

## 4

# **The Chronicles of the New World, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and ESOL Instruction**

*Norine Polio*

*Caliban:*

This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother  
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,  
Thou strok'st me, and made much of me; wouldst give me  
Water with berries in't; and teach me how  
To name the bigger light, and how the less,  
That burn by day and night; and then I lov'd thee,  
And show'd thee all the qualities o' th' isle,  
The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place and fertile:  
Curs'd be that I did so! . . .

*Miranda:*

I . . . took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour  
One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,  
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like  
A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes  
With words that made them known . . .

*The Tempest*, Act I, Scene ii (ll. 332-341; 355-359)<sup>1</sup>

Shakespeare demonstrates in a few lines the essence of the seemingly endless and controversial debate regarding second-language acquisition. On a positive note, the playwright captures the give and take of cultural exchange, the delight in sharing totally new experiences, in renaming and redefining objects and ideas. But Shakespeare's genius comes in showing us the dark side, the often patronizing tone, the loss of self which results when the new language is considered by the instructor and/or the population at large to be superior to the native one.

As an E.S.O.L. (English to Speakers of Other Languages) teacher to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Hispanic students in the Bilingual Department at Roberto Clemente Middle School and Fellow in the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute seminar "Writings and Re-Writings of the Discovery and Conquest of America" by Roberto González Echevarría, I find the connections between *The Tempest*, our readings on the Conquest, and language teaching/learning to be intriguing. Our seminar has explored the major texts which announce, describe, and interpret the Discovery and Conquest of the New World including works by Christopher Columbus, Hernán Cortés, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, Cabeza de Vaca, Bartolomé de las Casas, Michel de Montaigne, Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca, Roberto Fernández Retamar, and the anonymous native writers included in the volume *The Broken Spears*.

The attempts by totally different peoples to communicate is, I feel, one of the major themes of *The Tempest*, making its connection to second language acquisition relevant. While reading the various accounts of the Conquest, I have written endless notes in the margins regarding communication between conqueror and conquered including references to interpreters, translation, signs and other non-verbal expressions, native languages and dialects, and definitions of terms. These elements in the chronicles coupled with themes in *The Tempest* to which Caribbean-born Hispanic students can relate—*island life, storms, shipwrecks, magic*—are the structure upon which this unit is based. References to the historical works will be included when they parallel the particular scenes extracted from *The Tempest* in order to illustrate the similarities between the chronicles and Shakespeare's work. Since the historical documents are easily available in Spanish, teachers might consider having students literate in Spanish read these in the original to facilitate comprehension. Obviously some of the references are not within students' grasp; they are included however if the teacher wishes to paraphrase what I consider relevant background material for critical analysis.

In the transitional Bilingual classroom there is a delicate balance, when teaching English, between imparting communication skills in the new language and encouraging students to express pride in their native tongue through speaking, reading, and writing. This curriculum unit has been designed to promote critical thinking by posing the following questions related to the point-of-contact between cultures. Students and teachers alike may analyze the similarities and differences between the dynamics of the teacher/learner in *The Tempest* and their own educational experiences:

- What do you think happened between Caliban and the Europeans, Prospero and Miranda, when, according to them, he was first instructed to speak?

- Had Caliban and his mother, Sycorax, communicated with each other during the 12 years they lived together before she was banished?
- Does Miranda consider Caliban's sounds "gabble" (Act I, Scene ii, l. 357) because she doesn't understand them?
- Might Caliban think that Prospero's and Miranda's utterances are gabble?
- When you are first exposed to a new language, does it sound like gabble?
- Does it sound like gabble after you are exposed to it over a period of time?
- How might *The Tempest* have been different if Prospero and Miranda had recognized Caliban's utterances as a valid system of communication and had attempted to learn his language as he had learned theirs?
- How do you think Caliban would have felt about this?
- Should the direction of language instruction be one-way only, from teacher to student, or can students impart knowledge to teachers?
- What happens to Caliban's native tongue now that he has no opportunity to use it?
- How do you think Caliban feels about this?
- What would happen to your native language if you had no chance to use it?
- How would you feel about this?

Suggestions for lesson plans, class discussions, and homework assignments are included in the unit. Activities include films and poetry in addition to map skills, theater games and oral exercises. There is also an emphasis on isolating the technical dramatic elements found in the text. This concentration on costumes, sound, lighting, and scenery encourages students to focus on the play from the point of view of the stage technician.

