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**Incitement in the University Classroom:  
Enacting Trauma for Intercultural Discourse<sup>1</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT**

Habits of silence are frequently carried into practical and oral classes, where professionals struggle to stimulate active mental and verbal participation. Intercultural, dramatised contemporary traumas can provide an incitement catalyst through vicarious experience, which promotes all spoken English skills as well as confidence, performative ability and inter-cultural understanding. Furthering this purpose, the author's theory of incitement, and a set of questions with which to address trauma in fictions enables a strong theoretical framework which reinforces the critical lens through practical application. This study will demonstrate unique methodologies for the use of drama in university classes including translation, interpretation, discourse analysis, critical literary study as well as literature, drama, presentation and performance. The methodologies are applied to extracts from two plays written by the author for the specific purpose outlined. Cop Out from 'It Ain't Shakespeare,' (PRC: Xiamen University Press, 2012), and Let's Take a Selfie, include traumas of loss, rejection, PTSD, betrayal, and racism and these dramas humorously explore traumatic issues while offering opportunities for group and class intercultural dialogue and examination. Using the plays as a vehicle for a variety of activities, students learn and develop a multiplicity of skills and knowledge in addition to benefitting from the increased confidence which their improved proficiency provides, whilst experiencing valuable life skills as they co-operate to achieve group and team goals.

**Key Words:** Drama, incitement, trauma, othering, intercultural, translation, interpretation.

**INTRODUCTION**

Drama is an invaluable multi-disciplinary tool which has special application in Literature and Translation departments in non-native contexts. This article posits that intercultural, contemporary dramas provide, through vicarious experience, an incitement catalyst which promotes performative ability and inter-cultural understanding. At the same time, the multi-modal approach allows students learn and develop a variety of skills and knowledge in addition to benefitting from the increased confidence which their improved proficiency provides, whilst practicing valuable life skills as they co-operate to achieve group and team goals.

<sup>1</sup> Elements of this article were recently presented at Ege University 16th International Cultural Studies Symposium May 10-12, 2017 - Izmir, Turkey: Narratives Of Trauma

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## DRAMA, INCITEMENT AND INTER-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

### Efficacy of vicarious experience: the evidence

As Bandura's seminal work explains, if every aspect of knowledge had to be learned through real experience, vital processes of cognitive and social development would be not only retarded but tedious and even dangerous, (Bandura, 1986). This is where simulated vicarious experience provides knowledge and understanding in a safe and supported environment. 'By symbolically manipulating the information derived from personal and vicarious experiences, people gain understanding of causal relationships and expand their knowledge,' (Bandura 1986). '[V]irtually all learning phenomena resulting from direct experience can occur vicariously by observing people's behavior and its consequences for them,' (Bandura, 1986; Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 1978). Drama, of course, provides the ultimate in vicarious experience but typically dramas are written for audience enjoyment and not as a valuable experience for the participants. This is where vicarious experience may be harnessed as a tool aimed at enhancing learning and understanding in the university classroom.

Bandura emphasises the value of what he terms 'modeling influences' to elicit emotional reactions and arousal, through which 'people acquire attitudes, values, and emotional dispositions toward persons, places, and things.' He considers that such influences 'can serve as instructors, motivators, inhibitors, disinhibitors, social facilitators, and emotion arousers.' (Bandura, 1986). Dramatisation is a strategy for providing essential vicarious experience to support other elements of the learning process.

### Drama across the disciplines

Contemporary printed texts frequently theorise, offer statistics, and seek to convince the reader of the need for drama in the classroom, often with 'how to' instruction but, as Wessells points out, (Gray Royka, 2002), fear of failure, time constraints, fear of looking stupid, limited resources, lack of knowledge and a host of other negative attitudes beset, particularly, teachers of adults (and I take this to include the young adults we work with in universities).

Albalawi's study of the use of drama in the development of critical thinking makes a number of recommendations based on his findings including: 'Teachers should be trained on how to teach using drama in their classes,' and 'Foreign language teaching should adopt dramatic activities to help students improve their personalities, achievement and *cultural awareness of the foreign language*.' [My italics]. (Albalawi, 2014). He notes also 'many advantages' to the use of drama in the foreign language class, quoting Mattevi: 'the use of drama in the language classroom allows the teacher to present the target language in an active, communicative and contextualized way. Dramatization . . . favors and facilitates the study of some often neglected aspects of language such as *pronunciation and body language*.' [My italics]<sup>3</sup>

Culham notes: '[D]rama activities enhance language learning and promote *intercultural awareness*.' [My italics]. 'Power dynamics shift in all drama work as the teacher becomes a participant alongside the students. . . . [S]tudents can reveal expertise previously hidden by verbal (or sometimes cultural) domination of other less inhibited members of the class.' (Culham, 2002).

