

Analysis of the literary adaptations of *Hamlet* to be used as teaching material in the classroom

Análisis de las adaptaciones literarias de *Hamlet* para su uso didáctico en el aula

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Abstract

The reading of literary classics in the classroom is not exempt from controversy among teachers. However, due to its relevance in the humanistic formation of students and, in order to solve the possible obstacles derived from its reading by a young reader, literary adaptations arise, which are also susceptible to discrepancies among scholars. Along these lines, the general objective of the study focuses on analyzing different literary adaptations of *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* by William Shakespeare, to study the procedure of adaptation or recreation followed in each one of them. The design of the research focuses on a descriptive methodology based on the technique of content analysis. The sample consists of seven adaptations in which the generic, intertextual and linguistic diversity has been procured. The qualitative analysis program Atlas.ti is employed to conduct the processing of data according to the following categories: level/age, thematic comparison, gender, format and linguistic style. Finally, the specificity and didactic opportunity of the analyzed adaptations is shown, in order to make a suitable use of the literary classic in the classroom, according to its readers and the corresponding teaching needs.

Resumen

La lectura de los clásicos en el aula no está exenta de polémica entre el profesorado. Sin embargo, debido a su relevancia en la formación humanística del alumnado y con el fin de solventar los posibles obstáculos derivados de su lectura por un joven lector, surgen las adaptaciones literarias, susceptibles también de discrepancias entre los estudiosos. En esta línea, el objetivo general del estudio se centra en analizar diferentes adaptaciones literarias de *La tragedia de Hamlet, Príncipe de Dinamarca* de William Shakespeare, para estudiar el procedimiento de adaptación o recreación seguido en cada una de ellas. El diseño de la investigación se centra en una metodología de corte descriptivo, basada en la técnica del análisis de contenido. La muestra se compone de siete adaptaciones en las que se ha procurado la diversidad genérica, intertextual y lingüística. Se emplea el programa de análisis cualitativo Atlas.ti, para proceder al tratamiento de los datos en función de las siguientes categorías: nivel/edad, comparación temática, género, formato y estilo lingüístico. Finalmente, se muestra la especificidad y oportunidad didáctica de las adaptaciones analizadas, con el fin de un empleo adecuado del clásico en el aula en función de sus lectores y las necesidades docentes correspondientes.

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Introduction

Reading classic literature in the classroom is somehow contentious among teachers, whose task of selecting texts is not easy as they must at all times consider both the aim of the receptive activity in each specific context in the classroom regarding the formation of the reading intertext (Mendoza, 2001) and the principle that must guide literary training: promoting the reading habit (Ballester, 2015). The texts selected have to be appealing enough so that the readers get involved in the task following their own interests: their personal experiences from early ages in connection with reading will condition the students throughout their lives.

According to Cerrillo (2013), reading classical texts has to be included in the individual's humanistic training, as

much of the world's culture and tradition is contained in such texts because they are models of literary writing, they are part of the cultural heritage handed down by our forebears and because they contributed to the creation of a cultural imaginary that has given rise to a peculiar reading of the world throughout different ages (p. 17).

On the other hand, before suggesting reading any classic, it is advisable to reflect on the relevant level of education based on the students' literature maturity, since the use of issues that are out of time and far from the students' own experiences, combined with difficulties when it comes to decode, understand and interpret a certain text with a complex language that presents lexical variants may have a negative, unintended effect on young readers. Nevertheless, the issue pointed out by Navarro (2006) in this sense should be noted: "If classic books are not accessible to children and also to many adults, should we resign to the fact that these books are to remain closed lying on the shelves and to become mere names in the books of history of literature?" (p. 19).

Literary adaptations are created in order to solve these potential inconveniences and

barriers, as a comfortable way to bring classics closer to the students in their early ages. It is not surprising that the authors disagree on the benefits of adaptations, as explained by Cerrillo (2013, pp. 21-24) or Soriano (1995, pp. 35-49), because whilst some authors believe they help to bring the classics closer to the youths, others believe that the classics must remain unchanged and that they should only be accessed upon acquiring the appropriate literary skills.