It is obvious that reading *The Tempest* in its entirety is a very sophisticated task for even the average native English-speaking student and for this reason only relatively simple passages will be cited. An appreciation for Shakespeare often requires years of careful cultivation and begins by elemental familiarization with the sounds of the words, even if the meanings are obscured. I believe there is an advantage with beginning English speakers in that students are not yet aware of the unfamiliar words and awkward sentence construction with which many native speakers are uncomfortable almost immediately.

Since the level of English skills is relatively low for transitional students who have had 2-4 years of E.S.O.L. instruction, I would suggest introducing *The Tempest* by recounting the play first in narrative form, using a guide such as Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*, specifically tailored and illustrated for children. This synopsis could be followed by viewing the British

Broadcasting Corporation's film, *The Tempest. Forbidden Planet*, a 1950s science fiction version of *The Tempest* with Walter Pidgeon and Ann Francis, might be an interesting and enjoyable comparison for students. However, before familiarizing themselves with the films, the book illustrations, or even the book cover to the Arden edition, I feel it is important for students to formulate their own concepts, particularly with regard to the depiction of Caliban. Teachers can introduce this character as someone who looks and speaks differently from society as a whole and then ask the class to speculate on his appearance and personality. Since these particular students have had personal experiences dealing with an unfamiliar culture they will probably be able to relate to the problem posed by Shakespeare. Students might then begin to understand Caliban's monster-like depiction in the eyes of the Europeans as a possible exaggeration of the truth since he does not fit into their particular mold, and to analyze judgments placed upon people in contemporary society under similar circumstances.

After students have listened to a narrative version of *The Tempest* and/or viewed the films, they could then be introduced to the possible historical basis of the story. It would be helpful at this point to make maps available to compare the world at the time of the Conquest to the present. (The December 1977 *National Geographic* "Colonization and Trade in the New World".) Milan, Naples, and Bermuda could be clearly labelled to familiarize the class with locations mentioned in the play.

Shakespeare's story is believed to have been based on the separation during a storm of one of nine ships in a fleet which left England in 1609 with John Smith's Virginia colony as its destination. The colonists were marooned on an island and arrived in Virginia a year later after word of the wreck and possible demise of the colonists had reached England. Scholars believe that Shakespeare was familiar with these accounts as he was personally acquainted with members of the Virginia Company.

A brief analysis of the title of the play might follow (a more detailed treatment follows in Act I, Scene i). Certainly teachers who have come into contact with Hispanic children newly arrived from the Caribbean are familiar with their detailed accounts of personal experiences with hurricanes. Students could be encouraged to relate these impressions, either orally or in written form, thus appreciating the relevance of the play to their own lives.

While becoming familiar with the list of characters, students can make another obvious connection between themselves and Shakespeare's choice of Latin-based names. Prospero labels the island's inhabitant "Caliban", derived from the word "Carib", the native group believed by some to have ritually eaten

human flesh (“cannibal”). Students can be asked at this point to consider what this character’s real name might have been and how they themselves feel when labelled with an uncomplimentary nickname. The origin of the name Caliban could be illustrated by reading the following account by Christopher Columbus in his journal. On Sunday, November 4, 1492, less than a month after he arrived in the New World, the following entry appears:

He learned also that far from the place there were men with one eye and others with dogs’ muzzles who ate human beings.<sup>2</sup>

And on November 23, this account:

... On it (Haiti) lived people who had only one eye and others called cannibals, of whom they seemed to be very afraid.<sup>3</sup>

A contemporary response to Columbus’ account comes in an essay by Roberto Fernández Retamar in which he states:

The colonizer’s version explains to us that owing to his irremediable bestiality, there was no alternative to the extermination of the Carib . . . and in Shakespeare, Caliban is a savage and deformed slave who cannot be degraded enough . . . As for the concrete man, present him in the guise of an animal, rob him of his land, enslave him so as to live from his toil, and at the right moment, exterminate him; this latter, of course, only as long as there was someone who could be depended on to perform the arduous tasks in his stead.<sup>4</sup>

Another reference to the barbaric connotation associated with the name Caliban comes in Montaigne’s essay “On Cannibals” which appeared in 1580 and was one of the most widely disseminated European Utopian works. Giovanni Floro’s English translation of the essays was published in 1603. Not only was Floro a personal friend of Shakespeare, but the copy of the translation that Shakespeare owned and annotated is still preserved and is considered one of the inspirations behind *The Tempest*. Montaigne states:

... there is nothing barbaric or savage in these nations . . . what happens is that everyone calls what is foreign to his own customs ‘barbarian’.<sup>5</sup>

Students can respond to the above quotes by supplying their own impressions to unfamiliar people or experiences. Or, if they are comfortable enough with the teacher and fellow classmates, they might relate personal feelings associated with conflicting cultural values when they are considered “foreign” by the society at large in their new environment.