In a recent study, Ismail Yarman explains:

Culture is an indispensable component of human life and every event, task, or action about human beings somehow involves culture. . . . Cortazzi and Jin (1999) introduce three categories for the cultural coverage in language teaching: source culture, target culture, and international culture. Likewise, McKay (2000) mentions a similar categorization: target culture materials, learners' own culture materials, and international target culture materials. (Yaman, 2017).

Critical thinking, cultural awareness, pronunciation, body language, team-building and co-operative skills are key elements of the drama-based approach which are, furthermore, enhanced by the enjoyment inherently present in the learning approach itself, as Wessells posits. He lists numerous advantages for drama to help the teacher to achieve 'reality' and counteract students' resistance to learning the new language:

- by making the learning of the new language an enjoyable experience;
- by setting realistic targets for the students to aim for;
- by creative 'slowing down' of real experience;
- by linking the language-learning experience with the student's own experience of life

And drama can create in a students a need to learn the language :

- by the use of 'creative tension' (situations requiring urgent solutions);
- by putting more responsibility on the learner, as opposed to the teacher.'

Wessells further sums up the benefits of drama in language teaching:

- the acquisition of meaningful, fluent interaction in the target language;
- the assimilation of a whole range of pronunciation and prosodic features in a fully contextualized and interactional manner;
- the fully contextualized acquisition of new vocabulary and structure;
- an improved sense of confidence in the student in his or her ability to learn the target language. (Wessells, 2010).

In a career spanning over thirty years, the author's experience bears out Wessells' findings and recommendations, above, in their entirety. The study which follows offers dramas written specifically for purpose and additionally provides sets of questions on two aspects of critical analysis, trauma and othering, as exemplification of the broader uses and value of such materials.

### A practical resource for vicarious experience

What is being done to *put into practice* many decades of evidence that drama is not just an activity for play or fun? To the present day there seems not to be a single text which can be simply handed to an 'untrained' teacher for direct use in class without knowledge of drama teaching, or indeed provided for those having received teacher-training at all. In response to this lack, I decided in 2008, to write a play specifically for use by my own students. Not a play with one lead, a subsidiary lead, and only a few or no good parts for females, but a play which would offer **every** student in the group a role to get his or her teeth into. The students loved this first effort and begged me to write a sequel. A further seven plays were added and published in 2012.<sup>4</sup>

### Extending the practical paradigm

As many before have noted, drama can be used to enhance and extend learning in just about any field. Two unique pedagogical models are offered here. The first, relating to my theory of incitement covers practical speech utterances enacted and developed through purpose-wrought dramas. The second is an explication and demonstration of how literary theory, in this case, life trauma, furnishes additional methodological value for the dramas referenced. Here, thirteen original questions have been formulated with which to address text. In conjunction with performative strategies, these questions enable a strong theoretical framework which reinforces the critical lens through practical application.

### *It Ain't Shakespeare* as classroom drama

'*It Ain't Shakespeare*,' a set of eight one-act plays comprising some three to four scenes each, about a Turkish student and his English girlfriend, provides the initial 'incitement' to speak in English.<sup>5</sup> Each play is 20 or more minutes long, features anything from four to eight characters and includes materials for introducing each topic, glossary, explanations of idioms, discussion questions support for character understanding, performance hints, and suggestions for extension/follow-up work. (See Appendix B for details).

The plays, written with a view to giving roughly equal speaking parts to all participants, are written for students to read aloud in groups and can be rehearsed and performed in classroom or on stage. Furthermore, female characters are not consistently enfeebled, passive, vulnerable or otherwise 'marked' by the negative gender stereotyping often typical of drama created for general consumption, because our purpose is for *all students* to enjoy and be entertained; learning seems incidental. The 'soap-like' style of the dramas ensures a contemporary relevance designed to encourage active participation through vicarious experience.

### Theory of incitement

The author first posited five key target elements needed for success in speaking classes at university level at a conference in Taiwan in 2013, (Adams, 2013). These five elements constitute what I have named 'incitement', which is not the same as 'motivation,' (see Dornyei 2006). Merely telling learners to speak, as occurs in a role play for example, is not *incitement* but is related to motivation. Unlike

<sup>4</sup> Extracts from two plays are provided below.

<sup>5</sup> *It Ain't Shakespeare*. PRC: Xiamen University Press, 2012 was authored by Sandra M Adams, with translations by Ji Yuhua and is the version in use in universities throughout China.

motivation, incitement is not a *conscious* process of engagement but occurs when the learner's brain is spontaneously activated in impelling response to a situation. This situation is provided, vicariously, by the drama.

