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Master's Dissertation/
Trabajo Fin de Máster

SHAKESPEARE, NETFLIX AND HBO: THE BARD RELOADED

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ABSTRACT

This Master's Dissertation examines the presence of William Shakespeare's on the most important TV series or films available on the video-on-demand platforms and how we can use these audio-visual media to bring the Bard's figure closer to upper-secondary students.

For this reason, it presents the perception upper-secondary students have of William Shakespeare, the most iconic figure in British literature and even in all British culture. Consequently, it provides the opinions and concepts supplied by students in first Baccalaureate previous to a didactic proposal that will be carried out with them in order to show our students the relevance of Shakespearian topics as love, revenge, ambition, or power; the contemporaneity of Shakespearian characters as Richard III, Hamlet or Macbeth, and even Shakespearian influence on the language. Hence, this student-centred didactic unit is displayed in terms of justification, context, objectives, contents, and methodology. These concepts will be displayed and developed through the most successful audio-visual projects present on the most widespread video-on-demand platforms, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, HBO, or Disney Plus, taking into account our student's preferences and likes. Finally, a conclusion involving our students' reactions and their renewed perception of the Bard after this didactic unit is offered.

Key words: Shakespeare, Netflix, Disney, HBO, non-compulsory secondary education, culture, TV series, EFL

RESUMEN

Este Trabajo Fin de Máster examina la presencia de William Shakespeare en las series o películas disponibles más importantes en las plataformas de vídeo bajo demanda y cómo podemos utilizar estos medios audiovisuales para acercar la figura del Bardo a los estudiantes de Bachillerato.

Para ello, se presenta la percepción que los estudiantes de bachillerato tienen de William Shakespeare, la figura más icónica de la literatura británica e incluso de toda la cultura británica. En consecuencia, muestra las opiniones y conceptos aportados por los alumnos de 1º de Bachillerato previas a una propuesta didáctica que se llevará a cabo con ellos para mostrar a nuestros alumnos la relevancia de temas shakesperianos como el amor, la venganza, la ambición o el poder; la contemporaneidad de los personajes presentes en la obra de William Shakespeare como Ricardo III, Hamlet o Macbeth; e incluso la influencia del Bardo en el idioma. Así, esta unidad didáctica centrada en el alumno, se desarrolla en términos de justificación, contexto,

objetivos, contenidos y metodología. Estos conceptos se mostrarán y desarrollarán a través de los proyectos audiovisuales más exitosos que podemos encontrar en las plataformas de vídeo bajo demanda más extendidas, como Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, HBO o Disney Plus, siempre teniendo en cuenta las preferencias y gustos de nuestro alumnado. Por último, se ofrece una conclusión que implica las propias reacciones de nuestros alumnos y su renovada percepción del Bardo tras el desarrollo de dicha unidad didáctica.

Palabras clave: Shakespeare, Netflix, Disney, HBO, bachillerato, cultura, serie de televisión, películas, enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera

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1. INTRODUCTION

The following section justifies this TFM in terms of the legal framework, explanation of the elements employed and their connection with EFL learners, and the main reasons for what this study was required.

1.1 Justification

Concerning the process of teaching a second language, cultural aspects play an incontestable and essential role. As Almécija (2012:1) claims, a full comprehension of the culture of the target language will help us to manage most of the everyday situations we may face. Hence, these sociocultural factors must be incorporated into this process of teaching and learning a new language (Sagredo, 2007:1). Hence, we should involve some of the cultural key elements in the Anglo-Saxon world, as this Linguistic diversity is essential to foster understanding between diverse people whose historical and cultural legacies are very different (Sagredo 2007:1). However, Foreign language teaching (FLT) has traditionally been concerned with vocabulary, language structures, pronunciation, and, more recently, communicative skills. Culture has been, at best, an additional element of the curriculum, secondary to the main matter of teaching the linguistic components and the communicative skills. (Méndez García, 2015). Consequently, teaching and learning a foreign language is not just about achieving perfect pronunciation of the target language. It is also about transmitting and bringing together the cultures of both the country of origin and the target language. It is our responsibility as teachers to eliminate clichés and prejudices that exist about each culture and to collaborate in the acceptance and positive valuation of diversity and difference. We must also encourage empathy towards members of the other culture, and try to get students to reflect critically on their own culture. As foreign language teachers, we must convey that successful communication is not just a matter of understanding the words, but that we must enable our learners to understand the cultural context, which is essential to decoding a message properly (Díaz, 2006:9). As a result, the importance of using the cultural element to study a new foreign language is no longer questioned because, as Arcaini (1991: 78-79, as quoted in Rodríguez, 2004:242) argues, the study of a language is inseparable from its cultural context because it comprises and encompasses the whole of reality. Besides, an intercultural approach has a wider scope because it not only deals with cognition but also with affect (or emotion), skills, values, and actions. (Méndez García, 2015). Similarly, the Council of Europe depicts one of its aims concerning language policy as perceiving “the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe as a valuable common resource to be protected and developed, and that a major educational effort

is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding” (CEFRL, 2001).

Nowadays, in a direct connection with this idea of culture, we are living a sort of golden age of the TV series, as it happened to the novel in Victorian England, and, regarding this undeniable success, the development of technology has played an essential role in order to make it possible as well as to increase the number of productions released. As a result, we currently can find series with very different themes, such as fantasy, detective, comedies, or drama, and they are adapted to each generation, especially to those who are known as millennials, who can be directly represented by our students in upper-secondary and baccalaureate levels. In addition, TV series present on Netflix or HBO, have gained in prestige and quality within the audio-visual world. Until a few years ago, films and documentaries took all the credit because they were productions made with time, taking care of all the details and with great actors and actresses as stars. A television actor did not have the same consideration as one who made films. However, now this situation has changed. Studios and production companies devote a lot of resources and large amounts of money to make series because people prefer them. A movie will always be a good plan, but in today's modern and busy life, it is easier to watch a 40-minute episode than a two-hour film. Even more so if the story hooks us. Increasingly, TV series stand out for the quality of the plots, the actors' performance, the locations, the special effects. Thus, now these new products count with great Hollywood stars in terms of actors or directors; professional distributors and release strategies; and finally, a great marketing effort which involves an intense campaign of advertisement and notoriety. Consequently, the success of TV series can easily be associated with the success of serialized novels in the 19th century. Authors such as Gustave Flaubert, Honoré de Balzac, or Charles Dickens in English literature, implemented this system, which was very popular at the time. Nevertheless, serialized novels were considered low-quality literature, as authors used to write with many narrative devices, very fast and dealing with topics that were known in advance to be to the readers' taste since the ultimate goal was making money. Currently, production companies such as Netflix and HBO already generate a certain volume of content after analysing statistical data that determine the tastes of the public, thus guaranteeing their success. Although all this is questionable, there are still quality series and even films offered by these video-on-demand platforms.

Thus, it is obvious that upper-secondary and baccalaureate students are the target audience for many of these audio-visual projects available on the VOD platforms. Netflix, Prime Video,

HBO, or Disney + are the most popular platforms and most teenagers spend a great deal of time enjoying their contents at home every year. As a result, it is irrefutable that these series and even TV films contain some of the most appealing elements for them, such as young and successful actors, topics present in their daily lives like love or social acceptance, or even a shared setting as the high school itself, for example. For this reason, employing audio-visual materials derived from these platforms will also serve as a motivation for them to be involved in the development of the didactic proposal that will be presented and displayed in this same Master's Dissertation in further sections, since audio-visual content itself is innovative within a didactic proposal and, especially contents related to their favourite TV series, which make them perceive the lesson as something attractive and ground-breaking too. It will be our task as teachers to make the most of this resource and the motivation it implies, so we must be very careful when selecting the material to be employed taking into account that William Shakespeare is the most recurrent screenwriter or source of inspiration for most of the last blockbusters present in video-on-demand platforms.

Concerning previous works on the figure of William Shakespeare on the screen, we can easily find a large amount of literature dealing with adaptations of the Bard's works for the cinema industry. However, there are almost no reviews about Shakespeare's influence on the TV series present or even produced by VOD platforms such as Netflix, HBO, Disney +, or Prime Video. Specifically speaking, we can find several works on the adaptation of the Bard's works for a teenage audience in the world of cinema to bring his figure closer to their interests but, again, this literature fails in including TV series as a means of revealing Shakespeare to our students. As a plausible explanation, we could mention that this phenomenon of TV series as blockbusters is a recent one. Additionally, VOD platforms have experienced an extremely fast spread in the world of entertainment. For instance, Netflix, which is the VOD with the highest number of subscriptions (203,7 million all over the world in April 2021), started to be a widespread option in Spain in 2015. Furthermore, the importance of this new means to produce entertainment is the fact that these VOD platforms are not only mere catalogues of national or foreign productions, but they are now even producers of their own contents, creating the most successful TV series all over the world. Consequently, this master dissertation was necessary as a starting point to research the Bard's relevance within the VOD platforms.

From a didactic stance, the present curriculum for teaching English as a foreign language emphasizes a communicative approach. This approach implies the consideration of not only

grammatical aspects but also cultural, historical, and literal characteristics of the countries where the English language is spoken. In this context, the figure of William Shakespeare plays an undeniable role as an icon of British culture, since his literary works can be employed as a tool to transmit to our students some of the basic and indispensable competencies such as linguistic, sociocultural, or artistic competence. The current Law for Education (LOMCE 8/2013 8th December), highlights within its general objectives for Baccalaureate “to express themselves fluently and correctly in one or more foreign languages”, and “to develop artistic and literary sensitivity, as well as aesthetic criteria, as sources of training and cultural enrichment” (Royal Decree 1105/2014, 26th December). Furthermore, the current law in Andalusia also set as main objectives to know the historical facts and figures and cultural events in countries where the foreign language is an official language; to know representative literary works of the foreign language to enjoy them and learn socio-cultural aspects of the authors and events that took part in their production; and to watch films, plays and enjoy the use of foreign language, participation in cultural events or by means of television, cinema, theatre or the use of new technologies (Decree 110/2016 14th June).

Moreover, as an English teacher for the last ten years, the author of this Master Dissertation has checked very unhappily how our students’ knowledge and perception of the Bard of Avon makes them directly reject any issue related to the playwright. If we ask them about William Shakespeare's figure and plays, they will think about long costumes, stiff verse, and old-fashioned boring stories distant to them. That man with his quill and his manuscripts, author of the “to be or not to be” quotation, talking about topics foreign to their worries and concerns. In short, they perceive William Shakespeare has nothing to do either with them or with their surrounding reality. Furthermore, it is quite surprising the set of myths, false myths indeed, that surround Shakespeare’s works, which end up in a lot of misleading conceptions and perceptions. Therefore, it is our duty as foreign language teachers to provide our students with the real facts, setting aside falsehoods and legends regarding the Bard, as well as illustrating very clearly the deep influence of Shakespeare’s plays, plots, or even language in our, and especially, their current world. Hence, we need a full reload of Shakespeare's figure, which implies starting from scratch.

Bringing Shakespeare’s figure closer to our students and changing their perception of his characters and plots through their preferred TV series and making them aware of the contemporariness and similarities they even share with themselves will allow us to transmit an

essential aspect of the British culture. As a language cannot be separated from their speakers, it will be crucial for EFL learners to acquire proper knowledge on the best English known figure in all history as well as raising in them the necessity of learning more about him as well of his influence on their preferences even though they are not aware of it. Wherever you look, Shakespeare's influence is there.

2. OBJECTIVES

The general objective of this Master Dissertation is to bring William Shakespeare's figure closer to students of upper-secondary and Baccalaureate students by means of revealing to them the relevance of his works, characters, and language and his presence on the most successful TV series present on VOD platforms. Specifically speaking, this MD aims:

- To set aside false myths about William Shakespeare's figure
- To bring Shakespeare's figure closer to our students illustrating his presence and relevance in their favourite TV series
- To demonstrate the effectiveness of using TV series in the educational context of Baccalaureate when teaching English as a foreign language.
- To present a didactic proposal conceived as a form of integrating William Shakespeare using TV series
- To provide students with a critical ability to think about the figure of William Shakespeare and his relevance and influence not only in the selected works but also in future personal choices.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section is devoted to the related research and views on the three main topics developed in this TFM: the relation between language and culture, the integration of culture into ESL/EFL classroom teaching, the recent concept of intercultural awareness, and William Shakespeare's adaptations to the screen, especially as a means in the secondary education curriculum.

