special effects, and above all, the actors would be wearing their costumes. The publicity team added that they would show them the posters advertising the play, the programmes and the souvenirs they had been preparing the following class too.

Day 7: To organize the sets took them more than half an hour so the teacher decided to let them use two extra periods for the general rehearsal that day. Although most of the students remembered their lines, there were a few who still had some problems. Consequently, the prompters decided to prepare some posters with the most difficult parts. The costume designers discovered that the mask they had made for the student playing the character of Bottom did not let him see properly, so they sat in a corner to enlarge the holes for the eyes.

⁴⁷ "When Puck enters, it is important to make it clear that it is a dream and that nothing bad has happened. Remember that it is a comedy not a tragedy".

The first time they rehearsed the play, the result was not so good so the director decided to practise it at least twice again. She added that if they were still making mistakes they would have to meet during the weekend to rehearse. The Publicity team took advantage of this break and showed the whole class the posters. It was an enlarged picture which showed the lovers in the background, Oberon and Titania in the foreground and Puck holding a flower in the middle. They said that the phrase *the course of true love never did run smooth* was the slogan. As one of the students did not know the meaning of 'smooth', one of the script adaptors explained the meaning of the whole phrase to everybody. They all agreed that it was a good slogan. Then, they showed them the souvenirs. They were the same picture but small and set on a piece of wood. After that, they continued rehearsing.

The third time, the students were more fluent. However, the director was not satisfied and told them that there was going to be a last rehearsal the following weekend.

Second Year *Polimodal* Specialized in Economy

The director of this course did not hold a cast, since there were not enough students willing to act out to play all the parts. Therefore, he not only decided to play the part of Oberon (apart from being the director of the play) but also had to encourage some of the students to act out.

Day 1: The director started by telling the students to divide into departments. Then he told his assistants to start by making the students read the lines of Act 1 Scene 1 while he spoke with the people from the different departments to organize work.

The two assistants together with the script adaptors sat down to listen to the actors read their lines. While the actors were reading, the script adaptors checked not only the pronunciation of words like 'apace', 'worthy', and 'adjure' but also the understanding of some lines such as 'chanting faint hymns to the fruitless moon' and 'I do entreat your grace to pardon me' among others. They also corrected the intonation of some phrases. For example, when the student playing the part of Hermia said 'I would my father looked but with my eyes' they told her to stress the word 'my' and when the student playing the role of Theseus answered 'Rather your eyes must with his judgement look', he was told to give more emphasis to 'his'. Then, one of the script adaptors explained to the actors that as the action took place in ancient Greece, "aunque aquí dice 'nun' lo que quiere decir es sacerdotisa. Tendría que ser una sacerdotisa de la diosa Diana."⁴⁸ At what the student exclaimed, "Ah! Por eso lo de los cantos a la luna!"⁴⁹ The adaptor answered, "claro, Diana era la diosa de la luna."⁵⁰ While reading the lines they also discussed what the different characters were feeling and why. For example, the student who played the part of Theseus was

⁴⁸ "Although here it says 'nun' what it means is priestess. She would become the priestess of the goddess Diana".

⁴⁹ "Ah! That's why the hymns to the moon are mentioned".

⁵⁰ "Sure, Diana was the goddess of the moon".

told that he was a middle-aged soldier who was very much in love with Hippolyta and who was about to marry her.

Meanwhile, the director was speaking with the stage designers. One of them asked him, “¿Como hacemos el bosque?”⁵¹ The director answered, “Con algunas ramas con hojas de papel O con hojas de verdad ... pero tiene que haber algo para que Puck y yo nos escondamos.”⁵² One of the students told the director that they could produce some bushes. Another one added, “yo tengo macetas con plantas que puedo traer.”⁵³ The director accepted the idea of the pots with plants. Afterwards, the director spoke with the Costume team who told him that they had decided to recreate the ancient atmosphere and make the actors wear togas.

The director told the actors that he wanted to see them perform their parts. He sat down next to the assistants and script adaptors and also called the prompters to help the actors. Before starting the rehearsal, he explained the situation to everybody. During the rehearsal the director stopped the actors several times to give them some indications. He interrupted the student playing the character of Egeus to tell him, “cuando decis ‘This man has my consent ...’ tenes que tocarlo o por lo menos señalarlo.”⁵⁴ He also interrupted the student playing the part of Hermia to tell her, “vos tenes que parecer triste porque no

⁵¹ “How can we reproduce the wood?”

⁵² “With some branches with paper leaves... or real leaves ... but there should be something on stage for Puck and I to hide behind”.

⁵³ “I have got some pots with plants that I can bring”.

⁵⁴ “When you say ‘this man has my consent ...’ you have to touch him or at least point at him”.

quieres casarte con Demetrius.”⁵⁵ Then he told the student playing the part of Lysander that when he said ‘How now, my love? Why is your cheek so pale?’ he had to touch Hermia’s cheek and look concerned.

When the student playing the role of Lysander was saying ‘The course of true love never did run smooth’, he stopped and asked what ‘course’ and ‘run smooth’ meant. One of the script adaptors explained to everybody the meaning of the whole phrase. As Helena’s soliloquy was too long, the director asked the script adaptors to cut it a bit. Before the bell rang, he asked the actors to memorize the lines for the following class. He added that they were going to be rehearsing Act 1 Scenes 1 and 2 and also Act 2 Scene 1.