Furthermore, it is posited that humour provides an essential element in the process; the importance of humour should not be ignored. Humour 'is a vehicle for providing authentic cultural information; builds bridges between cultures; practices language items in genuine contexts; brings students closer together; releases tension; develops creative thinking; provides memorable chunks of language.' These elements also promote a happy classroom and enhance motivation, (Yarman, 2017). I would add that nothing motivates like success and it possible even for the weaker student to excel through drama, thus promoting a more positive attitude towards all areas of study.

Incitement focuses on stimulating a real-time need and desire on the part of the incitee, to speak, to take part. This is brought about, initially, by participation in the drama and, in extension work, through the discussion which ensues. For those who wish to, improvisation on themes raised or directly from the drama can further this process. These processes can progress the pursuit of fluency more effectively than role plays and rote learning alone.

**Incitement, then, requires the following five target elements:**

- 1 **A situation making speech mandatory;** a student has no choice but to read her or his part in the script.
- 2 **Appropriacy of material;** contemporary themes and the interests of young adults must be paramount.
- 3 **Exploration of cultural elements;** setting in a target language country (in this case, England) automatically presents the culture of the target, which is then *experienced vicariously* – not taught theoretically or learned through other documentary type means. Additional cultures are also introduced, and the Turkish character ensures that comparison is constantly present both explicitly and implicitly.
- 4 **Elements of suspense and excitement ensure engagement;** will Can and Amanda begin dating? Has Can been two-timing Amanda? Will Can be blamed for the inappropriate behaviour of Grace Gridley? Has Vicky killed Can? Will Amanda be fooled by 'Photoshopped' images purporting to show Can posing improperly with under-age girls?
- 5 **Firing of the desire to speak** is accomplished by reading and performing plays which include contemporary concerns and sometimes controversial or challenging elements. Cultural differences, stereotyping, racism, gender issues, traumatic life situations, societal problems, relationship issues and a plethora of topics pertinent to young adults are aimed at inciting a desire to speak *outside of the drama itself*. (Adams, 2013).

***It Ain't Shakespeare in the academic context: othering and trauma***

Several of the plays included, as well as one not in the original publication, offer themselves particularly appositely for the consideration of 'othering' and trauma. In order to facilitate student

research and consideration of both these tropes, application to the simple dramas in question can offer a helpful introduction. It is further posited that in addition to reading, performing, discussing the elements of the drama, we may apply real-life trauma theory and extend spoken work, through discussion, as well as written interrogation which can lead to essays, papers, comparison with other texts and multi-modal investigation and study.

As yet there is no set of questions to use for approaching trauma in texts. Those which follow were tested by the author's MA and PhD candidates on *It Ain't Shakespeare* plays and resulted in successful understanding and application which subsequently enabled valuable examination of more complex texts.<sup>6</sup>

### Thirteen questions to address to text using trauma as perspective

The author has formulated a set of questions to address to text using guidelines for professional psychotherapists and counsellors of trauma victims. This approach may be criticised as somewhat reductive in the light of current 'trauma theory' but we would suggest that this practical 'applied trauma' stratagem has a slightly different purpose, namely it seeks to elucidate text using a set of clear questions as a framework for analysis, either verbal or written. Further, by utilising the simple dramas of our corpus, students are led to develop analytical skills based on readily understandable contemporary situations, thus building confidence for the more daunting task of analysing actual Shakespeare plays. Purdue's OWL English laboratory provides a model for the following questions, which may be addressed to any text dealing with trauma:

1. What specific traumas are addressed in the work? Are they physical, psychological, both?
2. Who are the characters suffering the 'primary'<sup>7</sup> trauma?
3. Are 'secondary'<sup>8</sup> traumas suffered by other characters as a result of the primary traumatised characters' behaviours?
4. Are 'secondary' traumas suffered by other characters although the primary traumatised character seems unscathed by events?
5. Did the trauma occur within the action of the work or in the past (backstory) of the primary traumatised character/s?
6. Did the trauma occur in the past/backstory of character/s surrounding a main protagonist who has not him/herself suffered trauma from specified events?
7. Was the trauma caused by family/friends/ relationships, strangers, or external institutions?<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Students can be daunted at the prospect of taking a critical approaches towards text and the OWL questions at Purdue University Writing Centre offer useful frameworks.

<sup>7</sup> I here use 'primary' to indicate the original/initial recipient of trauma.

<sup>8</sup> I here use 'secondary' to indicate trauma caused to characters as a result of the trauma of the primary recipient of trauma.

<sup>9</sup> 'external' e.g. prison, care institution .

8. Was the trauma a result of random chance and the fault of nobody?
9. Was the trauma a result of the random 'malfunction' of others or was it systematic, e.g. sexual abuse in the home, prison, war/terrorism?
10. How are the symptoms of the trauma manifested in the character/s involved or affected?
11. How are the traumas presented/interpreted in the text?
12. How might the biography of the author influence the traumatic events portrayed?
13. How might the presentation/interpretation of the events represent the attitude of the writer?