## ACT I, SCENE i

Since the primary means of creating the illusion of action on shipboard in Shakespeare's work was suggestive noise and terminology, before showing students Shakespeare's initial stage directions—

(On a ship at sea): a tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning heard (ll. 1-2)

the teacher might elicit words or phrases to create this dramatic atmosphere. Classroom lights could be flashed rapidly on and off to simulate a storm, and then in darkness and with their eyes closed, students might begin to imagine the sounds, smells, sights, and feelings associated with the hurricanes they have experienced. The teacher could write these impressions on the blackboard, thus providing students with a rich vocabulary, and continue by reading the following passages from the chronicles. The first is an account by Cabeza de Vaca who explored Florida, northern Mexico and what is now the American Southwest in the years 1527-1537:

An hour after I left, the sea began to rise ominously and the north wind blow so violently that the two boats would not have dared come near land . . . All hands labored severely under a heavy fall of water that entire day and until dark on Sunday. By then the rain and the tempest had stepped up until there was as much agitation in the town as at sea. All the houses and churches came down. We had to walk seven or eight together, locking arms, to keep from being blown away.<sup>6</sup>

The second is considered to be an exaggeration of the truth and is known as the "Myth of the Lost Pilot". It was used to disclaim Columbus' contention of having been the first European to set foot in the New World since the power and financial rewards he would personally reap would minimize the control of the Spanish crown:

. . . a pilot . . . called Alonso Sánchez de Huelva . . . had a small ship with which he traded by sea and used to carry wares from Spain to the Canaries . . . while pursuing this trade . . . he ran into a squall so heavy and tempestuous that he could not withstand it . . . The crew suffered great hardships in the storm for they could neither eat nor sleep. After this lengthy period the wind fell and they found themselves near an island. It is not known for sure which it was, but it is suspected that it was the one now called Santo Domingo.<sup>7</sup>

The last two quotations are taken from an account of the Conquest by the Aztecs themselves. *Broken Spears* is a collection of native New World reactions to the events they witnessed first hand. Here we see hints of Prospero's command to Ariel to unleash the tempest:

Motecuhzoma had sent the magicians to learn what sort of people the strangers might be, but they were also to see if they could work some charm against them or do them some mischief. They might be able to direct a harmful wind against them . . . The magicians carried out their mission against the Spaniards, but they failed completely. They could not harm them in any way.<sup>8</sup>

Students can now read lines 1-17, 34-50, and 58-66 from *The Tempest* in order to dramatize Shakespeare's expertise in depicting the terror of the storm to those aboard ship. Throughout this approach to the play, if the words or concepts seem too difficult for students, the teacher can isolate one line at a time and the individual character or the class as a whole can respond by patterning their oral response after the teacher's. If the instructor delivers the words correctly in terms of pitch and tone, students should get a sense of what is being said, even if each word is not fully understood. Students could then be asked to paraphrase, with the teacher's assistance, in order to test for comprehension.

## ACT I, SCENE ii

The setting is now the island on which Caliban, Sycorax his mother (now banished), and Ariel had been living before Prospero and Miranda's arrival twelve years earlier (Miranda is now fifteen years old). Creating the mood for this scene might take the form of a class discussion or written assignment pertaining to the differences between island and mainland living, since Hispanic students will have had personal experiences with both. Before reading the section referring to Gonzalo's having gathered the necessary provisions for Prospero and Miranda upon their flight from Italy—

Some food we had, and some fresh water, that  
A noble Neapolitan, Gonzalo,  
Out of his charity, who being then appointed  
Master of this design, did give us, with  
Rich garments, linens, stuffs and necessities . . .

(ll. 160-167)

—students can imagine themselves in a similar situation in that specific time period and consider what manageable personal items they would have hurriedly thrown together for such an unexpected departure. My most cherished memories of grammar school revolve around the following exercise related to geography lessons. Our teacher would announce that we would be “traveling”

the next day to a specific part of the world and after telling us a bit about its location and climate, assign us the task of “packing a suitcase”—i.e. cutting out pictures from magazines of whatever we felt was necessary for the trip—and the next day we’d be strapped into our “seatbelts” on our “airplane,” “pass-ports” in hand, and be off! Photocopied pictures from historical costume books would be helpful here for the clothing they might carry. Regarding the characters’ departure from Italy in *The Tempest*, students should consider that this might be a permanent situation and that Prospero does not use his magical powers until they reach the island. This should inspire students to select items carefully and to anticipate the problems the characters might encounter on their journey.