The adaptations and translations of canonical books for adults aimed at a child and a young audience involve a series of modifications in the discursive strategy as a result of an intended pedagogical purpose, an interest of the implied reader in the text stemming therefrom, the adaptation to a different reception context (different to the production context), the qualitative and quantitative reduction of the text or a generic palimpsest (Genette, 1982) of the original classic, as already studied by Postigo (1994), Pascua (1998), Toledano (2001-2002), O'Sullivan (2003) or Kick (2014), *inter alia*. In this sense, in this new way of re-writing, we can identify the social function of adaptations compared to the educational process: it is essential to identify the framework where the problem lies and to structure literary education at the present time, according to "a socio-literary phenomenon" (Sotomayor, 2005, p. 219) inherent to our history. On his part, Ramon (2016) already pointed out that forgoing these classics would result in a "unquestionable pauperisation of the individual's culture and, therefore, of society as a whole" (p. 103).

There is no doubt that one should be extremely cautious in this field and analyse the selection of each adapted classic that is to be studied in the classroom following a didactic-philological criterion. Therefore, this study advocates for the use of adaptations in the educational context, taking their value and their guiding role in the teaching-learning process into account. Adaptations, translation and all sort of transformations of texts hold a privi-

leged position among children and youths, i.e. readers who are undergoing a training process. For this reason, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* by William Shakespeare, a classic of world literature, deserves being read by young people in order to transfer cultural heritage, notably using re-creations that make the story itself grow by other means: thorough an illustrated album, using the format of a comic book or through a narrative presentation of an entertaining and pleasant tale. It is interesting to see adaptations as a type of trans-textual relationship between a previous text or hypotext and a transformed text or hypertext. In the words of Ortega y Gasset (1983):

There is one only way to save a classic: using it without any further consideration for our salvation -i.e., omitting its classicism, bringing it to us, appeasing it, inoculating a new pulse with the blood that runs through our veins, the ingredients thereof being our passions... and our problems. Instead of being centenary in the centenary, one should revive classic books by immersing it in existence (p. 44).

Therefore, the overall purpose of this study focuses on analysing the different adaptations of *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, by William Shakespeare, in order to study the adaptation or recreation process followed in each one of them.

The overall purpose is divided into the following specific objectives:

- Establishing the recommended level or age of implied readers based on the adaptation performed to read the classic.
- Comparing the adaptations from a thematic point of view, in order to discover the characters and events that each one of them recreates.
- Discovering the type of generic palimpsests performed in the adaptation-recreation of the classic under study.
- Analysing the format of the adaptations compared to the combination of the textual and illustrated elements used.
- Studying the linguistic style of the adapted texts at a syntactic and lexical level.

Method

The design of this research focuses on a methodology of a descriptive nature, based on the content-analysis technique.

Sample

The sample is made up of seven literary adaptations of *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, by William Shakespeare. They were selected to seek generic, intertextual and linguistic diversity, because the purpose is to analyse a wide range of texts of this famous work in the field of children's and youth's literature. Therefore, a non-probability sample based on intention and opinion was performed (Arnal, Del-Rincón & Latorre, 1994).

In order to refer to each text throughout the study more easily, we opted to assign a letter in increasing order based on difficulty, as analysed in the results section (table 1).

Plan to analyse the information

The study of the texts was performed through the Atlas.ti software, which allowed for a qualitative analyses of the adaptations of Shakespeare's work. This tool made it possible to create the relevant hermeneutic units to analyse the information through prior categorisation of the interest elements, already identified in the specific objectives: a) level/age; b) thematic comparison; c) genre; d) format; e) language style (syntax and lexicon). The results of the analyses have been presented both through one of the semantic networks created by the aforesaid computer software, as well as through tables that clarify the comprehension of those data interpreted.

Results

The results divided into the aforesaid categories are presented below. It should be noted that, although this classification by level or age established could be determined after the

Table 1

List of the primary sources under study

	ADAPTATION	TITLE	TRANSLATION	ILLUSTRATION	PUBLISHER
A	Marcia Williams (2002)	"HAMLET, Prince of Denmark" from <i>Tales from Shakespeare</i> (p. 8-11)	Ana Herrera	Marcia Williams	Acanto
B	Andrew Matthews (2008)	"HAMLET, Revenge for treason" from <i>A Shakespeare story</i> (pp. 90-103)	Carlos Mayor	Angela Barret	Juventud
C	Charles Lamb & Mary Lamb (2006)	"Hamlet" from <i>Tales from Shakespeare</i> (p. 95-121)	Andrea Morales	Joëlle Jolivet	El Aleph
D	Charles Lamb & Mary Lamb (1991- 1 st ed. 1985-)	"Hamlet, Prince of Denmark" from <i>Tales from Shakespeare</i> (p. 274-290)	Andrea Morales	M.ª Rosa Perrotti	Anaya
E	Lourdes Íñiguez (2016)	<i>Hamlet</i>	-	Óscar T. Pérez	Anaya
F	Derek Sellen (2008)	<i>Hamlet, Prince of Denmark</i>	English version	Fabio Visitin	Black Cat & Vicens Vives
G	William Shakespeare (2008)	Hamlet	Rosario Outes Bilingual Version	-	Planeta DeAgostini-La Vanguardia