### Enactment and application of trauma questions: tying the drama to theory

In *Cop Out*, Can and Amanda have just moved into a flat together. In one scene Grace Gridley, an out-of-control fourteen-year old who is the step-daughter of the landlady, is introduced. Amanda leaves the stage to go into the bedroom and while she is there, Grace arrives dressed provocatively and wearing a great deal of make-up. To Can's considerable consternation, Grace proceeds to 'come-on' to him, moving closer and closer on the sofa and finally inviting him to kiss her. This is a comedy scene and students are able to showcase their acting talents to the full. Mrs Gridley arrives in the nick of time, saving Can from further embarrassment but immediately getting the wrong end of the stick upon seeing Grace. Luckily, Amanda comes out of the bedroom, wondering what is going on and Mrs Gridley realises her mistake.

### Extract from *Cop Out* by Sandra Adams (2012)

*[Amanda is in the bedroom and Can is alone in the sitting room. They have just moved in and Amanda's parents and twin siblings have just left. There is a knock at the door].*

CAN: Oh . . .? um, . . . hello.

GRACE: Hi, I'm Mrs Gridley's daughter, Grace.

CAN: Mrs Gridley?

GRACE: You know, the landlady, downstairs?

CAN: Ah. *[He is perplexed<sup>10</sup> at her appearance, but remembers his manners.]* Nice to meet you. I'm Can.

GRACE: Well, aren't you going to invite me in?

CAN: Yes, yes, of course. Come in.

*[Grace is wearing loads of makeup, a very short skirt, and very high heels.<sup>11</sup> She walks in with somewhat exaggerated hip movements, trying to look sexy and checking her impression on Can.]*

CAN: *[Formally.]* Do take a seat.

GRACE: *[Sitting and patting<sup>12</sup> the sofa.]* Come and sit next to me, then. Don't be shy.

CAN: *[Can sits, far away, Grace moves closer. Can looks alarmed.]*

<sup>10</sup> Perplexed: confused and curious.

<sup>11</sup> Tarty: like a prostitute. Tart is colloquial for prostitute.

<sup>12</sup> Patting: tapping gently with the open hand.

Let me make you a cup of tea. *[Jumping up.]*

GRACE: Haven't you got anything stronger?

CAN: Coffee?

GRACE: No, I mean alcohol, silly. And I need a cigarette.

CAN: Sorry I don't smoke. We haven't any alcohol in at the moment.

*[Grace pulls him down next to her.]*

Coke! *[Jumping up in panic.]* We've got coke. How about a coke?

GRACE: *[Resignedly.]*<sup>13</sup> Never mind. Come and sit down. You're like a jack-in-the-box.<sup>14</sup> You're not afraid of me are you?

CAN: No. No, of course not. *[He sits nervously, she pulls him closer, he moves away.]*

GRACE: *[Moving closer.]* You're Turkish, right? So who are the best looking girls, Turkish or English?

CAN: *[Diplomatically.]* Well, I think that is an impossible question. There are different kinds of beauty.

GRACE: *[Leaning closer to him.]* Cop out! Cop out! What about me? Am I better looking than a Turkish girl? Do you think I'm pretty? *[Moving closer.]*

CAN: *[Trying to move away – he is already on the end of the sofa.]* Yes, yes, of course you're pretty.

GRACE: So wouldn't you like to kiss me? I've never kissed a Turkish bloke before.

*[Can jumps up in fright and goes behind the sofa.]*

CAN: No, ..... I .....

GRACE: So I'm not pretty enough for you?

CAN: No. I mean. It's not that, it's.....

*[There is a knock at the door and Can scurries<sup>15</sup> over to it.]*

CAN: *[With enormous relief<sup>16</sup>.]* Mrs Gridley. Come in. Come in. Sit down. Here, on the sofa.

MRS GRIDLEY: *[Peering<sup>17</sup> at Grace.]* Grace? Is that you? What the hell do you think you're doing dressed up like a tart? You're supposed to be at school. And you! *[To Can.]*

*[Glaring aggressively at Can.]*

What do you think you're up to?

AMANDA: *[Coming in.]* Hello Mrs Gridley. Whatever's going on here?

*[She glares suspiciously<sup>18</sup> at Grace.]*

MRS GRIDLEY: *[Realising Can could not have been doing anything wrong because Amanda is there.]*

She's only fourteen, you know!

*[To Grace.]* I don't know what you think you're doing in those clothes and skipping<sup>19</sup> school. The Head just called me and I've had to come out of work!

Just you wait 'til your father gets back. Now you get downstairs, take that tarty outfit off, and clean yourself up.

<p>To be 'up to' something often implies wrong-doing.</p>
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<sup>13</sup> Resignedly: accepting with reluctance.