From linguistic competence to Intercultural Awareness

As it has been mentioned above in the justification of our project, the current legal framework has put an emphasis on a curricular model based on key competencies. It implies that at the end of the different educational stages, students must be able to transfer and apply the knowledge they have acquired throughout their academic life to the varied situations they may face in their daily lives. Furthermore, The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

(CEFR) defines competencies as “the sum of knowledge, skills, and characteristics that allow a person to perform actions” (2001: 9) and provides a broad definition of language competencies against the backdrop of general competencies, as we will see below. Besides, it sets as one of its goals the development of intercultural competence, promoting greater unity among members, mutual understanding and tolerance, and respect for identities and cultural diversities.

This leads us to the term linguistic competence (as it is present in the legal framework), which has undergone a deep change in the last decades, evolving from its early definition of what today is known as intercultural awareness. With regard to this evolution, it is Hymes (1971), the first researcher who takes into account the socio-cultural dimension, since he proposes for the first time the broader notion of communicative competence, which involves not only linguistic competence but also contextual or sociolinguistic competence. Hymes claims that “attention to the social dimension is thus not restricted to occasions on which social factors seem to interfere with or restrict the grammatical. ... There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (Hymes, 1971:278). Hence, as Pérez Cañado states (2015), Hymes’ conception of “communicative competence comprises four sectors, of which Chomsky’s grammatical competence is merely one. In fact, as Munby (1978:15) states, Hymes’ four components within “communicative competence reflect the speaker- hearer’s knowledge and the ability for use as regards not only grammatical (formally possible) aspects, but also psycholinguistic (implementationally feasible), sociocultural (contextually appropriate), and de facto (actually occurring) ones” (Hymes 1971:281).

According to Méndez García (2000:5), Hymes’ proposal of this more extensive framework of communicative competence becomes the most complete and extended until Canale and Swain’s classification of the diverse competencies included within the broader communicative competence. More recent research (Baker, 2011) demands a wider conception of competence, making the shift from communicative competence to intercultural awareness. The more traditional communicative competency is a static representation of communication that emphasizes linguistic competency, marginalizes sociocultural aspects of communication, and focuses on the competency of an idealized monolingual native speaker. There is thus a clear need for a wider reconceptualization of language and communication better suited to the multilingual and multicultural nature of intercultural communication through English as a lingua franca (ELF). This more dynamic conception of competence as intercultural awareness reflects the fluid, hybrid, and adaptable nature of linguistic resources in intercultural communication (Pérez Cañado, 2015:6-12). As Baker states, “intercultural awareness is a

conscious understanding of the role culturally based forms, practices and frames of reference can have in intercultural communication, and an ability to put these conceptions into practice in a flexible and context-specific manner in communication” (Baker, 2011:202). Within this model, linguistic competence needs to go beyond mastery of a single code, and pragmatic and communicative strategies are also needed, together with knowledge of processes of intercultural competence, like positive attitudes to multilingualism, multiculturalism, and diversity (Pérez Cañado, 2015:6-12).

Culture and language

There is an unquestionable connection between culture and language, as you cannot separate one from the other. Regarding this, Hall claims: “No two concepts are more intimately linked than language and culture. In our interactions with others, we use language not only to refer to or represent our sociocultural worlds. It is also the central means by which we bring our cultural worlds into existence, maintain them, and shape them for our own purposes” (Mebitil, 2012, as cited by Liton, 2013:6). Likewise, G. Lazar claims that “language can never be divorced from culture” (Lazar, 1993:66). Consequently, in our current world, learning the culture of the target language is a step ahead of EFL teaching-learning efficiency. Along with Kumaravadivelu (2003), “developing critical cultural awareness allows you to learn and grow, to change and evolve, in order to meet the challenges of today’s emerging global reality” (Mebitil, 2012; as cited by Liton, 2013:6). Hence, when dealing with effective communication in FL, cultural awareness is as relevant as any other language skill. Besides, Lustig and Koester (2003) assert that our goal as language teachers is to facilitate learners to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds. He claims that “culture is a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, and norms which affect the behaviours of a relatively large group of people” (Lustig & Koester, 2003:27). Furthermore, concerning this idea of culture and language as interconnected concepts, we can mention some other authors as Kramsch or Geertz. The former defines culture as “membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space, history and common imaginings”. (Kramsch, 1998:10). The latter perceives culture as “a whole way of life, embracing all the behaviours, symbols, beliefs, and value systems of a society” (Geertz, 1973:14). Similarly, Sonia Nieto describes culture as “an entity which is dynamic, multifaceted, embedded in context, influenced by social, economic, and political factors, created and socially constructed, learned, and dialectical” (Nieto, 2010).

Finally, Rod Ellis declares that “individuals who are motivated to integrate both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning experience will attain a higher degree of L2 proficiency and more desirable attitudes” (Ellis, 1997). Thus, if our goal is to achieve effective communication in the target language, it is absolutely required to incorporate culture into EFL/ESL teaching, so that learners, while learning English as a foreign language, can acquire the aforementioned intercultural awareness.

Culture in Foreign Language Teaching

As it has been displayed in the previous sub-section, culture plays a major role for learners whose aim is to master a language. According to Pulverness, “language teaching and learning inevitably involve issues of socio-cultural meaning, and that approaches which disregard the cultural dimension of language are fundamentally flawed” (Pulverness, 2003:426, as cited in Petrus, 2012:125-136). Moreover, the undeniable relationship between FL teaching and target culture teaching is a central part of contemporary research carried out by scholars such Chomsky, (1968), Byram, (1997), Byram and Morgan, (1994), Davidson, (1999), Foucault, (1994), or Kramsch, (1993 and 2001). Then, the literature on teaching EFL shows the appearance of culture integration into EFL teaching. In McKay’s words:

culture influences language teaching linguistically and pedagogically. Linguistically, it affects the semantic, pragmatic, and discourse levels of the language. Pedagogically, it influences the choice of the language materials because cultural content of the language materials and the cultural basis of the teaching methodology are to be taken into consideration while deciding upon the language materials (as cited in Guilani, Mohd Yasin, Hua, & Aghaei, 2012:115-120).

According to Méndez (2015) “language teachers in particular need to respond to this process of internationalization and globalization because they are the professionals in charge of taking learners ‘beyond the frontiers’ of the nation”. However, we sadly contemplate that culture teaching has been set aside in foreign language education by giving prominence to grammar or vocabulary. As a result, we, as teachers, are preventing foreign language learners from acquiring the intercultural awareness required to be competent speakers of a language. As a consequence, several misunderstandings and misconceptions take place undermining fruitful communication. Thus, to achieve real and effective communication, awareness of some non-linguistic factors such as attitudes, modes of thinking, manners, and expectations derived from the standards of the target language must be part of the teaching-learning process. Hence, it is this intercultural awareness that will rise in our students positive attitudes and tolerance to other cultural backgrounds, and, at the same, we will enhance and reinforce the teaching-learning process. As Peck states, without the study of culture, foreign language instruction is inaccurate

and incomplete (Peck, 1998:1). Correspondingly, Politzer argues that language teachers must be interested in the study of culture because by teaching language without teaching the culture in which it operates at the same time, learners will miss symbols and attitudes necessary to achieve effective communication (Politzer, as cited in Brooks, 1960:85- 86). Finally, according to Byram,

Successful communication is not judged solely in terms of efficiency of information exchange. It is focused on establishing and maintaining relationships. In this sense, the efficacy of communication depends upon using language to demonstrate one's willingness to relate, which often involves indirectness of politeness rather than the direct and 'efficient' choice of language full of information. Those ways of being polite vary from one language and culture to another widely known (Byram 1997:3).

On the other hand, it is essential to incorporate authentic materials into the classroom if we want to foster our students' motivation too. The use of authentic and genuine material is extremely useful in the EFL class, as Mishan claims,

The central pedagogical justification to use authentic materials in FL teaching is derived from culture, currency, and challenge (the 3 c's): culture, in that authentic texts incorporate and represent the cultures of speakers of the target language; currency, in that authentic texts offer topics and language in current use, as well as those relevant to the learners; challenge, in that authentic texts are intrinsically more challenging yet can be used at all proficiency levels (Mishan, 2005:44).

Furthermore, consistent with Purba, using authentic sources from the native speech community, like films or television shows, help to engage students in authentic cultural experiences (Purba, 2011:44-56). Thus, we can adapt "the use of authentic materials to suit the age and language proficiency level of the students" (Purba, 2011:44-56).

The Use of Audio-visual means in English teaching

Taking into account the current popularity of TV series and VOD platforms, we can say that there is a vast opportunity for teachers to implement and use them in the classroom. Additionally, we have the undeniable appeal that video activities produce on our students too. However, the presence of this kind of means is not a usual one in the classroom. We can observe that in case a teacher employs any audio-visual media in class, it will be cinema the product which is usually chosen, forgetting about TV series. According to Bayles (2013:2), the analysis of the use of media in teaching and learning has mainly focused on films as teaching resources by Champoux (1999:206–217) or including cartoons or animated films (Champoux, 2001:78–99). Furthermore, choosing films, videos, or any kind of other visual support to help students in EFL learning has been mainly studied in the past three decades by Weyers (1999), Sommer

(2001), and Linebarger (2001), who have mainly placed the focus on the properties of films and the utility of subtitles in several languages.

On the one hand, as Raquel Segovia states “the mass media are ideal tools to foster the expansion of the English language, so (...) why not use the mass media to learn a foreign language and its culture?” (Segovia, 2003: 37). Similarly, Olle Findahl claims:

How is the process of comprehension related to the process of learning a foreign language? (...) comprehension is essential when watching a film, (...) also the motivation with which we watch something, (...) so, attractive viewings and a positive attitude towards the foreign language are crucial to improve the level of the language (Findahl, 1989:43).

Furthermore, Kieran Donaghy affirms that

film can bring variety and flexibility to the language classroom by extending the range of teaching techniques and resources, helping students to develop all four communicative skills. For example, a whole film or sequence can be used to practice listening and reading, and as a model for speaking and writing. A film can also act as a springboard for follow-up tasks such as discussions, debates on social issues, role plays or, reconstructing a dialogue. It is also possible to bring further variety to the language learning classroom by screening different types of film: feature-length films, short sequences of films, short films, and adverts (Donaghy, 2014:1).

Thus, given our students' daily exposure to audio-visual means (TV series in this case), and the positive effects they suggest on their linguistic competence, like listening comprehension for instance, together with the possibility these shows offer to display culture too, they have proven to be a valuable tool that may provide us with high levels of input, as well as resulting in advancements in our students' output.

4. SHAKESPEARE AND THE AUDIOVISUAL WORLD

Shakespeare's plays have provided the basis for over 400 films, turning the Bard probably into the most common literary source in the history of the cinema and the most recurrent screenwriter too. As Jose Ramón Díaz (2016:260-262) points out, adaptations of the Bard's works comprise from the earliest surviving films, as that of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree as King John dating of 1899, to the latest productions, such as *Macbeth* (2015), with Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard. Furthermore, we should mention the first full-length Shakespeare sound film (*The Taming of the Shrew*, 1929); the first adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1935), co-directed by Max Reinhardt, or other attempts to adapt Shakespeare's plays as Paul Czinner's *As You Like It* (1936) and George Cukor's *Romeo and Juliet* (1936).

When adapting a literary work into an audio-visual means, filmmakers have three possible choices: a literal transposition, a re-adaptation of the original work employing the cinematic devices, or creating a completely new product, which is known as free adaptation.