When Prospero reaches the island he is “rapt in secret studies” (ll. 75-76) with the books Gonzalo has supplied:

*Prospero:*

From mine own library with volumes that  
I prize above my dukedom.

(ll. 167-168)

Students might enjoy creating booklets with magical symbols and secret codes to help them imagine the power that Prospero reaps from these documents.

Scene ii contains a poignant interchange between father and daughter in which Prospero finally explains to Miranda the circumstances surrounding their present existence. Lines 15-25 and 33-46 serve to give the class a clearer understanding of the characters’ plight; the following lines are particularly vivid and would probably leave a lasting impression on students of the hardships Prospero and Miranda faced:

... they prepared  
a rotten carcass of a butt not rigg’d  
Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats  
Instinctively have quit it . . .

(ll. 145-150)

Miranda’s first memories of her childhood are hazy when Prospero asks here in line 49, “What seest thou else in the dark backward and abysm of time?” Students and teachers alike could be encouraged to think back carefully to their earliest memories in order to recount them either orally or in written form.

Prospero tells Miranda that he has released the tempest through Ariel's intervention and with the magical powers of his robe. He asks Miranda to "pluck my magic garment from me" (l. 24) when he no longer needs control, and students might begin to envision the qualities of this article of clothing by producing a costume sketch. A collection of fabric scraps, especially glitzy ones, would help spark their creativity. Students can attach small fabric swatches along the bottom and sides of the drawing, as is the practice of professional costume designers, in order to suggest color and texture.

Lines 226-237 provide the only specific reference to Bermuda in the entire play and students could read the historical reference to the Bermuda Pamphlets described at the beginning of this unit.

Prospero, in his dialogue with Miranda, recounts their initial encounter with Caliban twelve years earlier. This, to me, is the first reference in the play related to second language acquisition and communication between two cultures, and for this reason I feel it warrants a detailed analysis. The first image we have of Caliban is Prospero's description:

... A freckled whelp hag born—not honour'd  
with a human shape . . . Dull thing, I say so . . .

(ll. 282-284)

We see the encounter from Caliban's perspective in the lines quoted at the beginning of the unit (l. 332-341; 355-359) and it would be an opportunity now to review these and their meaning with the students. This quote, in conjunction with lines 310-315 in which Prospero extols the virtues of Caliban's native intelligence and hard work, provides a basis for discussion of the necessary components for survival in the wild. The foreigners are dependent upon Caliban for their livelihood, yet subjugate and enslave him:

We cannot miss him: he does make our fire  
Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices  
That profit us . . .

(ll.311-315)

There is an interesting parallel in Cortes' letter to the king regarding the natives living near Tascalteca:

In a letter of mine I informed Your Majesty how the natives of these parts are of much greater intelligence than those of other islands . . . indeed they appeared to us to possess such understanding as is sufficient for an ordinary citizen to conduct himself in a civilized country. It seemed to me therefore,

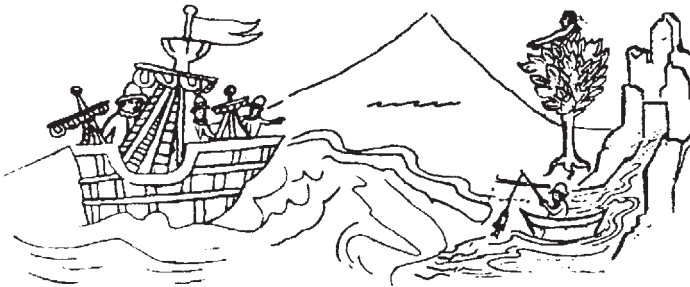
a serious matter at this time to compel them to serve the Spaniards as the natives of the other islands do; yet if this were not done, the conquerors and settlers of these parts would not be able to maintain themselves.<sup>9</sup>

We have read Columbus' account of rumored cannibals in the area. Here is the entry regarding his initial attempts to communicate with the natives:

On my arrival at that sea, I had taken some Indians by force from the first island that I came to, in order that they might learn our language, and communicate to us what they knew respecting the country . . . in a short time, either by gesture and signs, or by words, we were enabled to understand each other.<sup>10</sup>

The class could be divided into two groups at this point—natives and conquerors. Having prepared a list of the qualities of their island, the natives, through “gestures and signs” could attempt to communicate these to the foreigners.