Day 2: The class began with the rehearsal of Act 1 Scene 1. This time the actors remembered their lines and the director seemed happy with their performance as he did not interrupt them at all. Before starting with the rehearsal of Act 1 Scene 2, the students who played the parts of the workers wanted to know what their professions were. Therefore, one of the script adaptors translated the words ‘tinker’, ‘joiner’, ‘bellows-mender’, ‘tailor’ and ‘weaver’ into Spanish. They seemed to know the meaning of the word ‘carpenter’ since nobody asked about it. In the meantime, the other script adaptor asked the teacher why the workers did not speak in verse like the other characters. He was curious about the different verse forms that Shakespeare had used in this play. Later he explained that to the directing team.

⁵⁵ “You have to look sad because you don’t want to marry Demetrius”.
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Licenciatura en Lengua Inglesa
Dissertation: Teaching Shakespeare at *Polimodal* through Staging his Plays
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After all the doubts were clarified, the director described the personalities of the workers to the actors. Since the students who played the parts of the workers had a good level of English and had studied their lines, the director interrupted them only once to tell the student playing the role of Bottom that when he said 'I'll speak in a monstrous little voice' he had to speak and act like a hysterical woman to make what he was saying funnier.

After a little break while the Costume department asked the director about the mask they had to prepare for the student playing the character of Bottom, the director called the actors who took part in Act 2, Scene 1 and asked them if they had any questions about the vocabulary. The student playing the part of Titania asked the meaning of 'forgeries', 'votress' and 'chide'. She also wanted to know who Phillida was. A script adaptor explained to her that Corin and Phillida were two lovers. The student playing the part of Puck asked the meaning of 'girdle' and the director asked if he could change the word 'hither' for 'here'.

Before starting with the rehearsal, the director explained the situation to the actors, especially to the student playing the part of Titania. He told her, "nosotros no estamos peleados en serio, es como una broma, lo hacemos para divertirnos, somos una pareja super moderna. Vos saliste con Theseus, yo salí con Hippolyta, pero en el fondo nos queremos y no nos vamos a separar."⁵⁶ He also explained to the student who played the role of Puck his personality and how he had to act. During the rehearsal the director indicated to the student

⁵⁶ "We are not really angry with each other. It's like a joke. We are having fun. We are a very modern couple. You went out with Theseus and I went out with Hippolyta, but deep inside we love each other and we aren't going to split".

playing the part of Helena that when she said 'I am your spaniel' she had to kneel like a dog and looked desperate. Then he told the student playing the part of Demetrius, "y vos tenés que hacer como que la pateas."⁵⁷ He also explained to the student playing the character of Puck the meaning of the phrase 'meet me ere the first cock crows'. He told him that it meant "antes que comience el día."⁵⁸ Then he stopped the student playing the part of Puck and told him, "no, esperá a que te pregunte para darme la flor. Me la das cuando decís 'Ay, there it is.'"⁵⁹

After rehearsing the scene two times, the director told the actors to study the lines of Act 2 Scene 2 and Act 3 Scene 1 for the following class. He also asked the Publicity team to bring ideas for the poster and the souvenirs since he wanted to work on that area the following class.

Day 3: Today, the directing team started by listening to some songs that the Music department had brought. They had to decide which song the students who played the parts of the fairies were going to sing to make Titania sleep. The director said that all the songs sounded too modern so he asked a student who was taking piano lessons if he could record an easy classical melody for the fairies to sing the song which appeared in the play. The student told him that he was going to try. After that, the directing team looked at some ideas for the publicity of the play. As the director did not like any of them, he told the

⁵⁷ "And you should pretend to kick her".

⁵⁸ "Before the day breaks".

⁵⁹ "No, wait until I ask you to give me the flower. You give it to me when you say 'Ay, there it is'".

members of the department that they could start by looking for a phrase which might represent the play. He added that they were going to speak about that again the following class.

Before beginning with the rehearsal the director explained the scene to the actors and he told the Costume team that the student who played the part of Puck confused the student who played the character of Lysander for the student who played the role of Demetrius because both were wearing similar clothes. That was the reason why they had to make similar costumes for both of them.

At the end of Act 2 Scene 2, the student playing the part of Hermina asked the director, “aquí tengo que hacer como que pido ayuda, ¿no?”⁶⁰ To what the director answered, “sí, te estas despertando de una pesadilla. Podes gritar.”⁶¹ As usual, before starting with the rehearsal of a new act, the director asked the students if they had any questions. The student who played the role of Puck wanted to know the meaning of ‘hempen homespuns’, swaggering and ‘cradle’ among others. As he was not able to pronounce ‘hempen homespuns’ properly, the script adaptors changed the words for ‘common people’. The student playing the part of Bottom did not know the meaning of ‘odorous’ and a student playing the part of a fairy asked what ‘hail’ meant. When the students did not have any more questions, the director explained the situation to all the actors. While they were rehearsing the act, the director stopped the actors to indicate how to act out a part more than once. For example, he interrupted the student

⁶⁰ “Here I ask for help, don’t I?”

⁶¹ “Yes, you are waking from a nightmare. You can shout”.

playing the character of Puck and told him that when he said 'what common people have we swaggering here' he had to look interested. Then he told the same student that when the student playing the part of Bottom left the clearing in the woods he had to follow him and change his head into a donkey's head. He also told the costume designers to be prepared behind the bushes to help the student playing the part of Puck to change the head of the student who played the part of Bottom quickly.