<sup>14</sup> Jack-in-the-box: a doll on a spring inside a box. When you open the lid, the doll pops up.

<sup>15</sup> Scurries: rushes over in great haste – he wants to get away from Grace.

<sup>16</sup> Enormous relief: a great burden of stress or worry is taken away (Can is very worried and confused because of Grace's behaviour towards him).

<sup>17</sup> Peering: inspecting closely.

<sup>18</sup> Suspiciously: suspecting something wrong.

<sup>19</sup> Skipping: missing.

GRACE: You can't make me! You're not even my real mother..... Anyway, Dad's coming back in a bodybag.<sup>20</sup>

[Everyone looks at Grace in horror.]

MRS GRIDLEY: What a horrible thing to say, Grace. How could you say a thing like that?

[To Can and Amanda, explaining.]

He's in Afghanistan.<sup>21</sup> Look, we're all worried and scared, Grace, but this isn't going to help, is it? ..... Come on, let's go downstairs and have a cup of tea.<sup>22</sup>

[Explaining as she pulls Grace up.]

The Head called to say she hadn't been at school. I was that worried! I came up to ask if you'd seen her. Sorry about all this. [To Can.] Sorry, Can, I just jumped to the wrong conclusion. I should have known you wouldn't .....

CAN: That's alright. I understand.

AMANDA: No problem, Mrs Gridley.

<p>'Jumped to the wrong conclusion' - made a wrong judgement, based on a hasty assessment</p>
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### Identifying the trauma in a text

Firstly the trauma is identified and, in this case, it refers to the back-story of the Gridley family. George Gridley has remarried after the death of his first wife. He is currently serving in Afghanistan (this could be any conflict) leaving his new wife to look after his daughter. Both his wife and Grace are constantly anxious, for obvious reasons, and Grace is not taking well to her step-mother, although the new Mrs Gridley seems to be caring and supportive.

Although teenagers may have a full understanding of death like an adult, a common reaction to bereavement can include acting out, having trouble in school, engaging in risky behaviour, low self-esteem, (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2008). We notice all of these symptoms in Grace in *Cop Out*.

### Using the questions to examine traumatised characters

Grace's behaviour is clearly detrimental to herself and all those around her. Is her trauma physical, psychological, or both? As far as the evidence in the text shows, her trauma is psychological: she is bereaved. Her father has left her with someone who tries to replace her mother and this clearly is not acceptable to her.

Both Can and Mrs Gridley suffer secondary trauma as a result of Grace's behaviour, thus their lives are negatively impacted too. We have no idea what caused the death of Grace's mother, as the text does not give this information. At this stage we have to conclude that Grace's trauma is due to bereavement and this is probably linked to a sense of betrayal on her father's part.

The symptoms of Grace's trauma are manifested in behaviours which conform directly to real trauma in life. Some of the most common effects of untreated trauma include:

- Sexually inappropriate behaviour (especially in children)

<sup>20</sup> Bodybag: large, strong plastic bag for containing a body or body parts, usually black.

<sup>21</sup> Britain, the US and other countries have been involved in conflict in Afghanistan.

<sup>22</sup> This is a satirical joke against the British. Some people think that a cup of tea solves everything. When they don't know what to do, they may suggest a cup of tea. In fact, many people do not drink tea at all.

- Hostility (anger, violent behaviour)
- Constant arguments with loved ones
- Self-destructive behaviours
- Impulsive behaviours
- Inability to make healthy occupational or lifestyle choices

(Cascade Behavioural Health Hospital).<sup>23</sup>

Grace 'comes on' to Can utterly without his encouragement. She has clearly dressed in a way which she expects will attract him. In fact, she seems to view his recalcitrance as a goad to discomfit him as much as possible and has no thought of the fact that he could go to prison if he were to take her up on her offers, real or implied. When Mrs Gridley confronts her about her appearance and absence from school, she becomes hostile: 'You can't make me! You're not even my real mother... Anyway, Dad's coming back in a bodybag.' This reveals both her desire to hurt but also her fear of this outcome. Her choice to bunk off school is evidence of inability to make healthy occupational or lifestyle choices as is her decision to dress inappropriately, put on large amounts of make-up and otherwise draw unhealthy attention to herself.

In *'Let's Take a Selfie'*<sup>24</sup> also featuring Grace and demonstrating serious consequences for her traumatised behaviours, 'othering,' racism and post-traumatic stress of military personnel are also introduced. As a contemporary trope, there is enormous scope for follow-up work outside of the drama itself<sup>25</sup> since, unfortunately, the world is providing all too many instances of trauma and traumatised individuals. This play *incites* participants to experience and examine this challenging topic vicariously and with a dash of humour.