The illustrations contained in this curriculum unit are by two students at Betsy Ross Arts Magnet School, Gabriel Arvelo, a 6th grader, and Joel Johnstone, an 8th grader. These are based on adaptations of original codices paintings by Alberto Beltran in *The Broken Spears*. This first drawing and excerpt from the text are included here to draw parallels to *The Tempest* and to imagine Caliban's initial reaction to the Europeans:



Drawing by Gabriel Arvelo<sup>11</sup>

An emissary had been sent by Montezuma to validate reports that natives had seen “two towers or small mountains floating on the waves of the sea”<sup>12</sup> and the following is their eyewitness account:

‘Our lord and king, it is true that strange people have come to the shores of the great sea . . . There were about fifteen of these people, some with blue jackets, others with black or green, and still others with jackets of a soiled color, very

ugly, like our *ichtilmatli* . . . they have very light skin, much lighter than ours. They all have long beards, and their hair comes only to their ears.' Montezuma was downcast when he heard this report, and did not speak a word.<sup>13</sup>

Since these particular students have had the experience in their lives of encountering a culture and language different from their own, the following suggestion for a theater game might help them to recall that initial point-of-contact and the inevitable frustration and misunderstanding which result. Some Hispanic students are well versed in "jerigonza" in which words are divided into syllables and each syllable prefaced with the same sound, for example "chi". This new language is spoken rapidly and I am totally baffled whenever I hear it! If a student with this skill (pretending not to understand English or Spanish) were to confront the teacher or another student with no knowledge of *jerigonza*, this might simulate the initial encounter between Caliban and the foreigners. The class could formulate questions which might naturally develop from this situation and help the two actors consider non-verbal methods of communication.

The following quotes from the chronicles pertain to communication between two cultures, further emphasizing the historical antecedents and their relevance. Students can be encouraged to reenact these three situations in the "jeringoza" theater game described above. The first quote from Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca recounts the story of an Indian named Beru who encountered the Spaniards on the banks of the river Pelu:

The Spaniards asked him by signs and words what land it was and what it was called. The Indian understood that they were asking him something from the gestures and grimaces they were making with hands and face, as if they were addressing a dumb man, but he did not understand what they were asking, so he told them what he thought they wanted to know. The Christians understood what they wanted to understand . . . and from that time they called that rich and great empire Peru, corrupting both words, as the Spaniards corrupt almost all the words they take from the Indian language . . .<sup>14</sup>

Students and teachers alike have probably experienced similar misunderstandings in communication and it might be insightful here to discuss some of these twisted interpretations.

The next two quotes are taken from Cabeza de Vaca's account:

The Indians of the village returned next day and approached us. Because we had no interpreter, we could only make out what they said; but their many signs and threats left little doubt that they were bidding us to go.<sup>15</sup>

Students can contemplate what might have been said and attempt to communicate their thoughts non-verbally or through the “jerigonza” exercise above.

And we taught all the people by signs, which they understood, that in Heaven was a Man called God, who had created the heavens and earth; that all good came from Him and that we worshipped and obeyed Him and called Him our Lord; and that if they would do the same, all would be well with them. They apprehended us so readily that if we had had enough command of their language to make ourselves perfectly understood, we would have left them all Christians.<sup>16</sup>

A conflicting report is mentioned in Robert Ricard’s book, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*, as he describes the attempts of Munoz Camargo and other clerics to instruct the natives in Christianity:

... the religious could only indicate the existence of heaven and hell. To suggest hell they pointed to the earth, fire, toads and snakes. Then they raised their eyes, pointed to heaven and spoke of a single God. The Indians barely understood.<sup>17</sup>

Many Hispanic students are familiar with the beliefs of the Afro-Caribbean “Santería” religious cult. Assuming that the teacher is not and by using only signs and “jerigonza”, students could attempt to “convert” the teacher into this belief system and decide at the end of the exercise if their communication was successful.