As the student playing the character of Bottom did not remember the song he had to sing, the director told him to sing any song he remembered as long as he sang it very badly. Therefore, the student who played the part of Bottom decided to sing 'Old MacDonald Had a Farm'. He sang it in such a comic way that everybody laughed. The director took advantage of the interruption to explain to the students who played the roles of Titania and the fairies how they had to act out and why. When they finished rehearsing the scene, the student playing the part of Bottom wanted one of the script adaptors to clarify the meaning of the phrase 'reason and love keep little company together nowadays'. The script adaptor explained it to him and added that it was a metaphor.

As the student who played the part of Bottom was also a member of the Publicity department, he later told the other members he had found a phrase they could use as the slogan of the play and he repeated it to them. Before the class finished, the director announced that they were going to rehearse Act 3 Scene 2 the following class.

Day 4: First, the Publicity department showed the directing team the poster they had produced to advertise the play. It was a photo of the student who played the part of Bottom in the arms of the student who played the role of Titania surrounded by the students playing the parts of the fairies. In the background the student playing the characters of Puck and Oberon could be seen spying from behind a tree. Above the picture the name of the play was printed in big characters and below it the phrase 'reason and love keep little company together nowadays' was printed in golden letters. Not only the directing team but also the rest of the students were delighted with the poster. The Publicity department also showed them the souvenirs. They were fairies holding a magic wand with the same phrase.

Later, the director told the actors that before starting with the rehearsal of Act 3 Scene 2, he wanted to see Act 1 and Act 2 again. Even though the students complained because they said that the director had not told them that they were going to rehearse those acts that day, they remembered most of the lines and the acting was, in general, quite fluent. The actors had some problems with the pronunciation of some words but the prompters were able to help them. They also corrected the intonation of phrases like 'I am sick when I *do* look on thee' and 'And I am sick when I look *not* on you'.

Before starting with the rehearsal of Act 3 Scene 2, the script adaptors asked the actors if they had any questions. The students wanted to know the meaning of words such as 'carcass', 'hound', 'cur', 'spite', 'puppet', 'fie' 'garment' and

'counterfeit' among others. Then the director explained the scene to the actors. Although the actors told the director that they had understood the scene and that they remembered most of their lines, they made a lot of mistakes, which made the director interrupt the scene many times. For example, he told the student playing the part of Helena to kick the floor when she said, 'O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent to set against me!' He also told the student playing the role of Hermia that she had to look shocked at what was happening. He said, "no entendes nada."⁶² Then he interrupted the students playing the part of Hemina to tell her that she had to say, 'sweet, do not scorn her so' looking at the student paying the part of Lysander. He added that when she said, 'I am no yet so low' she had to try to catch the student playing the part of Helena to start a fight but that the student who played the role of Helena had to run and hide behind one of the boys.

When the bell rang and they had not finished the scene, so the teacher decided to let them use the second period of their usual lesson as well. Therefore, after the break, they continued the rehearsal. As they tried many times and the actors still did not sound fluent, the director decided that the problem was that the dialogues were too long so he asked the script adaptors to shorten them. As a consequence, the rest of the time was devoted to working on this scene.

Day 5: Due to the fact that there were so many problems with Act 3 Scene 2 the previous class, the director decided to start by rehearsing this scene again. This time the fight was really convincing. Moreover, the student who played the part

⁶² "You don't understand anything".

of Puck was very funny. He only asked the director how to say the lines 'Up and down, up and down, I will lead them up and down'. The Music department had recorded the voices of the students playing the parts of Lysander and Demetrius so when the student playing the role of Puck had to speak with their voices to mislead them, they just used their Mp3 player. For example, when the student playing the character of Puck had to say, 'Here, villain, drawn and ready! Where are you?' (both courses had changed all the pronouns and verbs like 'to be' and 'to have' into modern English), they used their Mp3 player with the voice of the student playing the part of Demetrius and the student who played the character of Puck only had to mime the words. The Special Effects team told the director that they were going to bring something to produce smoke the day of the general rehearsal so that the students who played the parts of the lovers were not going to be able to see each other while the student playing the character of Puck led them in different directions. Only once or twice were the actors interrupted by the script adaptors to correct the pronunciation of some words and the intonation of some phrases. Then, the director told his assistants to go to the video room to listen to the melody that one of the students from the Music department had recorded for Act 2 Scene 2 while he continued with the rehearsal of Act 4 Scene 1. These students, like the ones from the course specialized in Humanities had decided to eliminate Act 4 Scene 2. He started by explaining the act to the actors who asked him some questions about words and phrases they did not understand. Among the words they did not comprehend were 'cue' and 'anon'. One of the script adaptors explained the phrases 'I will overbear your will' and 'these couples shall eternally be knit.' While rehearsing, the director interrupted the student playing the character of

Titania to tell her, “cuando yo digo ‘there lies your love’ tenes que poner cara de asco.”⁶³ He also told her that she was no longer under the effect of the magic potion so she had to act out like before but this time they were not quarrelling any more. At the end of the scene, he told the student who played the part of Bottom, “te despiertas de un sueño. Tenés que estar como dormido pero contento porque el sueño fue lindo.”⁶⁴

As the student playing the character of Bottom was not able to remember all his lines, he asked the director if the script adaptors could cut some of them short. The director agreed with the idea. Since the script adaptors were not sure which lines to eliminate they consulted the teacher. Before the end of the class, the director told everybody that the following class they were going to rehearse Act 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. He added that he wanted the actors to wear the costumes while acting.