In the opening scene, Grace and two of her naughty friends sneak into Can and Amanda's flat. Grace seems already to be hatching a plot and encourages her friends to take selfie's in the bedroom, on the bed – this part occurs 'offstage', of course, and does not feature specific language but only innuendo. Here, students are encouraged to improvise as they supposedly take provocative selfies. By these means, students set their own boundaries as to what is acceptable to speak or imply. At the end of the scene, we learn that Grace has 'Photoshopped' a naked body onto a picture of Can, inserted it in a photo of the girls in the bedroom, and posted it to Amanda and others on the internet – we guess she must have taken a photo of Can at the party mentioned in an earlier play, *'It's a Windup.'*<sup>26</sup>

In the next scene, George Gridley, who was invalided out of the military in *'It's a Windup,'* and two army friends attack Can for his supposed abuse of Grace and the other minors. Luckily, they are

<sup>23</sup> Cascade Behavioural Health Hospital. What is a Potentially Traumatic Event? Retrieved on October 23, 2016, from <http://www.cascadebh.com/behavioral/trauma/signs-symptoms-effects>

<sup>24</sup> *Let's Take a Selfie* is a new, follow-up play and does not appear in the original 'It Ain't Shakespeare' publication.

<sup>25</sup> Although the attack on Can might well lead to traumatised behaviour on his part, and this could be discussed, it is not the intention to delve into such tragic results in these dramas.

<sup>26</sup> Normally, students would work through the plays from 1 to 8 so that a gradual picture develops of the lives of the two main protagonists.

highly incompetent and Mr Gridley keeps falling over as his injured leg cannot support him. In the final scene, all is revealed, the men run off and the police are heard outside. Can is shaken up and angry but otherwise unhurt.

**Extract from *Let's Take a Selfie* by Sandra Adams (2017)**

After the 'naughty girls' scene, Amanda comes back home and discovers the picture of Can and the girls on her cellphone, which she had left behind by accident, thus giving the girls the opportunity for their Photoshop selfie scenario.

*[Inside Can and Amanda's flat. Sound of a toilet flushing. Sam and Eric stand on either side of the bathroom door. When Can comes out, they grab his arms.]*

CAN: What are you doing? Who are you? What do you want? I'm just a student, I haven't got any money.

*[Seeing Mr Gridley, Can looks more alarmed. He realises it's about the fake selfie.]*

MR GRID: *[Tries to rush at Can and hit him with his stick. Falls on the floor.]*  
*[Shouting.]* YOU PERVERT. SHE'S ONLY FOURTEEN.

SAM: Hold on, hold on. Don't make a fool of yourself, George. Just wait a minute. We've got him.

*[Mr Gridley picks himself up and his stick and sits on the sofa.]*

ERIC: This little creep's not going anywhere.

CAN: No. You've got it wrong. It's not me. Listen to me, Mr Gridley.

*[Fighting off Sam and Eric, he steps towards Mr Gridley, trying to explain.]*

*Eric grabs his arms and ties his wrists together with plastic ties. Sam gets Can's neck in a necklock.*

*Throughout the following dialogue, Can is fighting off the men.]*

CAN: You can't do this. You're crazy. Get off me!

MR GRID: We'll tell you what can and can't be done! You can't mess with fourteen-year-old girls in our country.

ERIC: Maybe you do that where you come from but you can't get away with that filth in England.

SAM: We're not standing for you people behaving like animals with our girls. You got it?

CAN: Please, listen to me. I didn't! I can explain! I know what you saw. It's not what you think.

MR GRID: Explain! We'll tell you about explaining. We're going to explain to you how you an't treat little girls like that.

CAN: But I didn't. You have to listen.

ERIC: No we don't have to listen to you. We don't need to hear any stupid justification from you.

SAM: It's against the law in our country. That's all the explanation you need. Whatever you do back home, you can't do it here.

'hold on' - wait

'picks himself up' - to pick oneself up is to stand up, usually with difficulty, after one has fallen.

In this play we see further evidence of Grace's untreated trauma: the naked Photoshopping is sexually inappropriate and certainly an unhealthy 'life choice' as is her hostility towards Can for, very properly, rejecting her advances earlier. She has no thought of the fact that Can would go to jail if he

had done what she gives apparent evidence for. She also fails to realise that vital evidence does not fit so that it will be easy, in fact, for Can to prove that he is innocent.

Aside from the trauma to Can, all of the other participants, including Grace's own father, will suffer serious and negative life changes resulting from her thoughtless actions: possibly, Can and Amanda will break up because, initially, she accepts the photo as real, demonstrating a profound and unfair lack of trust in Can, as he may well point out; Mr Gridley and his friends could go to jail and the two who are still in the military will probably get dishonourable discharges; Mrs Gridley declares that she will not take care of Grace if her husband is sent to jail. This means that, as a minor, Grace will certainly be put into 'care' of the state and may well also receive a punitive sentence in a young offenders' institution for her actions. This is certainly not a happy outcome for the miscreant herself, and is likely to lead to other negative consequences in future. In this scenario, everyone loses.