1 In text G, the name of the author of the adaptation is unknown, although the book is entitled "abbreviated and simplified versions" in the inside cover.

comparative study of all the categories, it would be advisable to present and explain the results, according to the specific objectives set forth and with increasing difficulty of the literary adaptations worked on.

Results of specific objective 1: recommended age

The results of this first objective are shown in table 2, differentiating between the information provided by the publisher on the text under study in two dimensions (a. Language level; b. Age) and the analysis of this research, based on didactic criteria compatible with the results of the objectives set forth below.

This way, the adaptations by Williams (A), Matthews (B), Lamb & Lamb (2006) (2006) (C), Lam & Lamb (1991) (D) are classified in order of increasing difficulty. Adaptations C and D have the same author and translator, although its linguistic study allows for such ranking, as stated hereinafter. Regarding adaptation E, its publisher is the only one that specifies the

recommended age to read it (above 14 years); in contrast, the language level required is not specified.

Adaptation F is in English and its publisher suggests that the level of foreign language required to understand the story should be B1.1 (basic intermediate). Similarly, the publisher specifies that this adaptation can be used to prepare for the Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET). Upon interpreting it, the information provided by the publisher is confirmed and it is recommended for students with B1 level. As analysed hereinafter, it can be concluded that, since it is a comic book, the reader can access the story through a less text.

Concerning adaptation G, which is a bilingual version of the classic, the level of foreign language required to understand the story is also specified (higher-intermediate). Nevertheless, the level of Spanish language required is not specified. Upon analysing the text, the level established is B2; therefore, it is the most difficult adaptation of those included in this study.

Table 2

Language level or recommended age

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Publisher	Language level	-	-	-	-	-	B1.1	Upper intermediate
	Age	-	-	-	-	14+	-	-
Research	Age/foreign language level	6 - 7	7 - 8	10 - 11	11 - 12	12 - 13	B1	B2

Results of specific objective 2: thematic comparison

Most adaptations share the following characters: the ghost of Hamlet’s father, King Claudius, Hamlet, Polonius, Ophelia, Gertrude... Nevertheless, the narrative level varies in the case of certain secondary characters, as some of them are omitted in some adaptations (Osric, Cornelius and Voltimand, the priest...), while their roles are referred to in other adaptations, although their proper names are not always mentioned, such as those of the sentries (Marcellus, Barnardo and Francisco). In this sense, the characters presented in each adaptation are shown in table 3, by highlighting the relevant cell.

Just as with the presentation and the characters, each adaptations deals with the main events of the original plot differently, depending on the narrative specificity and the way certain controversial issues are dealt with: suicide, death, revenge, chastity... The events referred to in each adaptation are listed in table , by highlighting the relevant cells.

Results of specific objective 3: genre

As shown in the semantic network of figure 2, adaptation A is a comic book made up of a sequence of cartoons where the story is told. Nevertheless, three different sections can be identified in the text: a) the voices of the characters appearing in the cartoons where Shakespeare’s adapted text are reproduced; b) the explanation of the scene shown in each cartoon through boxes at the bottom (omnisci-

ent narrator); and c) the “bustling comments of the audience” (as seen in the back cover itself) through word balloons in the page margins that frame the cartoons.

As far as the third section is concerned, it has a special feature: the audience attending the performance of the theatre play shown in the cartoons is also incorporated under the form of a comic book. In this sense, both the first page of the book addressed to the “dear audience” and the back cover thereof, the different works the book is made up of are performed in the Globe Theatre in London. Therefore, the audience, which is distributed in galleries, comment on what is happening on scene and sometimes try to add a funny touch to the tragedy itself: “This is such a depressing beginning” (Williams, 2002, p. 8), “Come on...take revenge!” (p. 10), “I hope these cannons do not reach the theatre” (p. 11).