Concerning literal transposition, it attempts to reproduce the literary work as faithfully as possible in the audio-visual product (TV series or film), even reproducing dialogues, scenes, and obviously plots in the final product. However, as adapting means selecting, some subplots, characters and situations might be reduced or, conversely, they may be extended as well. This kind of adaptation was preferred throughout Hollywood's golden age, highlighting Lawrence Olivier's figure in his adaptations as a director and actor of William Shakespeare's works, such as *Henry V* (1945), *Hamlet* (1948), and *Richard III* (1955). Likewise, Orson Welles' works on Shakespeare have also been praised by critics and audience, stressing *Othello* (1952), and especially *Chimes at Midnight* (1965) also known as *Falstaff*, where he exhibits his interest in historical plays, drawing the film mainly on the two parts of *King Henry IV*, with some material from *Richard II*, *Henry V*, and a few lines from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. More recently, concerning this same way to adapt a literary work into an audio-visual element, we must include Kenneth Branagh's productions as director and actor too, with *Henry V* (1989), *Much Ado About Nothing* (1993), *Hamlet* (1996), *Love's Labour's Lost* (2000) and *As You Like It* (2006). Apart from these three great actors and directors, other adaptations involve Joseph L. Mankiewicz's *Julius Caesar* (1951), Franco Zeffirelli's *The Taming of the Shrew* (1966) and *Romeo and Juliet* (1968), Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* (1970), Peter Hall's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1968), Peter Brooks' *King Lear* (1971), Derek Jarman's *The Tempest* (1979), or Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books* (1991) based on *The Tempest*. However, this kind of product makes the general audience think of Shakespeare not only as a figure of popular culture but as an indecipherable and stuffy character. Even though we can find examples of this type of adaptations on TV series, such as *The Hollow Crown*, available in Prime Video, they do not act as an attractive element for the youngsters.

As it has been mentioned above, a second possibility is adapting a literary work into a more modern piece of art, that is to say, making the most of the cinematic devices and its contemporary context to turn this same literary work into a more attractive product for its current audience. Generally speaking, this kind of adaptation has been revealed as the most praised product concerning the conversion of literary works into films, with great jobs by famous filmmakers such as *Dracula* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1992). In this case, the film director is not so tied by the plot, characters, or even language present in the original work, but he feels free to avoid some parts of the plot, shift the spatial or temporal context, expand on some

interesting points of the story, deleting some characters, creating new ones or give some prominence to any aspect to the plot he perceives as relevant for the story he is telling. With regard to Shakespeare, this type of adaptation includes a lot of varied products, though I will mention here those targeted to a teenage audience, as our aim is displaying Shakespeare's figure for students aged between sixteen and eighteen. Concerning "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*" we can find some heterogeneous versions: *Get over It* (Tommy O'Haver, 2001), a musical adaptation set at a high school which also includes a "play within the play" performed as a show-within-a-show, as "*Pyramus and Thisbe*" in the original Shakespeare's work. Another instance is "*Were the World Mine*" (Tom Gustasson, 2008), a new version of the play set at a high school again. Besides, this musical's lyrics are based on Shakespeare's original text. For example, the title itself comes from a line in a song of this musical which is really drawn from a line in the play, "*Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated / The rest I'd give to be to you translated.*". In addition, we can also mention "*Strange Magic*" (Gary Rydstrom, 2015), a computer-animated musical fantasy romantic comedy by Lucasfilm Animation and Industrial Light & Magic. However, most of these revisions can be applied not only to teenagers but also to most of the young and middle-aged audience too. Thus, this same group might comprise adaptations of "*The Taming of the Shrew*", such as "*Deliver us from Eva*" a low-quality romantic comedy by Gary Hardwick (2003). On the other hand, *Hamlet*, Shakespeare's masterpiece, has also been widely adapted to the screen, being of special interest for this master's dissertation works such as "*Let the Devil Wear Black*", a 1999 crime thriller film directed by Stacy Title, and its quotation "*something is Rotten in the City of Angels*". Nevertheless, the most successful film based on *Hamlet* was produced by Disney in 1994, and then its remake released in 2019 "*The Lion King*". The former is an animated epic musical drama film; the latter is a photorealistic computer-animated remake of that same story almost involving no changes in the plot. Both of them were real blockbusters.

On the other hand, we have a set of films that, in this case, were exclusively devoted to the teenage audience. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, some producers decided to hire a teenage idol to star in a collection of films based on Shakespeare's works. The idea was bringing closer to teenagers the Bard's figure using a famous actor or actress mainly as a lure for their target audience. Thus, in an attempt to capitalize the figure of Leonardo Di Caprio, Amanda Bynes, or Julia Styles, several works were released. On the one hand, Di Caprio acted as the main attraction of Baz Luhrmann's version of *Romeo and Juliet* (*Romeo + Juliet*, 1996), which sets the plot within two mob families confronted each other in a current setting. Similarly, Amanda Bynes, the most emergent celebrity in Disney Channel in the early 2000s, starred in *She's the*

Man (Andy Fickman, 2006), a version of *Twelfth Night* set at a private school, mixing a love story and sports in a comedy that, personally, might be more suitable for students of first or second-year compulsory secondary education due to the simplicity of the plot and how it is displayed. On the other hand, Julia Styles appears in a cycle of films comprising *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. The cast of these adaptations also involved some other important figures for a teenage audience such as Josh Harnett (*O*, 2000), Heath Ledger (*Ten Things I Hate About you*, 1999), or Ethan Hawke (*Hamlet*, 2000). Respectively, *Hamlet* is adapted in *Hamlet* (Michael Almereyda, 2000), with Julia Styles playing a secondary role in a film set on contemporary Manhattan and employing contemporary devices. For instance, as a curiosity, the ghost of Hamlet's murdered father first appears on closed-circuit TV. *Othello* was versioned by Tim Balke Nelson (*O*, 2001), who sets the story at a private high school too with Julia Styles and Josh Harnett playing the major roles, mixing jealousy, basketball, and tragedy obviously. *Ten Things I hate about you* (Gil Junger, 1999), is a version of *The Taming of the Shrew*, with Heath Ledger, Julia Styles, and Joseph Gordon-Hewitt among its actors, mixing love and popularity at high school at the turn of the twenty-first century in a comedy which starts being quite fun and appealing for students but which loses some of its appeal as the film is being developed. Finally, the last audiovisual production to be included here is *Warm Bodies* (Jonathan Levine, 2013), based on a book by Issac Marion launched in 2010, it is a review on Romeo and Juliet, where the two families, Montague and Capulets, are replaced by zombies and humans. This is a very attractive product for teenage students, and it is now being turned into a TV series too, so it will be deeply analyzed in further sections. Moreover, this kind of adaptations can also be found as TV series, as in the case of *Shakespeare-retold*, a TV series comprising four television adaptations of William Shakespeare's plays broadcast on BBC One during November 2005, each one adapted by a different writer, and relocated to the present day. It includes *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, which is probably the most entertaining of them all.

Finally, as a third option, filmmakers may use a literary work as a springboard to create a completely new piece of art. Hence, we may be surprised when we learn that some movies are adaptations of previous literary works, as *Apocalypse now*, by Francis Ford Coppola (1979), for instance, a free adaptation of *Hearts of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. Concerning Shakespeare, we have films such as *Men of Respect* (William Reilly, 1991), with John Turturro; *Romeo Must Die*, with Jet Li (Andrzej Bartkowiak, 2000); *Forbidden Planet* (1956), a review of *The Tempest*, with Leslie Nielsen, Al Pacino's first documentary film *Looking for Richard* as an actor and director too (1996).

Concerning most TV series, we cannot state that they are actually adaptations of Shakespearian works, otherwise, they take inspiration in some of the Bard's plays, that is to say, they do not stand as adaptations of any kind of Shakespeare's literature but they reveal a profound impact and significance of the Shakespearean topics, characters or plots. Therefore, the most successful products which are available on video-on-demand platforms such as Netflix, HBO, or Prime Video, find a worthy source of inspiration in Shakespeare's works. Some examples are very explicit, as *Game of Thrones* (taking inspiration from *Henry VI Parts 1-3*, *Richard III*, *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet*), with the Starks warring against the Lannisters, mirroring the historical conflicts between the House of York and the House of Lancaster (*Henry VI Parts 1-3* and *Richard III*). Moreover, some of its main characters resemble Shakespeare's ones: Tyrion Lannister shares many qualities with Richard III, Robert Baratheon has roots in *Falstaff*, and Ned Stark could be compared to *Banquo* from *Macbeth*. On the other hand, in *Sons of Anarchy*, the protagonist learns about his late father through journals (communication from beyond the grave) after Clay, his father's best friend, conspires to kill his father and becomes romantically involved with his mother, an obvious reminder of *Hamlet*. Concerning Frank Underwood, the main character in *House of Cards*, there is an undeniable link between him and *Macbeth* regarding the plot and the fact that he breaks the fourth wall too. In addition, his wife, Claire Underwood plays the role of Lady Macbeth as well. In the same way, *Empire* finds more than a springboard in *King Lear*, involving siblings against one another and their parents too, due to the control of a business empire. Many other products could be mentioned here, such as *Slings and Arrows*, *Star-Crossed*, *The King of Texas*, *Skin* or, more recently, *Breaking Bad* and *Peaky Blinders*, which will be analysed individually in further sections.

To conclude, we could state that Shakespeare's works are so universal that their topics, plots and conflict can be exportable to any time and situation, so the Bard could be still depicted as Hollywood's most required screenwriter

4.1 Shakespeare on video-on-demand platforms: Products Chosen

Taking into consideration that most of the products mentioned above are available on the diverse video-on-demand platforms (HBO, Netflix, and Prime Video), it is Prime Video the one which offers the widest range of Shakespearian adaptations regarding literal transposition to the screen with productions such as Lawrence Olivier's or Kenneth Brannagh's films. However, after questioning our Baccalaureate students about which is their favourite video-on-demand platform, we learn that up to ninety percent of them point out that Netflix is the one they watch

the most. Thus, the TV series I have selected to be analysed in a didactic unit are two productions available on this platform. Furthermore, after asking students about their preferred English-speaking TV series, those who achieved the highest score were *Peaky Blinders* and *Breaking Bad*. Similarly, *Game of Thrones* was also regarded as one of their predilections, though, as it is an HBO production, it displays sex in a very graphic way and, as I have mentioned above, Shakespeare's repercussion is much evident in this TV series (it even reproduces scenes from Shakespeare's plays, as Arya Stark offering a cake to Lord Frey which is made from the corpses of Frey's children, a reproduction of a scene in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*), I preferred to focus just on the two products available on Netflix. On the other hand, as students will scrutinize these two TV series, they will be given the tools to carry out a deep analysis of a third product which will be launched this same year 2021, *Warm Bodies*, a widely known product for them as it has also been a novel and a film too; a product targeted directly to the teenage audience. They all will be examined in individual sections.

4.1.1. A Finished Product: Breaking Bad

The first TV series to be connected with William Shakespeare's works is *Breaking Bad*, one of the most successful TV series in all history, awarded with sixteen Primetime Emmy Awards and fifty-eight nominations, including winning for Outstanding Drama Series in 2013 and 2014. Additionally, it also won two Peabody Awards (2008 and 2013). Wikipedia describes the plot of this television show as follows:

Set in Albuquerque, New Mexico, between 2008 and 2010, *Breaking Bad* follows Walter White, a meek high school chemistry teacher who transforms into a ruthless player in the local methamphetamine drug trade, driven by a desire to financially provide for his family after being diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. Initially making only small batches of meth with his former student Jesse Pinkman in a rolling meth lab, Walter and Jesse eventually expand to make larger batches of special blue meth that is incredibly pure and creates high demand. Walter takes on the name "Heisenberg" to mask his identity. Because of his drug-related activities, Walter eventually finds himself at odds with his family, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) through his brother-in-law Hank Schrader, the local gangs, the Mexican drug cartels, and their regional distributors, putting his life at risk (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breaking_Bad).

Shakespeare's influence on *Breaking Bad* could include several of the Bard's works, such as *Richard III* or *Hamlet*. However, due to a matter of time and space concerning the didactic unit, I will focus just on one work: *Macbeth*. Furthermore, our students have already been in touch with *Macbeth* in the subject Universal Literature, part of the curriculum of 1st year Baccalaureate, so they already know this literary work. Thus, the presence of *Macbeth* in *Breaking Bad* will be divided into three separated sections: Structure, topics, and characters.