Day 6: Today the director and one of his assistants were absent because they were ill. The second assistant took his place and started by rehearsing Act 1 Scenes 1 and 2 but when they had to begin with Act 2, they had problems with the part of Oberon. A prompter offered to read Oberon’s lines but she did not sound fluent enough. Therefore, the assistant decided to skip the acts where Oberon appeared and rehearse only Act 5. She started, like the director, asking if anyone had any doubts. However, as she was not sure what to answer, she asked the script adaptors to help her.

⁶³ “When I tell you ‘there lies your love’ your face has to show disgust”.

⁶⁴ “You are waking from a dream. You are sleepy but happy because it has been a beautiful dream”.

The students asked the meaning of 'hue', 'mantle' and 'moans' among other words. They also wanted to know how to pronounce these words. Apparently, the assistant was not a student the others respected since the script adaptors did not help her much and, as a consequence, the actors stopped paying attention to her and asked the teacher instead. In the end, she got angry and told everybody that the following class was the general rehearsal. She added that the director was going to be very angry if they did not know their lines. She spent the rest of the class speaking with the costume designers, who seemed to be her friends for she was also a member of that department.

Day 7: The director started by scolding the students for not having paid attention to his assistant the previous class. Some of the students answered him that she did not know anything and that they did not know why he had chosen her as one of his assistants. The director, a charismatic student who seemed to be admired and loved by everybody, decided not to start an argument. He simply continued by telling everybody to get ready for the general rehearsal.

The stage team started to arrange the sets and the actors asked for permission to go to the toilet to change their clothes. Only two members of the Costume department accompanied them to help them. As the director had to leave the room to change his clothes too, he left his first assistant to be in charge of everything in the classroom. The Stage Design team had made two sets. One was Theseus' palace and the other was the wood. The walls of Theseus' palace

were painted on a curtain which covered the forest and which they could draw to reveal the forest necessary. The wood was the background of the palace and could be seen through the windows of the palace, which were part of the curtain. The Music team had brought a CD player to play the music and, as soon as the actors returned, the make-up team started working on the faces of the students who played the parts of the fairies. The Special Effects team had brought a machine that produced smoke. Even though these students were very well organized and had everything ready in less than half an hour, the teacher decided to give them the two extra periods to rehearse as she had also done with the course specialized in Humanities.

The first time they rehearsed they made various mistakes and, in general, they did not sound confident enough. The prompters stopped some of the actors to correct the pronunciation of some words which they kept pronouncing wrongly. The director also had to interrupt the performance some times to explain how to act out some parts, especially during Act 5. For example, He told the student who played the character of Flute to hold and kiss the hand of the actor who played the part of 'wall' when he said 'I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.' He added that this part had to be funny. Then he told the student playing the part of Bottom that when he said 'Now, die, die, die, die' he had to fall and stand up every time he said 'die'. He also explained the phrase 'give me your hands' to the student playing the character of Puck who seemed not to understand what he was saying. However, the fourth time they acted out the whole play, the director was happy enough to stop rehearsals. The rest of the lesson was devoted to the looking at the posters and the souvenirs and checking the

programmes. He also complimented some of the actors on their performances. In general, he seemed quite happy with the result of the general rehearsal.

After analyzing all the data recorded in the observation grid, the information was divided into different areas: comments and remarks by the directing team, comments and remarks that the members of the different departments uttered among each other, questions asked of the directing team and questions asked of the teacher. Within the section dealing with the comments and remarks by the directing team, the researcher also included the orders that the students gave to the different departments and the explanations that they offered without being asked. It must be remembered that the directing team was formed by 10 students that year: the director with his/her 2 assistants, the producer with his/her 2 assistants, 2 adaptors and 2 prompters.

The total amount of comments and remarks by the directing team formed the majority of the information gathered. Very few of them deal with the setting and the costume that the actors should wear. A few are about the pronunciation and meaning of some words and phrases. Some deal with the intonation of some lines. Many of them are explanations about the situation in general and most of them deal with how to interpret certain characters. It is worth mentioning here that there are also some remarks which dealt with the physical appearance of the characters. One was uttered by the directors when selecting the cast and referred to the fact that the actress who performed the part of Helena had to be taller than the one who played the part of Hermina. The second comment was directed to the actor who played the part of Flute. It was meant to explain why

Flute did not want to play the part of a woman, there was another about what Bottom had to look like after Puck had transformed him and there was one in which an adaptor said that Theseus was a middle-aged soldier. Moreover, only Puck was described in detail to the actors by both directors.

The number of comments and remarks that the members of the different departments uttered among each other were just a few. Some of them were about the setting of the play. A few deal with the clothes they were going to wear, with the posters they were going to produce to advertise the play and with the music they needed for certain parts of the play.

All the information grouped under questions asked of the directing team can be divided into questions on the meaning of words, questions on the pronunciation of some words, questions on the intonation of some phrases and questions on how to act some parts. The majority of the questions recorded were about the meaning of some words. A fewer questions were on how to pronounce some words and only two questions were on how to act a part. They also asked only two questions about intonation. However, it is worth noticing that among the questions on how to interpret some situations, the directing team also explained to the actors the way they had to say some lines.