The text of adaptation B follows a predominantly narrative pattern, whereby brief dialogues among the characters are also included. The adaptation is a first-person story told by Hamlet himself, who is acting as narrator and main character: “Ophelia and I love each other since we were kids. Before my father passed away I was totally certain that she would be my wife someday, but suddenly everything changed. There was no room for love inside my heart” (Matthews, 2008, p. 95).

Adaptations C and D are tales and their narrator is omniscient in both cases. There are only eight brief dialogues of the characters in them.

Table 3
 Characters appearing in the adaptations

CHARACTERS	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Ghost / spectre of Hamlet's father (King Hamlet)							
Hamlet							
Claudius							
Gertrude							
Polonius							
Group of actors / Wittenberg group street actors							
Ophelia							
Horatio							
Two spies / sentries / courtier / Hamlet's friends (Rosencrantz & Guildenstern)							
Danish pirates							
Laertes							
King Fortinbras							
Prince of Norway (Fortinbras)							
Sentries (Marcellus, Barnardo and Francisco)							
Osric							
Cornelius and Voltimand							
Reynaldo							
Priest							
Two gravediggers / peasants							
Norwegian captain							
English ambassadors							
Ladies							
Gentlemen							
Soldiers							
Messengers							
Sailors / fishermen							
Servant							

The text of adaptation E belongs to drama, to the tragedy sub-genre more specifically. The work is divided into five acts that are in turn divided into scenes. The plot can be represented easily by the students, as quotes (in italics) are reflected on the actions that must be performed by the actors, with a summary at the beginning of each scene.

Adaptation F is a comic book, made up of cartoons, word balloons for the characters' interventions and boxes that supplement, clarify and add a meaning to the plot from the point of view of the omniscient narrator.

The text of adaptation G has a drama pattern, made up of the characters' dialogues. This work belongs to the tragedy sub-genre and is divided into five acts. Quotes are read although they are not in italics in this case.

Results of specific objective 4: format

Given that adaptation A is a comic book, illustrations are especially important, they are not an accessory and help the reader understand the story (figure 2.) There is some kind of *horror vacui*, as information is also provided in the margins through texts and in different bright, colourful pictures, if we take the three types of sections previously mentioned that make up the pages of this book. The characters have caricature-like shapes, with animal features in some cases. Furthermore, Shakespeare himself holding a quill in his hand can be found in the audience of the margins, entering into the following caveat: "Kids, you are diverting my audience" (Williams, 2002, p. 10).

On the other hand, while the dialogues of the audience in the margins have the traditional word balloon type, the link between the voices

Table 4
 Remarkable events referred to in the adaptations

EVENTS	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Hamlet says his legendary sentence: "To be or not to be..."							
It can be noticed that Hamlet is below 20 approximately							
Hamlet wished to avenge his dead father, murdered by Claudius							
Hamlet feels betrayed due to his mother's incest							
It is said that the king died because he was bitten by a snake							
The death of King Hamlet is represented by the group of actors							
Horatio sleeps while the ghost shows up							
Horatio and the other sentries of the castle are able to see the ghost							
The soldiers are standing guard because Fortinbras may invade them							
Hamlet is the only one who can communicate with the ghost							
The ghost shows up in war armour							
Hamlet expresses his wish for suicide							
Hamlet loves Ophelia							
Laertes and Polonius push Ophelia so that she preserves her purity							
Laertes and Polonius advise Ophelia not to take Hamlet's words seriously							
Polonius is a hardly recurring character							
Claudius instructs Polonius to spy on Hamlet							
Hamlet becomes aware of the secret meetings held against him by the king							
Claudius regrets his actions and prays in the church							
Hamlet explicitly regrets Polonius' death							
The spies do not know that the letter is Hamlet's death sentence							
Hamlet replaces his name by that of the spies in his death							
Hamlet fights the pirates							
The pirates kill all the crew excepting Hamlet							
The two spies flee to England							
Ophelia's death is doubtful / it is suggested that she may have killed herself							
Hamlet and Laertes fight in the graveyard							
Gertrude dies after drinking from the poisoned wine cup							
Claudius is stabbed by Hamlet and obliged to drink from the poisoned wine cup							
Hamlet instructs Horatio to tell everyone about his story							
Hamlet tells Horatio that Fortinbras may reign over Denmark							
Fortinbras pays tribute to the fallen with a 21-gun salute							

of the characters in the cartoons and the picture of the speaker is characterised by the use of the integral sign used in mathematics, sloped depending on the location of both the text and the character.