Ariel’s song to Fernando (l. 399–405) in which he falsely implies to the prince that his father, Alonso, has died in the shipwreck, is an opportunity for those students interested in music to explore the technical possibilities within the play. The piece is included in the Arden edition and a simple flute recording with the assistance of the music teacher would add a nice touch here. (On page opposite)<sup>18</sup>

In addition, students interested in scenic art could sketch their interpretation of these lines. Students are provided with two additional challenges to their creativity by considering solutions to the following stage directions included in this scene:

re-enter Ariel like a water nymph

(l. 317)

re-enter Ariel invisible, playing and singing

(l. 377)

"FULL FADOM FIVE" J. WILSON, OVERFULL EYES

Full fathom five thy father lies; of his bones are coral made; those are pearls that  
 were his eyes; nothing of him that doth fade, but doth suffer a sea change  
 into something rich and strange Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell; Hark, now I  
 hear them, HARK, now I hear them, Ding, Dong Bell Ding Dong Ding Dong  
 Bell Ding Dong Ding Dong Bell Ding Dong Ding Dong Bell

The scene ends (l. 413-470) with Miranda's first glimpse of Fernando under the careful supervision of her father, who, as powerful as he is, cannot control their mutual attraction. Miranda challenges her father's negative response to Fernando and what ensues is the age-old generational conflict to which students can easily relate:

*Miranda:*

... I might call him (Fernando)  
 A thing divine; for nothing natural I ever saw so  
 noble.

(ll. 419-421)

*Prospero:*

... At the first sight  
They have chang'd eyes . . .

(ll. 443-444)

*Miranda:*

... This  
Is the third man that e'er I saw . . .

(ll. 447-448)

*Fernando:*

O, if a virgin,  
And your affection not gone forth,  
I'll make you The Queen of Naples.

(ll. 450-452)

*Prospero:*

... Come;  
I'll manacle thy neck and feet together,  
Sea-water shalt thou drink . . .

(ll. 463-464)

*Miranda:*

O dear father,  
Make not too rash a trial of him, for  
He's gentle, and not fearful.

(ll. 468-470)

Students can note here the change in tone of the supposedly cultured Prospero.

## ACT II, SCENE i

The act opens on another part of the island in which the remaining members of the fleet have been marooned. Lines 45-53 are a comical interchange between four of the characters concerning their impressions, both positive and negative, of the island. The following entry describing Cuba from Columbus' journal might be discussed here:

This said island of Juana is exceedingly fertile . . . it is surrounded by many bays . . . surpassing any that I have ever seen; numerous large and healthful

rivers intersect it, and it also contains many very lofty mountains . . . all these islands are very beautiful . . . they are filled with a great variety of trees of immense height . . . some of them were blossoming, some bearing fruit . . . The nightingale and various birds were singing in countless numbers, and that in November, the month in which I arrived there. There are . . . seven or eight kinds of palm trees . . .<sup>19</sup>

Students could be asked to draw these different varieties of palm trees from memory and also to compare the flora and fauna of Puerto Rico with the mainland. A dialogue might be improvised in which one actor paints a favorable picture of the new environment while another gives an unfavorable one.

The scene has several costume references (l. 59, 66, 93, 266), and the following illustrations can be analyzed, paying particular attention to the depiction of the Spaniards. From the point of view of the costume designer, students might consider the alterations the characters would make to their garments now that weather conditions have probably changed from those in Italy:



Drawing by Gabriel Arvelo

Lines 143–151 describe Gonzalo's idea of a Utopian life style on the island and the pronouncements he would make if he were king. Students can consider their own suggestions for an ideal world and come up with a personal list.

Shakespeare gives us several references (between lines 180–320) to dream-like spells experienced by some of the characters. Students might search this section independently to list these phrases. In their reading (l. 295–300) they will

Drawing by Joel Johnstone<sup>20</sup>

Drawing by Joel Johnstone

once again happen upon Ariel working his magic through song as he attempts to awaken Gonzalo from slumber. There is no musical notation available for this particular piece, thus providing interested students the opportunity to develop their own accompaniment which best corresponds to the sense of the words.

## ACT II, SCENE ii

The act begins with the technical note, "A noise of thunder heard," (l. 1.) followed by a passage by Trincolo in which he vividly describes the storm (ll. 18-

24). A modified version of the exercises suggested at the beginning of the analysis of the play to simulate hurricane conditions could be used now to draw students into the mood of the scene.