The questions of the teacher collected in the grid were very few. The students asked the teacher only twice about the meaning of some words, which shows that the teacher was much less consulted about this issue than the directing team. There was only one question concerning style. Some members of the

directing team were interested in the different verse forms that Shakespeare used in this play. Only once was the teacher asked which lines they should eliminate to shorten the part of one of the actors. Finally, the students consulted the researcher neither about the intonation of phrases nor about how they had to perform some parts.

All in all, comparing the information gathered from the two courses observed, the following similarities and differences could be detected.

On the one hand, the students of both courses had problems with almost the same words. The two teams of script adaptors decided to change all the pronouns and some verbs into modern English. Both of them did not feel any constraint on changing some other words which seemed too difficult for the students to remember or understand. They also explained the phrase *The course of true love never did run smooth* to the whole class. Moreover, both teams eliminated Act 4 Scene 2. Even though the two directors described all the characters, both of them seemed more worried about Puck since both of them devoted more time to the description of this character in particular. Another similarity was that the costume designers of the two courses chose to keep the ancient atmosphere of the play and asked the actors to wear togas.

On the other hand, the course specialized in Economy consulted the teacher more times than the one specialized in Humanities. They also showed more curiosity about the style of the play as they asked the teacher about the different verse forms that Shakespeare used in this play. The director of the group

specialized in Economy also asked the students if they had any doubts more frequently. Another difference is that the director of the group specialized in Humanities paid more attention to the physical appearance of the characters than the one from the course specialized in Economy. A final consideration may be that although the students of the course specialized in Economy had to be encouraged to act in the play by their director, they turned up to be more responsible.

4.2. Triangulation

This section aims at crossing the data obtained from the two questionnaires administered to the students and the observation grid used during the period of rehearsals. From the information reported above, the following conclusions can be drawn.

First of all, the lack of comments and remarks on style seem to be in direct relation to the fact that the students did too badly in this part of the questionnaire. Indeed, this is the section in which the majority of the students chose the wrong answers. Only question 29, the one about the famous phrase uttered by Lysander, was answered correctly by everybody, but, as has been already stated, this phrase was explained to the rest of the students in both courses. Therefore, it may be concluded that all the students answered this question in the correct way because they had paid attention to what they had been explained. It may be of interest to remember that only the students who belonged to the course specialized in Economy showed some curiosity about

the different verse forms used in the play and consequently they were better at answering question 24.

Then, even though there were relatively few comments and remarks on the setting, they seem to have been the correct ones to help the students understand when and where the play took place since this is the section in which the students made the fewest mistakes. The only exception was question 3, for twenty students confused the answer. This could be explained through the fact that both groups decided not to include Scene 2 from Act 4. As there is no register in the grid of anyone explaining or mentioning this omission to the rest of the members of the company, it might be concluded that the students understood that there was only one scene in this act.

Contrary to what was expected, the great number of comments and remarks on characters and characterization seem not to have helped the students comprehend this topic. Out of fifteen questions dedicated to this issue, only four questions were answered correctly by all the students and Puck seems to have been the only character who everybody could picture properly. This could be due to the fact that both directors took the time to describe him in detail to everybody. The fact that so many students were not able to get the personality of the king of the fairies so accurately maybe because one of the directors played this part and, as a consequence, he did not explain to the rest of the students what Oberon was like. Moreover, in spite of the clear remarks registered on the different roles that Bottom and Quince played, some students

still confused Bottom with Quince, since they chose him as the director of the play within the play, or at least, they did not remember the names.

To conclude this section, it may be interesting to recall here that although it was clear from the information registered in the grid that the students understood the different predicaments that Hermia and Helena had to undergo in this comedy, many students, 31.08 % of them, felt that Hermia was the one who risked the most for love. Furthermore, it could also be of interest to mention that despite the fact that there was no record of anyone explaining or mentioning the themes that were explored in this play, all the students could recognize, at least, two out of the six correct options, showing that they had been able to understand the abstract ideas underlying the play.

CHAPTER 5

5. 1. Conclusion

The objective of the present study, as stated in the research question, was to explore to what extent the staging of Shakespearean plays by *Polimodal* students who have only two periods of English per week is instrumental to helping them comprehend this playwright's works.

As can be perceived from the analysis of the data collected, the results are not conclusive. In other words, even though there is some information which seems to support the hypotheses, there is still some other which apparently disclaims them.

With respect to the first and second hypothesis, which stated respectively that to stage Shakespeare's plays helps *Polimodal* students to comprehend this playwright's works and that to stage Shakespeare's plays does not help *Polimodal* students to comprehend this playwright's works, it can be said that they cannot be proved either right or wrong. This conclusion may be deduced from the fact that there were some tasks that the students performed to stage the play which apparently helped them understand certain areas of it while there were other activities that seemed not to have aided them to comprehend other areas of the play at all.

As far as the third hypothesis is concerned (to work on the design of the sets and props to stage a play by Shakespeare may help *Polimodal* students to

understand the setting of the play better), it was clear that the fact that the students had to reproduce a wood in the classroom to stage the play had helped them fully understand the place where the majority of it took place. Also, to design the clothes the actors were going to wear forced them to pay attention to what the characters said. In other words, they had to read the script so as to find evidence to back up their choice and that helped them remember the historical time at which the comedy took place.