In last place, this adaptation is included in the second place of a compilation of another six works by Shakespeare. The text is presented on four pages that are larger than those of other adaptations under study, which, combined with the aforesaid pictures, is very appealing for the reader and follows a clear commercial criterion.

Adaptation B has significantly fewer illustrations. Nevertheless, there is a picture in each

double page: Elsinore Castle, Ophelia, Queen Gertrude holding a chalice, Hamlet with his mother, Hamlet's death... The figures illustrated by Barret are realistic; on the other hand, the atmosphere of the different locations mainly has dark colours. These illustrations, framed by rectangular shapes, play a secondary role as they are not essential to understand the text and represent a few characters only.

The text is included in a compilation of another seven works by Shakespeare. As an annex, the following chapters appear at the end thereof: "Shakespeare and the Globe Theatre" (Matthews, 2008, p. 116-119) and "Angela Barret

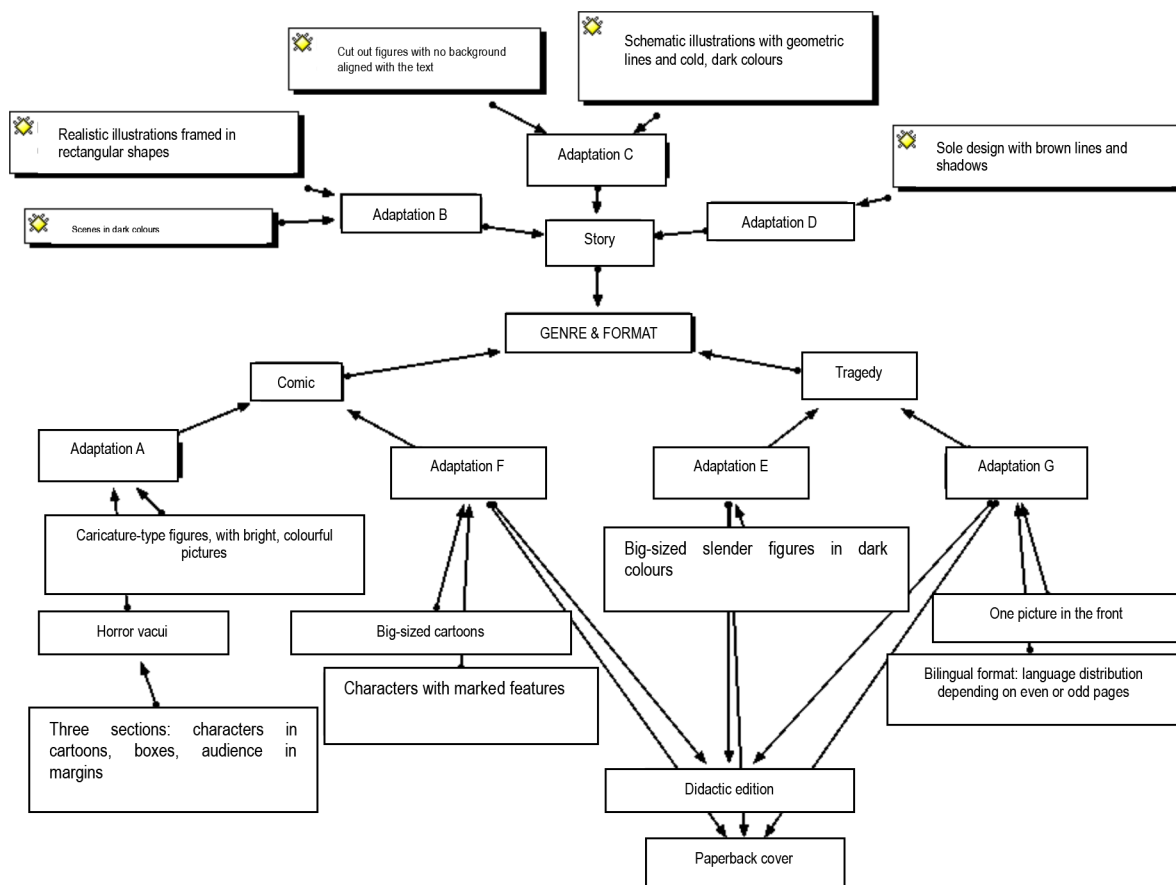


Figure 1. Semantic network of the type of genre and format of the adaptations.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

comments on the illustrations“ (Matthews, 2008, p. 119-124).