The continuation of Trincolo's discourse on the brewing storm and its relationship to the historical references in the chronicles can be considered here. Trincolo describes his first encounter with Caliban and immediately considers capitalizing on his "otherness" in the same manner chosen by Pedro Serrano, the shipwrecked Spaniard vividly described by Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca in his Commentaries. Serrano's plight, having spent seven years on a desolate island, is worth reading here for the pure theatricality of this adventure story. The following excerpt from this chronicle (three years into his dilemma another shipwrecked Spaniard joins Serrano, and four years later they are rescued by a passing ship) might prove insightful. Students can consider that Caliban's "monstrous" appearance was probably a natural adaptive reaction to his environment:

Owing to the harshness of the climate hair grew all over his body till it was like an animal's pelt . . . His hair and beard fell below his waist . . . Pedro Serrano and his companion, who had grown a similar pelt, seeing the boat approach, fell to saying that Credo . . . so that the sailors should not think they were demons and flee from them . . . They no longer looked like human beings . . . Pedro Serrano reached here (Spain) and went on to Germany where the emperor then was . . . In every village he passed through on the way he earned much money whenever he chose to exhibit himself.<sup>21</sup>

The second quote from *The Tempest* parallels Garcilaso's account as Stefano plans to capitalize on Caliban's "otherness":

*Trincolo:*

What have we here? a man or a fish? . . . Were I in England now, and had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver; there would this monster make a man: when they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian . . .

(II. 25-34)

*Stephano:*

If I can recover him and keep him tame and get to Naples with him, he's a present for any emperor that ever trod on neat's leather (cowhide).

(II. 67-70)

Students will probably have many stories to tell of their experiences with circus “freak” shows, movies and television programs in response to the above quotes. They might want to consider themselves in a similar situation and explore the deeper feelings of “the other” in order to see it from a different perspective.

This act also contains a reference to the native belief that the Spaniards were an incarnation of the gods of their legends. The first quote refers to Columbus’ perception of the people in present-day Santo Domingo and the second is Stephano’s response to Caliban’s curiosity:

... They practice no kind of idolatry, but have a firm belief that all strength and power, and indeed all good things, are in heaven, and that I had descended from thence with these ships and sailors . . . <sup>22</sup>

*Caliban:*

Hast thou not dropp’d from heaven?

*Stephano:*

Out o’ the moon, I do assure thee.

I was the man i’ th’ moon when time was.

*Caliban:*

I have seen thee in her and I do adore thee . . .

(ll. 135-140)

The end of Scene ii finds Caliban, under the influence of the wine that has been forced upon him by Stephano and Trinculo, deciding to change allegiance and to take them, instead of Prospero, for his masters. Caliban sadly mistakes for freedom what is actually just another form of servitude and slavery. The dialogue which proceeds from line 148 until the end of the scene again graphically depicts Caliban’s innate knowledge of natural lore and his willingness to share this with the very people who enslave him. The following lines are particularly graphic:

*Caliban:*

I’ll show thee the best springs; I’ll pluck thee  
berries, I’ll fish for thee and get thee wood  
enough.

(ll. 160-162)

*Caliban:*

... let me bring thee where crabs grow;  
And I with my long nails will dig thee pig nuts;  
Show thee a jay’s nest and instruct thee how  
To snare the nimble marmoset [monkey];

I'll bring thee  
To clustering filberts and sometimes I'll get thee  
Young scamels [a type of shellfish]  
from the rock

(ll. 168-172)

Since many of the students who make up the bilingual population in New Haven come from the rural areas of the Caribbean, they might enjoy comparing and contrasting their knowledge of the natural wonders of island life with Caliban's.

### **ACT III, SCENE i**

The love between Fernando and Miranda is expressed verbally in this short scene. Since most of the language is very sophisticated, these relatively simple lines (ll. 6-9, 20-21, 31-36, 45-51, 58-60, 63-65, 67-68, 72-74, 83, 86-92), can be excerpted in order to provide the framework for the following comprehension questions:

- How does Fernando describe Prospero?
- Why is Prospero acting like this?
- Where is Prospero during this scene? How long will he be away?
- What is Fernando doing?
- How does he seem to Miranda?
- Why isn't he exhausted by his heavy work?
- How many women has he seen? Men?
- What does Fernando claim to be?
- What is Fernando's response when Miranda asks him if he loves her?
- Why does Miranda cry?
- Who proposes marriage? What is said?

### **ACT III, SCENE ii**

This scene takes place on another part of the island as Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo plot to kill Prospero, with Ariel in the background trying to undermine their intentions. The language of lines 40-111 is basically simple, and students could mimic the teacher's delivery. The following questions might be posed:

- How does Caliban describe Prospero?
- What is Stephano's threat to Trinculo?