The results obtained with respect to the fourth hypothesis were contradictory. On the one hand, to create a sophisticated character like Puck, the actors had to work hard with the directing team. This enabled them not only to share opinions but to read the lines more than once to finally grasp the essence of this character as well. Moreover, to create believable characters forced them to pay attention to the pronunciation of the words and the intonation of the lines they were uttering. All these conclusions, which could be deduced from the comments recorded in the observation grid and the results from the second questionnaire, seem to prove that to give life to different characters of a play by Shakespeare was instrumental to helping the students internalize what personages are like and what the relationship among them is. On the other hand, even though the directing team gave the cast accurate instructions on how to perform the parts of Oberon and Titania and the students seemed to have understood them since the acting was convincing, the results from the second questionnaire revealed that they had not comprehended their personalities thoroughly, for example.

The fifth hypothesis, which stated that to stage a play by Shakespeare could help *Polimodal* students to ponder on the themes that are dealt with in the play, seemed to have proved right. Even though there were not any comments recorded in the grid connected to this topic, the different tasks that the students carried out to perform the play seemed to have helped them to think about the different themes that can be inferred from the play since the majority of the students were able to choose the correct ones from the list provided in the second questionnaire.

Considering the sixth hypothesis, it might be deduced from the results gathered that the students did not pay much attention to the style of the play neither to the symbols which Shakespeare used. However, it could be argued that, for instance, the fact that sixteen students out of seventy-four chose that Theseus stood for 'authoritarianism' instead of 'order and stability', for instance, may be connected to the character's attitude towards Hermina. That is, they might have seen a man who told a girl that if she did not marry the man her father wanted, she would be executed or become a nun, as an act of a cold person who did not take into account the feelings of young people instead of a person who was forced to act this way for the sake of keeping 'order and stability' in his dukedom.

On the whole, taking into consideration all the results obtained from the triangulation, the researcher came to the conclusion that her research question can be proved neither wrong nor right. Moreover, in spite of the fact that the majority of the students answered all the questions correctly the second time

they had to complete the questionnaire, there were a few, who even after staging the play, did not fully understand it.

5.2. Limitations of the present study

This study was carried out in only one school from Belen de Escobar and from this school only two courses were chosen for the present research. Therefore, the number of participants is a reduced one. Different types of schools and more courses should be studied to obtain more solid conclusions. Another limitation is that the students only worked on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other plays by Shakespeare or other playwrights should be explored to see if the acting out of their plays could really help learners to understand the plays better. The fact that the researcher was also the teacher of the courses being studied can be an important limiting element that should be mentioned. It would be very interesting to find other teachers willing to apply the same approach to the teaching of Shakespeare or who are already teaching Shakespeare through this method at secondary schools so as to be able to continue investigating this topic.

Finally, because of all these limitations, the results obtained from this study are only exploratory and cannot be regarded as general truths. Consequently, it is considered pertinent to point out here that further studies on this issue should be implemented.

5.3. A final word

Although the hypothesis proposed for this dissertation cannot be said to have been proved completely right, it is felt by the researcher that the staging of a Shakespearean play must trigger a special feeling in the students, since one of the first questions that they ask her at the beginning of the classes is which play by Shakespeare they are going to perform that year. It is thought that if they did not derive pleasure from the experience, they would not ask for it every year. Therefore, in a way, the task could be said to have been successful, since the majority of the students were able to answer the second questionnaire in a correct way.

Finally, it is the intention of this study to encourage other Argentine educators to continue doing research on 'teaching Shakespeare through staging his plays', since as Gibson (1998) states, in *Teaching Shakespeare*, the great playwright wrote plays to be acted out not to be read. Therefore, to fully understand what Shakespeare wrote, the students ought to step into the shoes of the characters and act out their lives.

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APPENDIX A

Sueño de una Noche de Verano (William Shakespeare)

Cuestionario exploratorio inicial

Fecha: Curso:

Nombre y Apellido:

1. ¿Qué relación tiene el título de la obra con la historia? Marque con una cruz la(s) opción(es) correcta(s).
 - a. Se refiere a que lo ocurrido durante una noche de mucho calor en un bosque puede ser interpretado como un sueño.
 - b. Se refiere a que durante las noches de verano uno tiene sueños.
 - c. Se refiere a que lo que ocurra una noche de verano calurosa sólo puede ser un sueño.

2. ¿Dónde y cuándo transcurre la mayor parte de la obra?
 - a. En la ciudad de Atenas durante el día.
 - b. En la ciudad de Atenas durante la noche.
 - c. En un bosque cerca de la ciudad de Atenas durante la noche.

3. ¿Cuáles son los actos que transcurren en ese lugar?
 - a. 2,3, y parte del 4.
 - b. 2,3, y 4.
 - c. 2.3.4, y parte del 5.

4. ¿Durante que período histórico transcurre la obra?
 - a. La Edad Moderna.
 - b. La Edad Antigua.
 - c. El siglo XIX.

5. ¿Cómo dedujo la respuesta anterior?
 - a. Por la ropa que usan los actores.
 - b. Por las instrucciones que Shakespeare escribió para la obra.
 - c. Por la información que proporcionan los personajes.

6. ¿Qué importancia tienen el lugar y el tiempo histórico? Marque con una cruz la(s) opción(es) correcta(s).
 - a. El lugar es importante, no tendría el mismo efecto si no transcurriera en un bosque. El tiempo histórico es relativo.
 - b. El lugar es importante y el tiempo histórico también lo es porque sería difícil imaginar a un padre moderno llevando a la corte a su hija debido a que ésta no se quiere casar con el hombre que él eligió.
 - c. La obra podría tener el mismo impacto si transcurriera en el futuro en un lugar y tiempo imaginario pero se debería cambiar el lenguaje renacentista.