The schematic illustrations of adaptation C show cut-out figures that are aligned with the text, with no background or context where they can be placed and geometric lines and cold, dark colours that render little realism to each picture represented figure 3). The illustrations represent some scenes of the text every two pages: Hamlet haunted with his hands on his head; the vision of the spectre by Hamlet, Horatio and Marcellus while standing guard; Hamlet writing letters to Ophelia... This adaptation is the fourth title of a batch of six that make up the book, starting with a foreword about the brothers who performed this adaptation, Charles and Mary Lamb (2006, p. 5-9).

Adaptation D is particularly different from the previous one given the small number of

pictures: there is only one picture where Hamlet, Laertes and Ophelia’s gravedigger, with lines and shadows in brown (Lamb & Lamb, 1991, p. 288); and also the small size of the letter, as the story is presented in one chapter of seventeen pages compared to adaptation C, which is made up of twenty-seven pages and has almost the same text and page size. The book includes twenty works by the author and includes a foreword explaining the aim of those stories aimed at young audiences (Lamb & Lamb, 1991, p. 7-9), a didactic schedule at the end of the work about the time, the persons who performed the adaptation, Shakespeare and his works (pp. 325-349) together with a biography of Charles Lamb (p. 351).

Adaptation E is made up of 144 pages with big sized slender figures in dark colours, where pictures are only a complement as they are not essential to understand the story. The text is



Figure 2. Adaptation A: example of format
Source: Tales from Shakespeare (Williams, 2002).

framed between an Introduction that describes the socio-cultural context, the English renaissance theatre and the tragedy genre (Íñiguez, 2016, p. 5-15) together with a Schedule that presents the life and works of the author, sources of the text, characters, style and adaptations (p. 133-144). The cover of this text and the following two are paperback, in line with a design aimed at older readers.

The illustrations of the comic book of adaptation F accurately represent the characters' emotions and expressions. The text and the pictures complement each other, they are interdependent to understand the plot. The cartoons have a considerable size (if one takes into account that the book's size is one sheet approximately), as in most cases there are two rows of cartoons, finding only one cartoon on each side quite often and three cartoons only occasionally (figure 4).

On the other hand, it is a full didactic edition divided into six parts, each one of them followed by language and reading comprehension exercises. Furthermore, there are explanatory texts about Shakespeare, Hamlet, the cinema and the characters of the work both at the beginning and the end of the book. This publication is also complemented by a CD that includes a sound recording of the text and a section for games and language exercise.

There are no illustrations in adaptation G, as it only includes a picture of Glenn Close and Mel Gibson in the front cover from the film version of the 1990 classic directed by Franco Zeffirelli. On its part, the text is substantially important, as it is a bilingual book with the original language version on even pages and with its translation into Spanish on odd pages. This format allows students to read the text more easily, although



Figure 3. Adaptation C: example of schematic illustrations.

Source: *Tales from Shakespeare* (Lamb & Lamb, 2006).

it can also be used to practice simultaneous translation.

Results of specific objective 5: linguistic style (syntax and lexicon)

Adaptation A combines short and longer sentences, although the former clearly predominate; they are more suitable for beginning readers as their syntax is less complex. The vocabulary used varies depending on its location and function in the adaptation as a whole. The characters' voices of the cartoons have a more complex, solemn and formal style, which in turn makes it more difficult to understand the scene somehow: "It was said that I was bitten by a snake while I was sleeping in my garden... but be it known by you, my honourable young friend, that the snake that bit your father is wearing his crown now" (Williams, 2002, p. 8). Instead, the dialogues are explained narratively in the boxes and thus read more easily: "While Hamlet, prince of Denmark, was standing guard with his friend Horatio in the battlements of Elsinore castle, the ghost of his father showed up. He said he was murdered by his brother Claudius and ask him to take revenge" (Williams, 2002, p. 8).