Structure

Although most TV shows employ a three-act structure, Vince Gilligan, creator of *Breaking Bad*, uses a five-act structure for his TV series. This is the first coincidence between Gilligan and Shakespeare. In the particular case of *Macbeth* and *Breaking Bad*, they both follow a very similar structure:

Act one1: Prologue or Exposition: Something happens to begin the story

Macbeth: A war is ending. The Scottish general, Macbeth, and his faithful friend, Banquo, have been victorious. However, three witches have created an evil plot against Macbeth and when they meet him, they tell him that he will be king.

Breaking Bad season one: We meet Walter and his family. He is diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. Next, Walter and Jesse enter the meth business so that Walter can support his family.

Act two: Raising action

Macbeth: Macbeth and his wife kill the king and take the throne. They commit themselves to tyranny. The action raises as we see how ambitious Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have become.

Breaking Bad season Two: Walter delves deeper into the underworld, meeting Saul Goodman and Gus Fring, and setting his fate. A major conflict is introduced here, as Walt entered the meth business to provide for his family after he is gone but in Season two, he loses his wife, Skyler.

Act three: Climax

Macbeth: Macbeth's paranoia increases as he sees Banquo's ghost after murdering him. Concerning Lady Macbeth, she becomes mentally unstable and they both are afraid of the punishment they will receive because of their evil actions.

Breaking Bad season three: Here, the characters reveal their true nature experiencing a profound change. The great tragic shift is Jesse, as he agrees to kill Gale. By contrast, Walter leaves the drug business for a while, though eventually, he joins Gus'.

Act 4: Falling Action

Macbeth: Macduff starts a revolt against Macbeth so that Duncan's exiled son may regain his rightful throne. On the contrary, Macbeth starts to think that he may be saved.

Breaking Bad season four: Jesse and Walt have grown distant and hostile. They choose confronted sides: winners (Walt) and losers (Jesse), or at least it is what it seems, as Gus and Walter control everything that happens.

Act five: Resolution

Macbeth: In Shakespeare, act five always ends in catastrophe. In *Macbeth*, the prophecy comes true, and eventually Macbeth is killed.

Breaking Bad season five: Walter takes over the Albuquerque drug world but finds even more ruthless characters. Eventually, almost everybody dies (Walter) or has his or her life ruined (Jesse). Most Shakespearean tragedies resolve with the tragic hero dead. However, though in the last episode of *Breaking Bad*, *Felina*, Walter White is killed, he handles much of the clean-up duty before he goes, which makes it different from a Shakespearian tragedy.

Topics: Ambition, power, and paranoia

Ambition is what drives Macbeth to kill Duncan and leads to his downfall. The point is, what is the trigger for his ambition? At first, Macbeth is a good man, at least at what we know, and he reveals his feelings as he is reluctant to commit regicide, he weighs up his options, he hesitates and realizes that his actions could return to plague him, however, his ambition wants him to feel the murder of King Duncan as justified. In *Breaking Bad* ambition comes from a much more contemporary element: cancer, something unpredictable and that will lead the patient to the unknown (a supernatural element in Macbeth). Thus, he starts cooking methamphetamine to support his family, yet he realizes his desire for recognition and progressively becomes hungry for power in the hierarchy of the drug world. He uses his family as justification for his evil deeds of cooking meth and murdering people. Ironically, he becomes his family's greatest threat, as we can see when a shot zooms out between his wife and son at home. At that same moment, Walter's utterance *We are family* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIhY1ydLmI4>), symbolizes that he does all this just for his ambition, which will lead him to his downfall, as in the case of Macbeth. Besides, note Walter's sentence at the end of the series *I did it for me* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaqxAEx46Zk>), acknowledging his pride and lust for power.

As we can see, Macbeth's ambition to be king consumes him to the point where he, even ponders murder in order to achieve it. Similarly, Walter White is immediately faced with the insidious ambition of making loads of money by illegal means when he sees on TV a table full of rolled-up cash. For Macbeth, his ambition was ignited or imbedded into his imagination by the witches, and, for Walter White, these ambitions were ignited by a much modern device, as he sees a great amount of cash caught from a drug-dealing operation carried out by the DEA on the television screen.

Closely connected to the concept of power, we can also include here the topic of paranoia, as both suffer from this disease and its influence grows as they accumulate more and more power. Then, after killing the king, Macbeth's paranoia arises as he imagines ghosts and supernatural

elements harassing him, feeling threatened to his throne, so he again chooses to create a false motive to kill, (Banquo, his companion, this time). He perceives Banquo as a menace and so he must be killed. In short, Macbeth convinces himself that his actions are acceptable despite their evil nature. Then, he feels so powerful and invincible that he orders the killing of all Banquo's family (as Walter does in *Breaking Bad* hiring the Nazi gang to kill nine people in jail as he perceives them as a threat to his position too). As a result, paranoia has changed both characters dramatically. In *Breaking Bad*, the drug world hierarchy reminds of a feudalistic structure: the king is the head of the cartel, who distributes to all South America. In the case of Walter White, his paranoia arises after he cooks meth for the first time as he fears getting caught (note the scene in underpants in the middle of the desert holding a gun in episode one, season one, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxCNmVZp2Pw>). It is this paranoia that leads him to kill the nine prisoners in Jail because they were related to Gus Fring and he feels them as a threat. Violence is graphic and taken to the extreme in this episode (*Gliding over all*, season five, episode eight) in an action fuelled by Walter's paranoia of losing his powerful position. This ambition and paranoia also leads Walter to kill his main competitor Gus, Mike (a former ally and probably an unnecessary death if we base on facts and not on imaginations), Héctor Salamanca, and poisons Lydia to protect his legacy (up to fifteen victims). All these murders are driven by his lust for power and by the paranoia of being deprived of his empire; he is moved by his fear about his downfall.

Walter White as tragic hero: Macbeth

From Macbeth to Walter White there have been many protagonists that we have not given a damn about their actions because we have connected in a very emotional form with their plots or their objectives within the story. However, do they not commit terrible actions? Walter lets a young woman die before his eyes when he might have saved her life, he poisons a child, he participates in a robbery that results in the death of another child and, do not forget that he is the manufacturer of a drug that ruins the lives of thousands of people and sometimes kills them. Likewise, Shakespeare's tragic heroes often commit criminal acts. Nevertheless, Shakespeare creates sympathy for all these tragic heroes and we admire them even as we are deeply troubled by the results of their actions. Consequently, this illustrates that we can be fascinated by the case of an ostensibly good character who goes on to commit evil. Walter decides to help and support his family by making money for their future, which can be perceived as a noble purpose, but he attempts to achieve this honourable objective through dishonest and unscrupulous actions. Walter and Macbeth are unequivocally juxtaposed in *Granite State* (season six, episode

sixteen), when we can see how Walter, just before the final events are triggered, murmurs a brief *Tomorrow* at the gate of his bunker, a shortening of Macbeth's probably most famous soliloquy *Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow*, (act five, scene five), which takes place just before the final incidents in the play that lead to Macbeth's death. Ultimately, Macbeth plunges the whole nation of Scotland into a brutal civil war, as Albuquerque is taken under the war between the drug cartels in the last season of the series.

Moreover, there are a set of undeniable similarities between Macbeth and Walter White as characters. To begin with, a sort of prophecy about their eventual fates made at the beginning of the plot drives both: Macbeth is told he will become king whereas Walter is told he will die from lung cancer. Similar to the prophecy that opens Macbeth, Walt's cancer diagnosis sets him on the road to an escalating hunger for power as well as a set of uncontrolled murders. Individually speaking, Macbeth does not believe what the witches tell him, and Walt assumes that he cannot beat cancer and is going to die in a few months.

On the other hand, Walter and Macbeth's personalities are closely connected as they both ponder about the pros and cons of murder when they commit their first killing: Duncan in Macbeth's case, Krazy-8 in Walter's. Macbeth's soliloquy *Is this a dagger I see before me* (act two, scene one) just before killing Duncan and Walter's words before he commits his first deliberate murder are analogous too, as Walter in *And the Bag's in the River* (season one, episode three), makes a list of reasons why he should kill Krazy-8 or he should let him live instead. Eventually, though they worry about their decision, they both kill Duncan and Krazy-8 respectively, which marks a turning point in the development of both characters. However, as the story goes on, murder comes easier and easier to Macbeth, just as it does to Walt, and eventually, they both find themselves on a killing spree. Furthermore, the topic of "toxic masculinity" can be introduced here too, as different characters throughout the plot question Macbeth and Walter's masculinity. For instance, Lady Macbeth pokes fun at her husband's masculinity when he fears Banquo's ghost and when he doubts whether to kill Duncan. Likewise, Hank usually picks on Walter's masculinity throughout the whole series questioning his manhood too. Later on, Walter feels great making use of new fake masculinity as he threatens and faces any criminal in Albuquerque.

Next, as Walter and Macbeth continue their journeys, they both start to think they are invincible. Walt thinks that because he can make the purest meth on the market, and so he deserves to hold the highest position in the drug world hierarchy. When Macbeth finds out that *no man of woman born* (act four, scene one), can harm him, he thinks he cannot be killed even though he learns that Macduff was not born of a woman. In addition, once Macbeth discovers that Macduff *is no*

man of woman born in act five, he does not cease his fight for control. Walter, when in season two, he finds out that his tumor has shrunk by eighty percent, he hits a paper dispenser in the toilet with his fist until his knuckles bleed, continuing on his path to control the meth trade anyway. Eventually, both Walter and Macbeth acknowledge death as inevitable.

Finally, Skyler White and Lady Macbeth show several resemblances as well: Skyler took a turn as the play's villainess in *Rabid Dog* (season five, episode twelve), urging Walt to kill Jesse to keep their safety (as Lady Macbeth urges Macbeth to kill Duncan to become king himself). She eventually joins Walter in his meth operation, laundering money for him through the car wash. Lady Macbeth depreciates Macbeth many times in the play, distrusting his manhood and even going as far as insulting him when he carries the daggers out of Duncan's bedroom. However, she later helps him with his bloody attempt for power even to the point of giving him advice on how to act.

4.1.2. An Ongoing Product: *Peaky Blinders*

Wikipedia describes *Peaky Blinders* as follows:

Peaky Blinders is a British period crime drama television series created by Steven Knight. Set in Birmingham, England, the series follows the exploits of the Shelby crime family in the direct aftermath of the First World War. The fictional family is loosely based on a real urban youth gang of the same name, who were active in the city from the 1890s to the early twentieth century ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peaky_Blinders_\(TV_series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peaky_Blinders_(TV_series))).

Additionally, it has received twenty awards and it has been nominated for other forty-seven awards, including BAFTA Awards and American Society of Cinematographers.

As we have already delved into *Macbeth* with our students, to make the most of our previous work concerning this point, we will connect a second TV series with this same play, so students may apply the knowledge they have acquired to a new and different product. Thus, in the case of *Peaky Blinders*, we will reveal *Macbeth*'s influence in terms of the tragic hero, topics, and context mainly.

Thomas Shelby as a tragic hero

As we have developed before, *Macbeth* is an example of a tragic hero, and this same definition can be applied to Thomas Shelby, the protagonist of *Peaky Blinders*. On the one hand, we sympathize with him despite his evil deeds, as he is a violent man engaged in illegal activities. In the case of Tommy Shelby, a resemblance with *Macbeth* arises just at the beginning of the TV series, as they both are war heroes (World War I in the case of Thomas Shelby), back from

an armed conflict perceived as a threat for their countries. Hence, we meet two violent men, though they (and we indeed), justify that violence. They were extremely efficient at war and they employ that identical violence when they are back from war. However, war has also changed and damaged not only these two men but also their families: they have lost friends, family, and some of their personality on their way. As a result, they are depicted as murderers, but, despite their undeniable brutality, they also exhibit some kind of sensitivity linked to their own suffering as we will demonstrate when dealing with the topics present in both products: play, and TV series. Similarly, there is a strong parallelism between Macbeth and Tommy Shelby at the beginning of season five, (season five, episode two), when Tommy finds a cross in the middle of his open yard, where a mannequin, representing himself, has been crucified. He also receives a note which says *look down on earth and see the seeds you have sown*, finding mines around him. After saving his child from stepping on these mines, Tommy uses a machine gun against the mines and the scarecrow, detonating them all madly. This powerful scene can be linked to the one when King Duncan is reported on Macbeth and Banquo's bloody actions on the battlefield. They were so fierce and bloodthirsty that it was as if they were trying to make the battlefield as infamous as Christ's crucifixion at Golgotha (*Maybe they wanted to take a bath in their enemies' blood, or make that battlefield as infamous as Golgotha, where Christ was crucified, I don't know*. Act one, scene two). The bloodiness in Macbeth's and Tommy's nature may also be found in the TV series soundtrack, *Red Right Hand*, by Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds. This red right hand is implicitly full of blood, since murder, violence and ultimately blood are elements shared by Macbeth and Tommy Shelby.