7. ¿Cuánto tiempo transcurre entre la primera escena y la última?

- a. 3 días.
 - b. 4 días.
 - c. Una semana.
8. ¿Cómo obtiene esta información?
- a. Se puede deducir de lo que dicen Theseus e Hippolyta en la primera escena del primer acto.
 - b. Lo explica Puck en la primera escena del segundo acto.
 - c. Se puede deducir comparando lo que le dice Lysander a Hermia en la primera escena del primer acto y lo que dice Theseus in la primera escena del cuarto acto.
9. ¿De qué manera se entera de cómo son los personajes físicamente?
- a. Por las instrucciones que Shakespeare escribió para el director.
 - b. A través de cómo se describen ellos mismos y como los describen los demás personajes.
 - c. Por la forma de vestirse.
10. ¿Qué tiene en cuenta para describir a los personajes emocionalmente?
- a. Lo que dicen y como actúan.
 - b. Las notas que Shakespeare escribió al comienzo de cada escena.
 - c. Por sus gestos.
11. ¿Cómo definiría a Theseus?
- a. Como un guerrero de edad mediana, ceremonioso y formal pero amable al mismo tiempo, quizás por estar muy enamorado y a punto de casarse.
 - b. Como un hombre que fue soldado pero que ahora se dedica a gobernar su ciudad sin mucho entusiasmo.
 - c. Como un hombre joven y apuesto que está muy enamorado de Hippolyta.
12. ¿Qué tuvo en cuenta para contestar la pregunta anterior?
- a. La descripción que Egeus hace de Theseus.
 - b. La forma en que habla, el vocabulario que utiliza, y su forma de actuar.
 - c. Que Hippolyta está muy enamorada de él.
13. ¿Cuál de los siguientes personajes se arriesga más por amor?
- a. Hermia.
 - b. Titania.
 - c. Helena.
14. ¿Por qué eligió la respuesta anterior?
- a. Porque se escapa de la casa de su padre con su amado.
 - b. Porque decide perseguir al hombre que ama de noche a través de un bosque sabiendo que él la desprecia.
 - c. Porque se enamora de un hombre con cabeza de burro.

15. ¿Por qué cree que los artesanos son malos actores? Puede elegir mas de una opción
- Porque quieren escribir prólogos para explicar todo lo que pasa en escena.
 - Porque son todos hombres.
 - Porque son un recurso que utiliza Shakespeare para que la audiencia no se tome tan en serio los problemas del amor.
16. ¿Cuál de los artesanos le parece mejor caracterizado?
- Quince.
 - Bottom.
 - Snug.
17. ¿Por qué?
- Porque es el director de la obra.
 - Porque a pesar de tener una experiencia extraordinaria tiene el buen sentido de no contarla a sus compañeros.
 - Porque sólo tiene que rugir.
18. ¿Por qué Titania y Oberon están peleados al principio del segundo acto?
- Porque Oberon quiere al pequeño niño indio que Titania adoptó.
 - Porque Titania fue la amante de Theseus.
 - Porque Oberon fue el amante de Hippolyt.a
19. ¿Qué señala este hecho?
- Que son demasiado celosos.
 - Que no están realmente muy enojados el uno con el otro.
 - Que no se quieren.
20. ¿Qué clase de personaje es Oberon?
- Caprichoso y vengativo pero compasivo al mismo tiempo.
 - Celoso y vengativo.
 - Celoso pero muy tierno.
21. ¿Cómo dedujo la última respuesta?
- Por las cosas que le dice a Titania.
 - Por las cosas que quiere que haga Puck.
 - Porque a pesar de sus actitudes extravagantes, ayuda a los enamorados.
22. ¿Cómo describiría a Puck?
- Como un duende pícaro pero sin mala intención.
 - Como un duende pícaro y mal intencionado.
 - Como un ser burlón e interesado.
23. ¿Qué tuvo en cuenta para elegir la última respuesta?
- Porque se equivoca pero sin querer.

- b. Porque todo lo que hace lo hace con doble intención.
 - c. Porque trabaja para Oberon sólo porque es el rey de las hadas.
24. Los personajes pueden ser divididos en cuatro grupos diferentes. Cada uno de estos grupos usa una forma particular de hablar. ¿Qué forma pertenece a cada grupo? Una con una flecha.
- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. La corte de Atenas | 1. prose |
| b. Los amantes | 2. blank verse |
| c. Las hadas | 3. rhyming couplets |
| d. Los artesanos | 4. lyrical, short-lined poetry |
25. ¿Qué representaría Theseus?
- a. Autoritarismo.
 - b. Orden y estabilidad.
 - c. Aburrimiento.
26. ¿Qué significado le daría a la poción de amor?
- a. El poder de la magia.
 - b. Los deseos de Cupido.
 - c. Lo impredecible del amor.
27. Elija una o más opciones que le parezcan adecuadas para describir la atmósfera mágica de la obra.
- a. Oberon se puede hacer invisible.
 - b. Egeus acusa a Lysander de haber hechizado a su hija.
 - c. Puck puede controlar los fenómenos de la Naturaleza.
 - d. Los artesanos dan explicaciones de todo lo que sucede en escena.
 - e. La metamorfosis de Bottom en asno.
28. ¿De qué manera anticipa el autor los acontecimientos que habrán de desarrollarse en el transcurso de la obra?
- a. A través de las reiteradas alusiones a la luna en el primer acto.
 - b. Situando la acción en la ciudad de Atenas.
 - c. Lo explica Egeus en el primer acto.
29. ¿Qué significado le atribuye a la famosa frase: *The course of true love never did run smooth?* (1.1.134)
- a. Que el amor de las mujeres es más constante que el de los hombres.
 - b. Que para que los sueños se hagan realidad deben intervenir las hadas.
 - c. Que si el amor es verdadero, puede vencer cualquier obstáculo.
30. ¿De qué trata la obra? Elija la(s) opción(es) que crea correctas.
- a. Las dificultades que el verdadero amor debe enfrentar para llegar a buen término.
 - b. Racismo.
 - c. Realidad y apariencia.