In adaptation B, long subordinate sentences are predominant: "My friend Horatio met me at a certain distance of the castle, whose face showed sorrow and this is why I knew he was going to tell me some bad news" (Matthews, 2008, p. 99). As far as vocabulary is concerned, despite the use of words such as "mischief", "frigid", "rapier", "onslaught" or "reverence", it can be easily read though, in contrast with a potential syntax complexity.

The translation by Morales of adaptation C is derived from the original French edition of the publisher Naïve livres. Most sentences are subordinate and are remarkably difficult in terms of syntax: "At the beginning, Laertes just trifled with Hamlet and allowed him gain some advantage, which was hypocritically praised and magnified by the king, in a toast to Hamlet's success and encouraged him (Lamb & Lamb, 2006, p. 119). A wide range of connectors is used, and the vocabulary is complex ("stem", "expel", "induce"), with no footnotes that clarify its meaning.

The text of adaptation D is practically the same as that of adaptation C, also translated by Morales, although in this case it is translated



Figure 4. Adaptation F: example of format.
Source: Hamlet, Prince of Denmark (Sellen, 2008).

from the original in English of the first edition published by William Godwin, as stated at the beginning (Lamb & Lamb, 1991, p. 4). The story told is not so refined, in other words, the text is even longer and descriptive; sentences, digressions and words that were not included in adaptation C are included in this adaptation but are not essential to understand the story.

In adaptation E, the sentences are subordinate. The vocabulary used is solemn and formal; therefore, this adaptation is aimed at proficient reader with superior skills. It is a didactic edition that includes the explanation on the lexical meaning of certain words and expressions, as well as contextual and cultural

references in the footer: “Priam: last king of Troy who defended it against the Greeks” (Íñiguez, 2016, p. 57).

Adaptation F requires a command of English language equivalent or above level B1. There are no complex sentences in this text, although it includes a wide range of verb tenses: simple future, past perfect, present continuous... The vocabulary is difficult and in line with a didactic edition, as explanatory notes on the meaning of certain words and even illustrations referring thereto are found in the footer, such as the picture of a mermaid followed by this word as the only explanation (Sellen, 2008, p. 69).

As far as syntax is concerned, the bilingual version of adaptation G is quite difficult as it has long sentences. The text in English has a high level of complexity that includes, for didactic purposes, footnotes explaining not only the meaning of words or expressions but also aspects related to the style or the context: “Scholar: pundit. At that time, people believed that spirits and everything related to the next world used Latin to communicate, a language studies by pundits only” (Shakespeare, 2008, p. 6); “Anon: soon, shortly. Literary” (p. 28).

Conclusions

According to the results obtained, the classical work by William Shakespeare Hamlet has been adapted to trainee readers through a series of literary recreations that fall within children’s and youth literature. This classic has undergone different amendments in the adaptations under study, which show the specificity and didactic suitability of the texts based on the recipients and the relevant teaching needs, divided into levels and ages.

As far as the thematic suitability of this classic, the subject of death is dealt with in several books of children’s and youth literature and even in animation from different points of view, such as the character’s maturation, the sense of loss, betrayal, family relationships and both positive and negative emotions (sadness, anger, revenge, acceptance, bravery...). This same issue is dealt with in Disney’s *The Lion King*, where Simba’s father (King Mufasa) dies and his brother Scar takes over the animal kingdom. These issues and the outcomes are far from the happy ending standard and make young readers reflect thanks to Shakespeare, as sought in a theatrical experience described by Domènech (1991) through issues raised to the audience.

This classic expands its initial text to other types of text, genre and language that project new ways of reading and approaching the work by William Shakespeare on the students. These different approaches give rise to a series of

hypertext varieties that broaden and enhance the intertext of the students, which allows for the creation of a meaning network that links and knits the students’ readings (Mendoza, 2012). Similarly, the coherence between all the elements that make up the books is essential in order to identify any potential difficulty of understanding, taking into account how reading skills evolve in the different stages of the students’ lives (Colomer, 2010).

In last place, in spite of statements such as those by Carranza (2012), who refers to children’s classics using a pun “classic unadapted” to entitle its own study, the use of children’s and youth adaptations in the classroom should be envisaged, as well as the “revived” -renewed and significant- approach (Caro, 2006, p. 26) to the classics through their intertextual reception from at the earliest age.as

For this reason, if a literary character such as that analysed in this study, Hamlet, has become an emblem and icon of universal literary culture, it is essential to bridge the gap between teachers and students.

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