On the other hand, both Thomas Shelby and Macbeth are described as natural leaders, they are top men, fairly above any other characters in the play or TV series: they are powerful, potent, they both deserve to be kings in their areas and settings, it is somehow an act of natural justice for them to reign over the other characters in the play and series. Therefore, they represent two natural rulers. For example, Macbeth kills Duncan to be king, whereas Tommy kills the gangster Billy Kimber to do so. Concerning Duncan, he is introduced as a weak character, even as a naive one, not an intelligent man, as he trusts blindly in Macbeth, he is so dependent on Macbeth that he does not deserve to be king. Regarding Tommy Shelby, he surpasses his brother, Arthur to be the head of the family and no one questions his position, neither members of his family nor his allies.

Again, comparable to Walter White in *Breaking Bad*, and Macbeth, Thomas Shelby is engaged in a journey into the dark, into the horror. As tragic heroes they accept death as part of life, even their own death, they both change their perception of life as the TV series and the play progress.

On the one hand, Macbeth moves from his illusory convenient, and easy future he had fantasized about living a happy life with his wife after getting the throne of his cousin, to the acceptance of the futility of life in his famous soliloquy *Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow* (act five, scene five) describing life as meaningless, useless, and empty. After Lady Macbeth dies, for him, each day is miserable, time is a burden, and destiny is inevitable. As a result, he perceives the future as hopeless, tiresome and monotonous, manifesting a very bleak vision of life. On the other hand, Thomas Shelby also moves from illusory future happiness (season two, episode six), as he is going to be executed in the last episode of the season, describing the merry life he would have lived with Grace if his plans had been successful (*Nearly got fucking everything!*) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B9O6dHRGIU>), to a gloomy attitude and description of life in season five, once his wife Grace has been assassinated. However, as *Peaky Blinders* is not a finished product, and its final season is being launched in autumn 2021, it is impossible to know if Tommy Shelby will be dead or alive at the end of the story, though it is crystal clear that he accepts death as part of his life, especially in season five, as he never got over his wife's death. For instance, the final scene in season five presents Tommy talking to his wife's ghost and aiming a gun at his own head, suggesting the idea of suicide. The audience will not know what will happen until season six starts. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnOck3s06fQ>).

Topics: Ambition, power, and paranoia

The topics of power and ambition are evident in *Peaky Blinders*, as Tommy Shelby is an entrepreneur that is continuously searching for spreading his business (horse racing, bets, alcohol, guns, and even drugs, especially in season five). Tommy Shelby starts from being part of a localized gang in season one to be in charge of the races, controlling several other gangs to be a leader in London, being involved in cocaine traffic, expanding to the United States, sending alcohol to Al Capone or dealing Chinese heroin in the UK. Eventually, he even gets a post as a member of Parliament to legitimize his life as a respectable citizen despite being a gangster. Therefore, though as the series progresses Tommy enjoys the chance to retire and start a new and comfortable life, he rejects this possibility, devoting himself to a new and risky means of business. As a result, we can state that Macbeth and Tommy would be “dead” if they lived normal lives so, though they get what they primarily wanted (being king and ensuring money and a high-class position for his family respectively), both characters keep on catching more and more power. This connection is clearly reflected in Macbeth's sentence *I am in blood Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more, Returning were as tedious as go o'er* (act three,

scene four). Again this ambition and lust for power end up in paranoia as Tommy Shelby as Macbeth, suffers from insomnia, he cannot sleep because of his war nightmares; he sees his former dead wife's ghost as Macbeth saw Banquo's. They both are tormented by the actions they feel responsible for. Besides, this paranoia increases in season five, when Tommy feels everyone wants to kill or betray him, even suspecting of his family members, especially his cousin Michael.

4.1.3. A Chance for the Future: *Warm Bodies*

This audiovisual production differs from *Breaking Bad* or *Peaky Blinders* as it can be depicted as an adaptation of a Shakespearean play more than just a production where the Bard's influence can be found. Then, the film *Warm Bodies* uses *Romeo and Juliet* not only as a sort of springboard to create a totally new product but as a basis for the story the filmmaker wants to tell or show us.

On the other hand, *Warm Bodies* is a chance for the future in the sense that a TV series is currently being produced based on a previous film (*Warm Bodies*, 2013, Jonathan Levine), which is at the same time based on a novel by Isaac Marion (2010). This TV series should have been released last year (2020), but due to the pandemic that has completely changed our world, it was delayed until 2021. The plot is an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*'s, with basically the same set-up as the *Capulets* and the *Montagues*, but in this case with zombies, guns, and brain-eating. After a zombie apocalypse, there is a war between the undead, who intend on eating humans and especially human brains, and the humans, who understandably, want to kill the zombies. Thus, we get the star-crossed lovers, as "R" (Romeo) is a zombie who falls in love with Julie (Juliet), a human. They belong to two separated "families" engaged in a bloody war, and hence their love is forbidden. They cannot be together.

By contrast, the great difference between these two products is that while *Romeo and Juliet* is a tragedy, as the two lovers die at the end of the play, *Warm Bodies* is a romantic comedy, with the two lovers not only alive at the end of the story but also happily together. The great twist lies in the fact that zombies, as they eat human brains, get the memories within those brains, so they become more "human" too. Besides, these memories arise in them some feelings, so they gradually are "less dead and more alive". On the other hand, the novel, film, and now TV series, includes a third "family", the "skeletons", which will become a common enemy for both humans and zombies at the end of the film, as zombies are transformed into more "human" beings as the novel progresses.

Specifically speaking, the names of the different characters present in the film and its future TV version, clearly represent those of the characters in Shakespeare's play:

"R", the protagonist and main male character does not remember his name, only that it starts with the letter R, which could stand for Romeo. Julie is about as close to Juliet as you can get without totally giving it away. Besides, her full name is Julie Cabernet, which resembles Juliet Capulet: "R" and Julie, Romeo, and Juliet. There's even a zombie named "M" (we later know him as Marcus) which may as well be a stand-in for Mercutio, Romeo's close friend in the play. On the other hand, other secondary characters also mirror the influence of the play on the film such as Nora, who is Julie's confidant, and who curiously wants to be a nurse, as in *Romeo & Juliet*, Juliet's confidant is her nurse. Perry, Julie's former boyfriend displays a connection with the Bard's play, as he could stand for Paris. Likewise, Romeo kills Paris in act V in *Romeo and Juliet*, whereas R kills Perry at the beginning of the film. Finally, Julie's father (Mr. Capulet in the play) is the leader of the humans. He is a military commander who hates zombies. Meanwhile, the zombies do not really have a leader, just like we learn very little of Romeo's family in the play.

To conclude, we get to the popular balcony scene (that which never really happened in Shakespeare's play). In the play, Romeo pronounces a long speech about his love for Juliet, which is very similar to what happens in *Warm Bodies*. Here, R sneaks into the fortified field human camp to tell Julie how much he misses her and warn her about the danger of an invasion. Although adapted to a current, or even futuristic context, *Warm Bodies* takes the most of the Shakespearean play to appeal to a teenage audience, producing an interesting film which is a fruitful means to show Shakespeare's influence on current blockbuster films and series.

5. DIDACTIC PROPOSAL

5.1 Context

Our didactic proposal takes place at a high school set in a coastal town in the province of Malaga. As it is regarded as a tourist destination, our students are often in touch with English regularly, which helps them develop their language skills. It is a bilingual school that fosters CLIL methodology at secondary level and Baccalaureate, so most of the students are used to receiving lessons in English. As regards the social, economic, and cultural context of the students, we can say that in general terms these students belong to families with a middle socioeconomic level, whose main source of income comes from the tertiary sector. Specifically speaking, we are dealing with two groups of first-year Baccalaureate students, one of them is specializing in Arts, the other is devoted to Humanities. Besides, these students are aged sixteen

and seventeen, a life stage when they start being interested in new academic topics, especially as they have just finished their compulsory secondary school and they now can choose the subjects that they perceive as the most appealing. On the other hand, a remarkable diversity is observed in our students about their learning abilities as well as their attitude towards that learning. Furthermore, we can find several foreign students within the group, coming from diverse countries: Argentina, England, France or Peru, though their families are settled down in the area and both students and families are fully integrated into the school, mastering Spanish language and, in the case of the only native English student, she also masters English, as it is her mother tongue. Besides, we can also find several students whose family background is connected to English speaking countries, like their mothers, fathers, or grandparents are from English speaking countries, since the town where this high school is located is a usual destiny for English retired families or a usual second residence as well. Despite the diversity among students, the general English level is consistent or even higher in some cases with the one targeted at this educational level. Thus, most of them enjoy a B1 level regarding the CEFR, and, individually, some students enjoy a B2 level. Finally, we must bear in mind our native English speaker, whose English level is noticeably higher.

5.2 Objectives

According to Article 25th, Royal Decree 1105/2014, of 26th December, the Baccalaureate will contribute to the development of the student's skills that will enable them to (Note that those in bold are present in the Didactic Unit concerning this Master's Dissertation):

a) Exercise democratic citizenship, from a global perspective, and acquire a responsible civic conscience, inspired by the values of the Spanish Constitution as well as by human rights, which promotes co-responsibility in the construction of a fair and equitable society.

b) Consolidate personal and social maturity that allows them to act responsibly and autonomously and develop their critical spirit. To foresee and resolve personal, family, and social conflicts peacefully.

c) To promote effective equality of rights and opportunities between men and women, to analyze and critically assess existing inequalities and discrimination, and in particular violence against women, and to promote real equality and non-discrimination of people due to any personal or social condition or circumstance, with special attention to people with disabilities.

d) To consolidate the habits of reading, study and discipline, as necessary conditions for the effective use of learning, and as a means of personal development.

e) To master, both orally and in writing, the Spanish language.

- f) To express oneself fluently and correctly in one or more foreign languages.**
- g) To use information and communication technologies with competence and responsibility.**
- h) To know and critically assess the realities of the contemporary world, its historical background, and the main factors of its evolution. To participate in a supportive way in the development and improvement of their social environment.**
- i) To access fundamental scientific and technological knowledge and master the basic skills of the chosen modality.
- j) To understand the fundamental elements and procedures of research and scientific methods. To know and critically assess the contribution of science and technology in changing living conditions, as well as to strengthen sensitivity and respect for the environment.
- k) To strengthen the entrepreneurial spirit with attitudes of creativity, flexibility, initiative, teamwork, self-confidence, and critical sense.**
- l) To develop artistic and literary sensitivity, as well as aesthetic criteria, as sources of training and cultural enrichment.**
- m) To use physical education and sport to favour personal and social development.
- n) To consolidate attitudes of respect and prevention in the field of road safety.

In addition to the objectives described in the previous section, Baccalaureate in Andalusia will contribute to developing in students the skills that will enable them to:

- a) Deepen their knowledge and appreciation of the peculiarities of the Andalusian linguistic modality in all its varieties.
- b) Deepen their knowledge and appreciation of the specific elements of Andalusian history and culture, as well as its physical and natural environment and other original facts of our Community so that it is valued and respected as its own heritage and within the framework of Spanish and universal culture.**

In the case of our particular area, English Language, the current legal framework proposes the following objectives, which are obviously present and developed our integrated didactic unit:

1. Listen attentively and understand oral texts in the foreign language on a variety of subjects, genres and registers delivered directly by the human voice or reproduced by audio storage and reproduction resources in diverse media.
2. Deliver oral productions in the foreign language with grammatical accuracy, textual coherence, and social appropriateness on a variety of subjects, genres, and registers using one's own voice or resources for storage and reproduction of the same.