- d. Discriminación.
- e. Distintos tipos de relaciones.
- f. El poder de la oratoria.
- g. El misterio de la muerte.
- h. Las convenciones del teatro.
- i. El poder de la magia.
- j. Piedad vs. crueldad.
- k. La corrupción que produce la ambición desmedida.
- l. Colonialismo.
- m. Contrastes entre distintas clases sociales.
- n. Sexualidad e incesto.
- o. Venganza.

Sueño de una Noche de Verano (William Shakespeare)

Cuestionario exploratorio inicial

Fecha: **Curso:**

Nombre y Apellido:

Cual fue su rol en la obra:.....

APPENDIX B

**A Midsummer Night's Dream
Observation Grid**

ACT/SC	CATEGORY	DIRECTING TEAM Comment	ADAPTORS Comment	CAST Comment	COSTUME/MAKE-UP DESIGNERS Comment	SET DESIGNERS Comment	MUSIC/LIGHTS/SPECIAL EFFECTS Comment	D
	SETTING							
	Historical Period							
	Time span							
	Time							
	Place							
1	CHARACTERS							
	Theseus							
	Hippolyta							
	Egeus							
	Hermia							
	Lysander							
	Demetrius							
	Helena							

ACT	SC	CATEGORY	DIRECTING TEAM	ADAPTORS	CAST	COSTUME/MAKE-UP DESIGNERS	SET DESIGNERS	MUSIC/LIGHTS/SPECIAL EFFECTS
			Comment	Comment	Comment	Comment	Comment	Comment
		SETTING						
		Time						
		Place						
		CHARACTERS						
		Quince						
		Bottom						
		Flute						
		Starveling						
		Snout						
		Snug						

ACT	SC	CATEGORY	DIRECTING TEAM Comment	ADAPTORS Comment	CAST Comment	COSTUME/MAKE-UP DESIGNERS Comment	SET DESIGNERS Comment	MUSIC/LIGHTS/SPECIAL EFFECTS Comment	D
		SETTING							
		Time							
		Place							
		CHARACTERS							
		Titania							
		Fairies							
		Oberon							
	2								
	2	Puck							
		Lysander							
		Hermia							
		Helena							

ACT	SC	CATEGORY	DIRECTING TEAM Comment	ADAPTORS Comment	CAST Comment	COSTUME/MAKE-UP DESIGNERS Comment	SET DESIGNERS Comment	MUSIC/LIGHTS/SPECIAL EFFECTS Comment	D
		SETTING							
		Time							
		Place							
		CHARACTERS							
		Quince							
		Bottom							
		Flute							
		Puck							
3	1								
		Peaseblossom							
		Cobweb							
		Moth							

AC/SC	CATEGORY	DIRECTING TEAM Comment	D	ADAPTORS Comment	D	CAST Comment	D	COSTUME/MAKE-UP DESIGNERS Comment	D	SET DESIGNERS Comment	D	MUSIC/LIGHTS/SPECIAL EFFECTS Comment	D
	SETTING												
	Time												
	Place												
	CHARACTERS												
	Oberon												
	Puck												
	Lysander												
	Helena												
	Demetrius												
	Hermia												

ACT/SC	CATEGORY	DIRECTING TEAM Comment	ADAPTORS Comment	CAST Comment	COSTUME/MAKE-UP DESIGNERS Comment	SET DESIGNERS Comment	MUSIC/LIGHTS/SPECIAL EFFECTS Comment
	SETTING						
	Time						
	Place						
	CHARACTERS						
	Titania						
	Bottom						
	Faires						
	Oberon						
4	1						
	Puck						
	Theseus						
	Egeus						
	Lysander						
	Demetrius						

ACT/SC	CATEGORY	DIRECTING TEAM Comment	ADAPTORS Comment	CAST Comment	COSTUME/MAKE-UP DESIGNERS Comment	SET DESIGNERS Comment	MUSIC/LIGHTS/SPECIAL EFFECTS Comment
	SETTING						
	Time						
	Place						
	CHARACTERS						
	Theseus						
	Hippolyta						
	Quince						
5	Bottom						
	Flute						
	Snug						
	Puck						

ACT	ISC	CATEGORY	DIRECTING TEAM		ADAPTORS		CAST		COSTUME/MAKE-UP DESIGNERS		SET DESIGNERS		MUSIC/LIGHTS/SPECIAL EFFECTS			
			Comment	D	Comment	D	Comment	D	Comment	D	Comment	D	Comment	D		
		THEMES														
		STYLE														