Why do the three men try to take the law into their own hands? Can lives only upstairs so is not hard to find. Could they not block the front door, keep watch at the back of the house, and call the police? Would not this be the 'reasonable' and 'responsible' way to react?

According to the National Centre for PTSD, (2015), the response to stress can become 'stuck,' leading to responding to all stress in survival mode. Individuals suffering from PTSD are more likely to react to stress with 'full activation. . . and may react as if [their] life or self were threatened. This automatic response of irritability and anger in those with PTSD can create serious problems in the workplace and in family life.' Anger, even when no extreme threat is present, leads to 'arousal' so that someone 'may be easily provoked. This high level of arousal may cause [them] to actually seek out situations that require [them] to stay alert and ward off danger .' Many trauma survivors 'may be impulsive, acting before they think. . . . Many people with PTSD *only use aggressive responses to threat. They are not able to use other responses that could be more positive.*[My italics].

According to Dr Kathleen Sales, (Sales, 2015), this 'Hyperarousal is often the first sign of PTSD, and it's directly linked to activation of the sympathetic nervous system,' and Dr Lynn Margolies, formerly of Harvard Medical School explains:

The essential psychological effect of trauma is a shattering of innocence. Trauma creates a loss of faith that there is any safety, predictability, or meaning in the world, or any safe place in which to retreat. It involves utter disillusionment. Because traumatic events are often unable to be processed by the mind and body as other experiences are, due to their overwhelming and shocking nature, they are not integrated or digested. (Margolies, 2016).

In their vigilantism, rather than invoking the proper authorities and following legal procedures, the army characters appear to be exhibiting some typical symptoms of PTSD.

### Othering

This drama also demonstrates some of the language of 'othering' through the attackers' remarks to Can, providing a clear example of this mechanism which can be followed up by a variety of extension work. Similar to the earlier model 'trauma' questions, the following nine questions help students to become aware of how language itself can become a weapon insidiously to control and manipulate the message absorbed by the recipient, either by chance or design. By providing appropriate questions,

students are led to perceive answers which might otherwise have eluded them. Students learn to seek and discover subtexts which form the skeleton on which meaning hangs and while asking and answering questions they collect the data from which essays and papers may be based. Having benefitted from use of Purdue's sets of analytical lenses in critical analysis classes over some years, I formulated the thirteen trauma questions as well as the nine questions below in hope of making a useful addition to Purdue's original tools.<sup>27</sup>

### ***Nine questions relating to othering and perceptions of normality***

1. Who is being othered?
2. Which groups or individuals are doing the othering? E.g. random characters, specific groups, institutions.
3. What are the perceived differences being criticised?
4. What form does the othering take?
5. What is the response of characters not involved in the othering, (if any)?
6. What may be perceived as the attitude of the author (politician, or director in a film)?
7. What behaviour/s seen as abnormal (what is perceived as 'normal')?
8. What reactive behaviour takes place on the part of the 'normal' groups or individuals?
9. Is there any way in which the 'reactive' behaviour may be perceived as against normal values? E.g. vigilantism, which is against the law in most countries.

How may the questions be applied to *'Let's Take A Selfie?'* Can is being 'othered'. How and by whom? What are the perceived differences? Mr Gridley and his cohorts regard Can as 'other' so that when they imagine he has criminally abused young girls, they immediately attribute this to the fact that he is not the same as themselves (he is Muslim). 'In our country' they tell him 'we don't' do the perverted things which are allegedly permitted in the country of the othered individual. 'You people' behave like animals, they assert. Implicitly, of course, 'we' do not do any of the unacceptable behaviours. 'You people' as against 'we' (who do not sexually abuse young girls) is typical of the language of othering, the assumption is that those who are not 'we' must *de facto* have lower moral standards. 'It's against the law in *our* country. . . . Whatever you do *back home*, you can't do it here.' Can's assailants hit on perceived differences to account for what they believe he has done, rather than just assuming he is a bad individual. Students may be asked if similar language is used in their own tongue and this usually provokes lively discussion and exemplification – all of which is conducted in English, thus extending the 'incitement' value of the drama.

The negative evaluation of Can's attackers is manifested in these individuals both because it is, regrettably a reality, and to provide a platform for intercultural study as well as opening possibilities for the analysis of speeches and text in the wider world.

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<sup>27</sup> My questions have led to very useful discussion and written project work with both MA and PhD candidates.

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The ineptitude of Sam and Eric and George's bumbling attempts to attack Can create humour in a setting which would otherwise be tragic. The seriousness of such situations is not intended to be demeaned or dismissed through humour but defused through a safe and fun 'experience' with classmates, which can lead, later, to reflection and serious discussion.