3. Read and understand written texts in the foreign language on a variety of subjects, genres, and registers on paper or digitally.
4. Write a variety of written texts with grammatical correctness, textual coherence, and social appropriateness on diversified topics, genres, and registers in paper and digital formats.
5. Be interested in the lexis of the foreign language and learn it, organized by semantic fields and registers of formality, as a means of producing oral and written manifestations of formal quality, textual coherence, and social appropriateness.
6. Recognize the importance of the morphosyntactic structures of the language, learn them and apply them consciously to self-monitor and contribute with increasing autonomy to the formal correction of oral or written texts.
7. Be aware of the function of the elements involved in vowel sound production to imitate the native pronunciation of a standard variety of the foreign language.
8. Know the location, main cities, geographical features, units of currency and other measurements, historical facts, and figures and cultural manifestations of the countries where the foreign language is an official language.
9. Know representative literary works of the foreign language and read them at a level adapted to their possibilities of comprehension to enjoy them and learn socio-cultural aspects of the authors and events involved in their production.
10. Learn the names, thematic preferences, and ideological trends of the main mass media which broadcast information in the foreign language to keep up to date with international events and assimilate them with a critical spirit.
11. Listen to music, sing, watch films, play, and enjoy the passive or active use of the foreign language by interacting personally in areas where it is used by native speakers and, as far as possible, by participating in cultural events, excursions or trips, or, failing this, through television, cinema, theatre or the use of new technologies.
12. To use the foreign language to participate in various speech acts, to meet speakers of the foreign language, to make known the historical heritage of Spain and Andalusia, to make friends, to undertake and open horizons, to avoid and solve conflicts, and to contribute ideas and behaviours that promote peace among peoples and happiness among people.
13. Use the foreign language for personal enjoyment and for training by finding out, communicating, or disseminating information applicable to the academic, professional, or other fields in various paper or digital formats in any field of knowledge.
14. Value the people involved in foreign language learning: native speakers, language learners, authors, and teachers.

Specifically speaking, the current legal framework establishes that the main aim of our subject is “to develop the students' communicative competence employing tasks aimed at managing the skills of oral and written comprehension and expression in a foreign language in any given situation”. Additionally, foreign language learning also prepares pupils for citizenship, understanding of the world and culture, and participation in the advancement of the knowledge society, and facilitates the maximum development of their abilities and competencies to actively integrate into a diverse society in a continuous process of change and development.

Finally, as an addition to the previously highlighted objectives, among the main goals established for this didactic unit we have:

To set aside false myths about William Shakespeare's figure

To bring Shakespeare's figure closer to our students illustrating his presence and relevance in their favourite TV series

To provide students with a critical ability to think about the figure of William Shakespeare and his relevance and influence not only in the selected works but also in future personal choices.

5.3 Contents

Contents in this didactic unit are derived from the four-block of contents proposed by the current legal framework: based on the four language skills, that is to say, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Furthermore, they are linked to the seven key competencies that Spanish Educational Law establishes, and which are defined as “the capacities to apply in an integrated manner the contents belonging to each teaching and educational stage, to be able to do adequately activities and efficiently solve complex problems”. (LOMCE 26th December 2014) These seven competencies are Competence in Linguistic Communication (CLC), Competence in Mathematics, Science and Technology (CMST), Digital Competence (DC), Learning to Learn (LTL), Social and Civic Competencies (SCC), Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship and (SIE), Cultural Awareness and Expression (CAE). Hence, our subject contributes to the seven key competencies individually. The English as a Foreign Language subject contributes in a fundamental way to the development of competence in linguistic communication (CCL). It also contributes at the same time to social and civic competencies (CSC), fostering attitudes of appreciation and respect for all languages and cultures. It is, therefore, necessary to use the foreign language in an empathetic and tolerant manner, as well as the intercultural and socio-economic dimensions of their countries. It fosters a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (SIEP) since to communicate it is necessary to be creative, to have initiative, and to have a sense of responsibility. Besides, Digital competence (DC) is indispensable for learning a foreign

language, as linguistic activity is largely carried out through technological means. On the other hand, competence in cultural awareness and expression (CEC) is present in the learning of the First Foreign Language, as it implies valuing with an open attitude numerous artistic and cultural manifestations in that language, such as films in the original version, contributing to the personal enrichment of the students and increasing their motivation for learning. Finally, when learning a foreign language, abstract reasoning is used, thus contributing to the development of mathematical competence and basic competencies in science and technology (CMCT).

Moreover, the Spanish curriculum includes a set of transversal contents, a set of values and attitudes considered as a requirement to solve problems derived from our students' relations with the world that surround them, comprising an ethical dimension linked to the concepts of respect, human rights, equality, tolerance or solidarity. All these transversal topics are derived from the current legislation too: (Royal Decree 1105/2016, Order 14th July 2016, and Decree 111/2016)

- a) Respect to our Legal Framework, including basic rights and freedoms set in the Spanish Constitution and the Andalusian Statute of Autonomy.
- b) Develop personal competencies and social abilities to become participants in society, following the values that support freedom, justice, equity, and political diversity, and democracy.
- c) Education to live together and respect interpersonal relations, emotional competence, self-awareness, body image, and self-esteem as necessary tools for personal development, to reject and avoid situations linked with bullying, discrimination, or ill-treatment, to promote well-being and security and protection of all members of the school community
- d) The promotion of values and necessary actions to enhance real and effective equality between men and women, recognizing the contribution of both genders to the development of our society and the added knowledge for humankind, analysing possible reasons, situations, and solutions to gender inequalities, respecting sexual identity and orientations, rejecting sexist behaviour, attitudes, and contents, as well as stereotypes, preventing gender violence and rejecting sexual abuse.
- e) The promotion of inner values and behaviour associated with the principles of equal opportunities, universal access, and non-discrimination, as well as the prevention of violence against the disabled.
- f) The promotion of tolerance, recognizing the diversity and intercultural coexistence knowing the contribution of distinct societies, civilizations, and cultures to the development of

humankind; the knowledge of gipsy culture and history, the education for peace, respect to freedom of mind, the consideration of victims of terrorism, the awareness of the basic elements in the democratic memory linked with our Andalusian history, rejecting terrorist violence and any other means of violence, racism or xenophobia.

g) Basic abilities development for personal exchanges of information, active listening, empathy, rationality, and agreement through dialogue.

h) Critical and conscious use of new technologies and audiovisual resources, providing means to solve possible misuse, focused on the relevance in teaching and learning and student's work, and how to change information into knowledge.

i) The promotion of values and behaviour linked with road safety, rational behaviour, and prevention of traffic accidents. Also the protection in cases of emergency and catastrophe.

j) The promotion of physical activities to develop motor skill competence, healthy habits, the responsible use of free and leisure time, to promote a balanced diet for individual and social well-being including concepts linked with education for consumption and health in labour.

k) The acquisition of competencies to act in the economic background and to create and develop different models of enterprises, taking part in the economic growth following premises and samples of sustainable development and social well-being to create a sense of awareness necessary for citizens to comply with their tributary responsibilities and fight against fraud as a well to help maintain public services following the principles of solidarity, justice, equality, and social responsibility, promoting entrepreneurship initiatives, ethics in enterprises equal opportunities.

l) Becoming aware and analyse problems affecting the population in a globalized world, including health, poverty, emigration, inequalities between people and nations and the basic principles ruling our environment and the consequences of human actions upon them, the shortening of resources, overpopulation, pollution or global warming, aimed at promoting an active contribution, do defend, preserve and improve our environment as a key factor in our life quality.

Now, we delve into the specific aspects concerning the contents present in this didactic unit as they are taken from the Spanish legal framework and how they are connected to the developments of the seven key competencies present in the Spanish curriculum for the Baccalaureate.

BLOCK 1 Contents and key competencies related	BLOCK 2 Contents and key competencies related
Comprehension strategies: • Distinguishing types of understanding (general meaning, essential information, main points, and relevant details) in response to questions or the task requirements. • Creating hypotheses on contents and context, based on textual clues or help from the teacher or classmates. • Reformulating hypotheses from understanding new elements, with or without help. • kcLC+kcMS+kcDC+kcES+kcCA Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects: • Recognizing most typical aspects of English-speaking countries in texts: place names, celebrities, historical events. • Recognizing non-verbal elements of the English-speaking world, in photographs of places, objects, etc. • Showing interest in messages coming from and dealing about other cultures. • kcLC+kcDC+kcLL+kcES	Production strategies: <i>Planning:</i>0 Conceive the message clearly, distinguishing its main idea(s) and its basic structure <i>Execution:</i> Express the message clearly and coherently, structuring it adequately and adjusting, if necessary, to the formulas for each type of text. Communicative functions: - Initiation and maintenance of personal and social relationships - Exchange of information, indications, opinions, beliefs, opinions, beliefs and points of view, advice, warnings and cautions. - Expression of curiosity, knowledge, certainty, confirmation, doubt, conjecture, skepticism and disbelief. Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects: Including some of the most typical aspects of English speaking countries in one's own texts: place names, celebrities, historical events. Showing interest in producing messages to explain Andalusian sociocultural aspects to speakers from other cultures. kcLC+kcMS+kcDC+kcES+kcCA

BLOCK 3 Contents and key competencies related	BLOCK 4 Contents and key competencies related
Comprehension strategies: • Distinguishing types of understanding (general meaning, essential information, main points, and relevant details) in response to questions or the task requirements. • Creating hypotheses on contents and context, based on textual clues or help from the teacher or classmates. • Reformulating hypotheses from understanding new elements, with or without help. • Narration of punctual and habitual past events, description of present states and situations, and expression of predictions, situations, and expression of predictions kcLC+kcMS+kcDC+kcES+kcCA Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects: • Recognizing most typical aspects of English speaking countries: place names, celebrities, historical events. • Recognizing non-verbal elements of the English-speaking world, in photographs of places, objects, etc. • Showing interest in messages coming from and dealing about other cultures. kcLC+kcDC+kcLL+kcES	Production strategies: <i>Planning:</i> Put theoretical knowledge into practice in order to communicate idea <i>Execution:</i> Express the message clearly and coherently, structuring it adequately and adjusting, if necessary, to the formulas for each type of text. Communicative functions: Initiation and maintenance of personal and social relationships Exchange of information, indications, opinions, beliefs opinions, beliefs and points of view, advice, warnings and cautions. Expression of curiosity, knowledge, certainty, confirmation, doubt, conjecture, skepticism and disbelief. Use of the foreign language to find out or share information from other areas of knowledge Sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects: Including some of the most typical aspects of English speaking countries in one's own texts: place names, celebrities, historical events. Showing interest in producing messages to explain Andalusian sociocultural aspects to speakers from other cultures kcLC+kcMS+kcDC+kcES+kcCA

5.4 Methodology

The methodological approaches of First Foreign Language taught in Baccalaureate are subject to a series of variables that justify the implementation of planned work projects adjusted to the students' circumstances. In order to achieve meaningful learning, it is necessary to involve students in learning situations they enjoy. Encouraging interaction in the classroom by addressing topics close to their experience or of interest to them, combined with time for reflection and appropriate procedures for comprehensive memorization, is a good stimulus to enhance interest in the foreign language and culture.

The latest generation didactic materials are a serious competition to the traditional paper-based ones since they provide the practice of all the communicative skills and the established contents and facilitate the variety of learning styles of the students. Thus, linguistic tasks and projects that cultivate the learning of sociocultural aspects and intercultural knowledge are encouraged. In addition, we should not forget the contribution to the reading of song lyrics or the subtitles of movies in their original version, which provides the peace of mind that the students themselves can exercise their freedom to choose themes and titles and, consequently, enjoy directing their learning process. Finally, the relationship of the language and its culture with facts, concepts, and expressions belonging to areas of knowledge other than that of the language of study will awaken other concerns in addition to the already routine ones of how to say or what a certain word or expression means

According to the Curricular Project, the strategies, that is, how to teach contents concerning the objectives proposed, will agree with the available resources, the groupings, the timing, and the learning environment. The methodological approach followed is clearly communicative. Students will practice the four skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) to be communicative competent. We should take into account students' previous knowledge, students' participation, meaningful learning, and their relation with the environment. Learners will play an active role in the teaching-learning process when working in pairs, in groups, or on their own. The various groupings will give students opportunities to participate and build meaningful learning without conflicts. The materials and activities will be as authentic and attractive as possible. These activities will be adapted to the students' personal characteristics and interests so that they can be meaningful for them. Errors will be considered as a normal part of the learning process. We will try to promote strategies of autonomous learning in the integration of the four skills and the English language, and students will also make use of those strategies learned in their mother tongue. Through the observation of everyday work in class,

participation, homework, tests, interviews, diaries, and self-evaluation pages, teachers will get all the information to make an analysis of the process and evaluate the use of our methodology. Thus, this unit intends to provide methodological guidelines for the group for which it has been designed. The main points to remember from this stance are the following:

- Motivation is meant to be one of the main goals in the methodological choices of the teacher; for this reason, all the other measures proposed below take this point into account; students can be motivated through the correct selection of contents, establishing realistic objectives, clear evaluation criteria and transparency in the evaluation, and the use of adequate techniques, groupings, and resources in the classroom.
- Activities are sequenced so that the four basic skills are practised in an integrated way; giving prominence to productive skills (speaking and writing).
- Groupings vary to avoid monotony and to provide more interaction.
- Printed and recorded resources are often authentic or adapted from authentic to provide more realistic conditions of language use; the same refers to the spontaneous use of English in class.
- The treatment of errors will be subject to criteria of fluency; as long as errors seem to form part of the current interlanguage and do not interfere with the efficiency of communication, they would not be dealt with immediately but indirectly through additional practice or general comments.
- Motivation using computer resources, as students find the use of new technologies attractive and at the same time, they like seeing what they wrote or did on the Internet.

5.5 Lesson Plan

Any didactic unit, no matter the subject, must involve a lesson plan to divide the multiple contents related into the number of lessons for which it is aimed. In our case, we are developing an integrated didactic unit which is divided into five lessons of fifty-five minutes each, that at the same time are divided into four sections: warm-up, presentation, interaction, and conclusions. Chronologically speaking, this unit lasted from the 1st of June until the 12th of June (six sessions in two weeks).

Session 1: Start from scratch

Objectives	Contents	Competences	Related Areas
Stage: b), d), f), g), k) Area: 1), 2), 5), 6), 8), 9)	1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4/1.5/1.6 2.1/ 2.2/ 2.3/ 2.4 Transversal: e), f), g), h)	kcLC+kcMS+kc DC+kcES+kcCA +kcLL	History Literature

Warm-up:

First of all, we start with a dialogue, as the teacher wonders:

Teacher: What is literature?

Students: “a written work...”.

However, the teacher interrupts them, questioning again:

Teacher: “Don’t you think oral tradition is literature too?”

Students: “yes”, reply at once.

Teacher: And, what about films? Aren't they literature?

Here, we find some controversy, as some of them agree with this idea, some of them don't.

Now the teacher adds an example to illustrate the concept of literature. He chooses the Arthurian legend to demonstrate how the concept of literature can be adapted. The Arthurian legend started as an oral tradition in Early Middle English; next, it was turned into several written works as *Morte D'Arthur* by Thomas Malory (1485). Finally, we can watch *Excalibur*, by John Boorman, a high-quality film from 1981.

Then, students are asked about their preferred TV series. As I have mentioned before, *Breaking Bad*, *Peaky Blinders*, and *Game of Thrones* are regarded as their prime. Next, the teacher asks them about the main topics in these TV series, achieving the conclusion that they three involve violence and revenge as a common source. Furthermore, individually speaking, they attach topics such as drugs to *Breaking Bad*, alcohol and family to *Peaky Blinders*, and sex and adventures to *Game of Thrones*.

Next, the teacher projects an image of William Shakespeare and asks the students if they know who the man in the picture is. Most of them know him but, when they are asked about his works, they mostly mention *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and at a lesser account *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The teacher tells the students about William Shakespeare's figure very briefly. He asks them about their knowledge about the Bard and most of the answers are related to Hamlet's soliloquy *to be or not to be* or Romeo and Juliet's balcony scene.

Presentation:

Now, the teacher asks students “How do you think Hamlet would be today?” And he projects a new picture on the interactive whiteboard where they can see Hamlet taking a selfie with Yorick's skull (<https://sk.pinterest.com/pin/555913147737024671/>), “to selfie or not to selfie”. That would probably be Hamlet’s image today. Then, and taking into account that learners have expressed they knew Hamlet's soliloquy holding the skull and saying “to be or not to be”, as well as Romeo and Juliet's balcony scene, the teacher surprises them by telling that these both events never happened in Shakespeare’s works. The third image projected on the whiteboard is that of “Juliet’s balcony” in Verona, Italy (https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casa_de_Julieta). Then, learners are questioned about the balcony present in the image. They are required to scrutinize the image and especially the architecture of the building. Does the balcony match the style of the facade? Certainly, they achieve the same conclusion: no, it does not. Now the teacher points out that the balcony was added later, as an appealing element for tourists. Thus, students become stunned again as they are told that the balcony scene never took place in Romeo and Juliet. The play only introduces the idea that Juliet is on a higher level than Romeo, but a balcony never appeared in it. Likewise, image number four shows Arnold Schwarzenegger dressed as Hamlet and holding Yorick’s skull and, as students are questioned “What is he about to say?” Their answer is obvious: “To be or not to be”. Again, this is not true, as it never happened like that in Shakespeare’s Hamlet. They are explained that, in that same scene, Hamlet just says *Poor Yorick, I knew him*, and, at the same time, the teacher tells the learners that Hamlet’s famous soliloquy “To be or not to be” takes place in a very distant scene. As a result, the conclusion here is very clear: Don’t take anything for granted. Start from scratch.

Interaction:

Now that we have set aside false myths about the Bard, we can start this second part of the lesson, which is devoted to illustrating the relevance of William Shakespeare’s works in our current society and especially in most blockbusters. To begin with, we remind the students that the two topics in common for Breaking Bad, Peaky Blinders, and Game of Thrones are violence and revenge, which are also the main topics of Shakespeare’s most famous tragedies: *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*, which involve these aforementioned topics and death as well.

For instance, some images will be projected on the whiteboard, all of them targeted to a teenage audience, so most of the learners not only know them but also have already seen them. Among the videos projected, we play the official trailers of *Romeo Must Die* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w500paj_MPU), *Gnomeo, and Juliet* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgO03BFTVSc>), *Hamlet* 2000 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F39CYBE6-Kg>) or *Get Over It* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HV_kGmmqvUQ). Then, they all watch several clips available on Youtube about *Ten Things I hate about you*, *She's the Man*, *Romeo + Juliet*, and *O* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bz1NIOjkJi0>). Before any clip is played, the teacher summarizes the plot the audiovisual work is based on. The last work to be mentioned is *The Lion King*, as it is usually the most surprising element from them. Learning that this movie is based on Hamlet is an eye-opener for them. Besides, the teacher also shows the students two famous advertisements on TV to exemplify Shakespeare's influence on them: *Alfa Romeo Giulietta* and *iPhone Seven*. The former involves a slogan taken from *The Tempest*, *I am such stuff as dreams are made of* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agRelxkDnQ>); the latter implies the famous balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet* as the main context to publicize Apple's latest mobile phone (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jGz3A81yc9I>).

To finish this part of the lesson, the teacher asks students if they know any other examples and most of them mention *The Simpsons* (season fourteen, episode thirteen, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O41bHX7kUPU>), which offers an adaptation of Hamlet. The teacher takes the chance to add here that in *The Simpson*, (season six, episode eighteen), the character of Barney Gumble starts his film with a sentence taken from Othello, *Now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast. That pretty well covers it.* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKVvodPv1vk>). Similarly, some of them mention the recent Netflix production *The King*, based on *Henry V* and Shakespeare's character *Falstaff* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svVykTznk9Q>).

Conclusion

Now, the teacher and students together summarize what they have learned throughout the lesson. They are asked if their perception of William Shakespeare has changed and they all say yes, of course. Shakespeare's topics are present in many contemporary products, and even in productions directly targeted to teenagers. We recall some of the products chosen and projected in class, and, as homework, we ask them to surf the web to find some other audiovisual products which are under Shakespeare's influence. Additionally, as they have chosen *Breaking Bad* and

Peaky Blinders as the best TV series, they are required to note down the most relevant features of the former to connect them to Bard's figure in the following session.

Session 2: “*All Hail Macbeth... or should I say Macmeth?*”

Objectives	Contents	Competences	Related Areas
Stage: b), d), f), g), k) Area: 1), 2), 5), 6), 8), 9)	1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4/1.5/1.6 2.1/ 2.2/ 2.3/ 2.4 Transversal: e), f), g), h)	kcLC+kcMS+ kcDC+kcES+ kcCA+kcLL	History Literature

Warm-up:

Firstly, the teacher asks the students to tell them about the homework derived from session one. He tells the students to sum up *Breaking Bad*'s plot, its main characters, and the topics involved as well. Most of the students participate enthusiastically in summarizing the TV series. For this reason, the teacher moves from different students to create a complete summary of the plot. In turn, from the beginning to the end of the series, they add one or more sentences to a common *Breaking Bad* summary. Next, the teacher asks them if they have read or watched *Macbeth* (play or film), or at least, what they know about the Bard's play. Some students have watched a film about this play, specifically the 2015 version with Michael Fassbender (as it is available on Prime Video, curiously). Nevertheless, all members in the class have already been in touch with this literary work as they all study the optional subject Universal Literature, part of the 1st year Baccalaureate curriculum. As a result, though they have not read the play, they all enjoy some knowledge of the play, its topics, and characters too.

Presentation:

Now, for this second part, the teacher intends to show the students Shakespeare, and specifically *Macbeth*'s influence on *Breaking Bad*. However, it is paramount here telling the students that *Breaking Bad* is not an adaptation of *Macbeth*, as *The Lion King* actually is about *Hamlet* or *Ten Things I Hate About You* is on *The Taming of the Shrew*. Hence, the point here is to demonstrate the influence of Shakespearian topics and characters in one of the best TV series of all time.

After this clarification, the teacher summarizes *Macbeth*'s plot to the students to refresh their minds and ideas about the play. As they have studied this play in another subject, they mostly

know the plot, topics, and characters present in the literary work. Therefore, it is easier for the teacher to present the connections between Macbeth and Breaking Bad.

Interaction:

To begin with, the topics present in Macbeth and Breaking Bad are contrasted: power, ambition, and paranoia. For this purpose, the teacher employs clips of Macbeth (2015) and Breaking Bad. He firstly projects the beginning of Macbeth, described as a brave soldier, and then Walter White in episode one season one, projecting the image (<https://www.pinterest.es/pin/117586240243882120/>). When asked about what they perceive from that photo, they reply “power and money”; so, what are two things that you would regard as a king? That's it, power and money. Secondly, he shows the resemblance of the two monologues concerning their first murder (King Duncan and Krazy-8 for Macbeth and Walter respectively), and how they both justify murder. Thirdly, the teacher clarifies the correlation concerning the symbols present in Macbeth and Breaking Bad: the prophecy of the witches for Macbeth and Walter receiving the news about his lung cancer; or Macbeth's imagining his power as a king and Walter's contemplation of the rolled-up cash on TV, two events that show how ambition governs them. Eventually, to demonstrate how ambition consumes both protagonists, two clips concerning Breaking Bad are projected, those where Walter says, *I did it for me*, and *We are family*, which have already been mentioned above in a previous section. Regarding the topic of paranoia, the teacher links it with ambition again, as it is the fear of losing his empire that raises this paranoia in both Walter and Macbeth. Firstly, the teacher counts Macbeth's killings, including Duncan, Banquo, and his family too. At this point, most of the students agree with the idea of rejecting Macbeth as a violent man as he kills his companion and his family. However, this feeling is not the same when talking about Walter, though the teacher mentions all the killings he directly or indirectly commits: nine people in jail, Gus Fring, Hector Salamanca, Lydia, and, especially Mike. These last two killings are the ones that made some of them change their minds about Walter. In order to exemplify Walter's ruthless ambition, the teacher plays the clips mentioned above, stating that it was ambition as well as the paranoia of losing their empires and power that moved both Walter and Macbeth. Additionally, as they are asked when this paranoia begins, the teacher projects one of their preferred images concerning the TV series: Walter White in underwear holding a gun in the middle of the desert as the beginning of the paranoia that will rule him later in further seasons of the TV-series. (<https://www.pinterest.es/pin/117586240243882120/>).