The responses of Mrs Gridley as well as Amanda provide the balance of decency and 'normal' behaviour and this, in turn, shows the attitude of the author; the understanding of point of view as well as negative propaganda is an important element in education which, further, has far-reaching life effects.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Contemporary, realistic drama has the specific aim of providing vicarious experience, through *demonstration* not instruction, as well as entertainment for both participant and onlooker, permitting the learner a dimension of creativity within an experiential situation. It also makes utterance acts mandatory one way or another; the show must go on.<sup>28</sup>

In the 'improvisation' stage, the more competent speaker may lead the performance in any direction at all, whilst the weak speaker can stick with the script. . . . experience has shown that practical articulation will lead to greater confidence that the retrieval of 'passive' language is going to take place in spontaneous speech situations. (Adams, 2013).

In the specific context of interpretation and translation, translators require a host of skills effectively to carry out their function. Confidence gained from vicarious experience through drama, including the many elements brought into play such as body language, knowledge, cultural interaction and understanding, pronunciation, intonation and fluency, self-knowledge, acceptance of alternative viewpoints, co-operation, responsibility, organisation, are brought to fruition in the act of interpreting.

Appropriately framed and developed dramatic activities, specific to student needs in the non-native speaker environment, stimulate, improve and have an invaluable impact on the practical use of the target language for future professionals in all situations as well as on analytical and other academic and life skills.

NB A new edition of *It Ain't Shakespeare*, adapted for Turkish universities is in late draft stage and is expected to be published in 2017. Included in the book are: character details, explanations of stage language such as 'blocking, cues' etc tips for acting, performance, costume and characterisation, staged 'attack' tips and guidance, explanation of idioms, questions at the end of each play, English to Turkish glossary, notes on intonation and stress, extensive footnotes. In the meantime, if you would like a sample play to use with your students, please contact the author.

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<sup>28</sup> Adams, Sandra M. (2013). *Motivating the Silent*

## APPENDIX

### Using the drama, and ideas for extension work

Introduce the main characters of the play.

- Show the explanatory material about each character.
- Tell students to pre-read the play for homework and/or listen to the audio of the play.
- Read a quarter or half of the play to the class OR have students read aloud in groups.
- Explain, discuss as required.
- Groups assign characters and read through.
- Teacher may instruct how to 'block'<sup>29</sup> the play or may leave it to the students themselves to work this out.
- Assist groups with, staging e.g. don't all stand or sit in a row, don't have back to audience etc.
- Assist with ideas for simple props e.g. cups, cell-phone, umbrella etc.
- Assist with ideas for simple costume e.g. lots of make-up and a short skirt would help 'Grace' in her first play; a boy playing a girl could wear an item of girls' clothing e.g. hat, scarf.
- Homework: do not learn the part but be familiar with the story outline.
- Improvise the play without the book or hidden – encourage changing / improvising.
- Perform whole or parts for class.
- Peer evaluation.
- Read parts or sections of the play in groups and discuss characters and motivations.
- Analyse the plot.
- Discuss the cultural information at the beginning of the play.
- Discuss the questions at the end of the play.
- Compare elements with home culture.
- Rewrite the play in groups – improve, change, present.
- Write a sequel or prequel to a play or event in a play, present.
- Change elements in a play to affect the outcome.
- Do research on cultural elements, present.
- Write an evaluation of a play.
- In groups and pairs, interview characters and ask them to explain their actions for a TV reality show.

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<sup>29</sup> Blocking involves fixing the disposition and moves of characters as well as entrances and exits. Normally only cues are read out at this stage, not the entire play. The actors should note their own moves on the script, in order to keep these the same. At this point the teacher can take the opportunity to point out that in 'realistic' scenes, characters do not stand in lines or circles to speak to one another, and should usually avoid presenting their back to the audience.

- Set up confrontational interviews where characters may be attacked for their words or behaviour and must defend themselves.
- Create a cartoon version of a play or scene – could use free software.
- Imagine you are a newspaper reporter and report on the play as though it were real.
- Write a play again but set it in another country and change characters as necessary.
- Consider the relationships of characters. Do they seem realistic? Would they be the same in other cultures?
- Write/present cultural comparisons based on the plays.
- Write/present additional cultural comparisons which could be explored through drama. Write or improvise the play.
- Give a character such as Can, or Amanda a human 'thought' bubble - this person sits behind the character. Choose a difficult situation such as where Amanda meets Can's parents. The 'thought bubble' adds what the character is *really* thinking.
- Repeat previous exercise using animation software (e.g. Muvizu).
- Apply trauma, othering or other literary critical questions and lenses to situations and characters in other texts.
- Compare representations of trauma in different texts.
- Explore artistic verisimilitude from positions of trauma or othering in different texts.

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