To finish this section, there is a comparison between the two tragic heroes. The students are questioned why do we connect with them despite their evil deeds? And, when does this

connection break and so our perception of them changes?. In the case of Walter White, this shift starts when he leaves Lydia to die and it is reinforced as he kills his former companion Mike. In the case of Macbeth, this happens when he kills Banquo and his family. Thus, the teacher explains to them the idea of the tragic hero, a concept that comprises Walter and Macbeth. Besides, the similarities between Walter and Macbeth are supported by projecting Macbeth's monologue *Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow* as well as Walter's mentioning it; how they both ponder the pros and cons of committing murder (Duncan and Krazy-8 respectively); how they feel as invincible for distinctive reasons (*a man born of no woman* and cooking the purest meth in the country); and how they both accept death as inevitable since Macbeth keeps under control though he discovers that Macduff is *no man of woman born* and, similarly, when Walter finds out that his tumour has shrunk by eighty percent, continues on his path to control the meth trade anyway.

Conclusion:

As a routine, teachers, and students summarize what they have discussed in class and they express their opinions about the topics developed. A few students mention some other examples of possible tragic heroes and some other search for other resemblances between the two works contrasted. Finally, as homework, the teacher asks the students to prepare a summary of *Peaky Blinders* and a report about its highlights. Again, it will be contrasted to *Macbeth* in the next session.

Lesson 3: “Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown” (Henry IV, Part II, Act III, Scene I)

Objectives	Contents	Competences	Related Areas
Stage: b), d), f), g), k) Area: 1), 2), 5), 6), 8), 9)	1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4/1.5/1.6 2.1/ 2.2/ 2.3/ 2.4 Transversal: e), f), g), h)	kcLC+kcMS+kc DC+kcES+kcCA +kcLL	History Literature

Warm-up:

the teacher asks again about the homework derived from session one. He tells the students to sum up *Peaky Blinders* plot, its main characters, and the topics involved as well. Most of the students participate in summarizing the TV series. As in lesson two, the teacher moves from

different students to create a complete summary of the plot. In turn, from the beginning to the end of the series, they add one or more sentences to a common Peaky Blinders summary. As the students have shown in lesson two their knowledge of Macbeth, and this same knowledge has been increased within the previous lesson, it is much easier for them to check the influence of this play in Peaky Blinders than in Breaking Bad.

Presentation:

Now, the teacher explains to the students that Peaky Blinders is not an adaptation of Macbeth, though its influence is reflected in the TV series. As Macbeth has already been summarized and reviewed in lesson two, this stage of the lesson is quite short as the teacher aims his students to search for evidence of this influence and express their views and ideas by themselves.

Interaction:

To begin with, the topics of power, ambition, and paranoia are mentioned by the students, who even mention several scenes in the TV series. Thus, the famous quotation by Thomas Shelby “There is no rest for me in this world. Perhaps in the next”, appears as an example of their ambition and search for power. Furthermore, how he defeats the Lee family, kills the powerful gangster Billy Kimber (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mkXOjdLenM>), how he negotiates with Winston Churchill (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCs36W2ZCnc>), deals with Russian aristocracy (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SO_GPhTQPs8), gangsters from London or even gets engaged in politics (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uhCqMyKqy8>), are presented as undeniable examples of Tommy’s ambition. He and Macbeth are described as equally ambitious men who need living that way to feel completely alive. In order to expose this idea, the teacher plays a clip of season four, episode six (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPdXb9ys9zA>), which displays Tommy's depression after a time of retirement and rest. He needs to live like a gangster to fuel his life. These topics are connected with the idea of paranoia by the students as well, mentioning the fact that Tommy also sees a ghost throughout the series, that of his dead wife, even talking to her and maintaining conversations together. Tommy, as Macbeth, is regarded as a “sufferer” too, talking about his nightmares (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Koo_djT6GH4), and dead friends and relatives (Danny, Freddy Thorne, or his brother John in season 4). They perceive them both as violent men back home from war and they regard those nightmares as a consequence of war.

It is here when the idea of the tragic hero rises, they agree with the idea that we all sympathize with him despite his evil actions. As in the case of Walter White in *Breaking Bad*, students acknowledge Tommy Shelby's violence and they even recognize blood as part of the TV series (note the explicit blood in the previous clip when Tommy kills Billy Kimber), as the teacher plays a part of its famous soundtrack on the whiteboard. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGD2N5hJ2e0>). When asked about the development of Thomas Shelby as a character in the series, most of the students remark that is progressively turning into a much darker character, as he showed ambition and illusion for a happier future in the first three seasons. On the contrary, after his wife Grace is murdered in season four, he becomes a gloomy character that perceives life more as a burden than a pleasure. As a result, the teacher plays two essential clips to illustrate Thomas Shelby's evolution: the final minutes of the last episode in season two (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B9O6dHRGIU>), and the last final minutes of the last episode in season five (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnOck3s06fQ>).

Conclusion

In this final part, we again follow the routine of summarizing together what we have discussed in class and so students express their opinions about the topics developed. Interestingly, a group of students suggests how Tommy Shelby gets engaged in politics, especially as the fascist party is present in the TV series, something they depict as controversial. Here, the teacher explains to them that *Macbeth* was also a polemical play, as it was first performed in 1606, a year after the *Gunpowder Plot* (1605), so introducing part of the British history in the debate too. To conclude, they are told to have a look at the last audiovisual production of the lesson: *Warm Bodies* (available in Amazon Prime and mostly on Youtube).

Lesson 4: Warm Bodies. Zombie Love

Objectives	Contents	Competences	Related Areas
Stage: b), d), f), g), k) Area: 1), 2), 5), 6), 8), 9)	1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4/1.5/1.6 2.1/ 2.2/ 2.3/ 2.4 3.1/ 3.2 / 3.3/ 3.4 / 3.5 / 3.6 / 3.7 Transversal: e), f), g), h)	kcLC+kcMS+ kcDC+kcES+ kcCA+kcLL	History Literature

Warm-up:

The teacher asks the students the literary work on which this audiovisual product is based and they all know it is *Romeo and Juliet*. Most of them have already watched this film and they all know the literary work, so the teacher sets it in time and, to demonstrate its relevance, mentions several adaptations to the screen, searching for the most surprising for them, such as *West Side Story* (1962), or especially *Montoyas y Tarantos* (1989), a Spanish version set in the gipsy culture.

Presentation:

The teacher informs the students that the film *Warm Bodies* will be projected in class in several clips that last about thirty minutes. The teacher will stop the reproduction sometimes to interact with the students about what they are watching on the screen.

Interaction:

Several clips are played on the board to introduce the varied characters in the play. Then, as they are questioned, the students are able to find out the resemblance between Julie and Juliet easily; immediately they connect the names “R” and Romeo, and, utilizing some help granted by the teacher, they also link “M” to Mercutio, Juliet's father to Mr. Capulet and Nora to the nurse.

When they are asked about the main topics in the movie, love is the most repeated answer, and they all discuss the similarities and differences (especially the end of the play) between the film and the play. Eventually, they get to the balcony scene, the one which never happened in Shakespeare's play, which illustrates not only the connection between the play and the film but also the contemporaneity of the topics developed by the Bard four centuries ago.

Conclusion:

The assorted aspects developed throughout the session are now recalled and the teacher recalls the students to prepare a set of arguments for an opinion essay they will have to write in the following session. They will enjoy forty minutes to do that task, so they must revise connectors, vocabulary, and the outline for this type of essay: *OREO* (opinion, reasons, examples, and opinion again).

Lesson 5. Your Turn

Objectives	Contents	Competences	Related Areas
Stage: b), d), f), g), k) Area: 1), 2), 5), 6), 8), 9)	3.1/ 3.2 / 3.3/ 3.4 / 3.5 / 3.6/ 3.7 4.1/ 4.2 / 4.3/ 4.4 / 4.5 / 4.6/ 4.7 Transversal: e), f), g), h)	kcLC+kcMS+kc DC+kcES+kcCA +kcLL	History Literature

Warm-up:

The teacher recalls the students the task to do today: writing an opinion essay on “Is Shakespeare the most relevant screenwriter now?”

Presentation:

The teacher displays the guidelines to fulfill the required task: They will enjoy 45 minutes to do that, they will have to employ the grammar structures studied throughout the school year, they must be specific, avoiding to use “general words” (think, people, because, do, have), as well as repetitions. The structure must be that of an opinion essay and they will have to employ the required linking words and vocabulary. They are also explained the writing rubric to assess their works, paying attention to spelling, grammar, content, and structure.

Interaction:

The students create their opinion essay in class

Conclusion:

The teacher asks them orally for a “yes” or “no” and some arguments to support their answers very briefly. Next, he requires them to prepare for a debate on the same topic that will be carried out in groups in the following session.

Lesson 6: Debate

Objectives	Contents	Competences	Related Areas
Stage: b), d), f), g), k) Area: 1), 2), 5), 6), 8), 9)	1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4/1.5/1.6 2.1/ 2.2/ 2.3/ 2.4 Transversal: e), f), g), h)	kcLC+kcMS+ kcDC+kcES+ kcCA+kcLL	History Literature

Warm-up: The teacher remembers the students of the several topics dealt with throughout the didactic unit, as they will have to be discussed in the debate.

Presentation: The teacher set the rules for the debate: he divides the students into groups of four members each, they all must participate in the discussion, they must respect each other in terms of turns, register, and tone, they will participate in turn and they must support their stances with ideas, arguments, and examples

Interaction: The debate takes place in class

Conclusion: Both possible views are summarized: for and against. The students realize that, although they may have opposite opinions, they can reach an agreement concerning some aspects.

6. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

As it has been stated at the beginning of this Master Dissertation, its main objective is to bring William Shakespeare's figure closer to students of upper-secondary and Baccalaureate students through revealing his presence and influence on their favourite TV series. To begin with, our students' perceptions have changed concerning William Shakespeare as their concept and view of the Bard has moved from a distant position at the beginning of the didactic unit to conscience of the relevance and presence of his literary works in current productions. Their written production in session five as well as their oral interventions in session six reflect an evolution in his understanding of Shakespeare's figure and his works. As one of our aims was to foster their critical thinking, through the didactic unit proposed, students have been able to analyze an existing reality from a different stance. The assorted ideas expressed and developed in their written and spoken production (sessions five and six respectively) show a wide range of opinions, ideas, and perspectives that set the basis for the use of this critical thinking in future activities.

On the other hand, it has also been proven the suitability of TV series to teach a second language as they have revealed themselves as a useful instrument to offer authentic materials and language use in real cultural contexts, to introduce cultural elements in our lessons and, additionally, to motivate our students, as they get the chance to approach the English language in a new and original form far from the traditional one implying textbooks.

Eventually, we have displayed a didactic unit that develops the objectives, contents, and competencies present in the current Spanish curriculum for Baccalaureate, contributing to the enhancement of both oral (debate and interactions) and written skills (opinion essay). Thus, we have exemplified the previous theoretical assumptions using a didactic unit conceived as a form of integrating culture and language in the English classroom. For this reason, we have incorporated new means to our methodology (TV series), to make this unit as attractive and close to our students' real world as possible. As the aforementioned literature review displays, TV series are probably the most fashionable way for them to get in touch with real language use (and culture too, indeed), so the incorporation of this new means to our work as second language teachers is more a requirement than a choice. Moreover, the variety of social and cultural topics scrutinized and debated during and after watching the TV series together with the completion of the required tasks, make our students aware of the relevance to know and respect other cultures, and it certainly expands their perception of the world beyond their own culture too.

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