- What does Caliban intend to do to Prospero when he leads his two companions to him?
- What is Ariel's role in this scene?
- Who is really starting trouble here? Why?
- What is the first thing Caliban says they must do to Prospero?
- Who is the only other woman Caliban has ever seen?
- What does Stephano intend to do with Miranda after Prospero has been killed?

### **ACT III, SCENE iii**

This scene provides a wealth of opportunities for students interested in technical theater as the storm wells up again and a banquet strangely disappears. In addition to scenic, costume, lighting and properties notes, there are references to music and choreography and to the elements of Ariel's magic. Students could divide the following stage directions into their corresponding components and decide as technicians in their particular fields what the best solutions would be. They might also consider the differences between a staged and a film version in order to compare the possibilities and limitations of both media:

Solemn and strange music, and Prospero on the top (invisible). Enter several strange Shapes, bringing in a banquet; and dance about it with gentle actions of salutations; and inviting the king and company to eat, they depart.

(Il. 16-21)

Thunder and lightning. Enter Ariel like a Harpy; claps his wings upon the table; and, with a quaint device, the banquet vanishes.

(Il. 51-54)

Ariel vanishes in thunder; then, to soft music, enter the Shapes again, and dance, with mocks and mows, and carrying out the table.

(Il. 82-85)

This scene also contains a description of the islanders by Gonzalo which parallels an entry in Bartolomé de las Casas, and students might consider the similarities in both accounts as a basis for a class discussion and/or a written assignment. Regarding the natives of Hispaniola (Santo Domingo), las Casas states:

... these people are the most guileless, the most devoid of wickedness . . . They are by nature the most humble, patient, and peaceable, holding no grudges . . . neither excitable nor quarrelsome . . . The sons of nobles among us, brought up in the enjoyments of life's refinements, are no more delicate than are these Indians . . . <sup>23</sup>

## ACT IV, SCENE i

A wealth of song and poetry characterizes this scene as the element of the masque is introduced. For those students who enjoy poetry, this would be a good opportunity to repeat the lines after the teacher and to discuss the meaning and content of each poem. A memorization homework assignment might follow. These verses include Ariel's poem (ll. 42-47), Juno's song describing her marriage blessing (ll. 105-110), Ceres' hopes for the bestowal of rich harvests (ll. 111-116), and Iris' call to the nymphs (ll. 127-138).

There are several references to clothing here, presenting yet another chance for students to analyze the play from the costumer's perspective and sketch the corresponding designs. These include the following:

-Enter certain Reapers, properly habited

(l. 138)

-(re)enter Ariel, loaden with glistening apparel

(l. 192)

-Enter Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo, all wet

(l. 194)

*Trinculo:*

O, King Stephano!

... look what a wardrobe here is for thee!

(ll. 222-223)

*Stephano:*

Put off that gown, Trinculo; by this hand

I'll have that gown.

(l. 228)

## ACT V, SCENE i

This, the last act in the play, illustrates Prospero's humanity in pardoning his brother and his skill at restoring his lost power. Fernando and his father are reunited, Ariel gains his liberty, having successfully carried out Prospero's wishes, and Prospero extends this freedom to Caliban who regrets having subjected himself to Stephano, "this dull fool" (l. 297). Prospero and the foreigners plan their voyage back to Italy, where Fernando and Miranda will wed.

Shakespeare does not give us any indication here of Caliban's response to the foreigners' exodus from the island. Is he happy that they're leaving? Will he miss these people even though he has been subjugated by them? How do students think this new language and worldly knowledge have altered his perceptions? It might be interesting to imagine that Caliban travels back to Italy with the Europeans in the light of the following quote from Montaigne, his account of a native of the New World's visit to Europe:

Three of these people . . . were at Rouen at the time that the late King Charles the Ninth was there . . . and they were shown our fashions, our pomp, and the form of a fair city. After that someone wanted to know what they had found most to be admired . . . They said . . . that they had observed that there were among us men crammed with all kinds of good things while their halves were begging at their door, emaciated with hunger and poverty; and that they thought it strange that these needy halves did not take the others by the throat or set fire to their houses.<sup>21</sup>

Students can observe here several references to the magical qualities of Prospero's robes and to his donning of the garments, including his "hat and rapier," (l. 118) which he wore in Italy, symbolizing his relinquishing of power. The charm is extinguished when he states:

. . . I'll break my staff  
Bury it certain fadoms in the earth,  
And deeper than did ever plummet sound I'll  
drown my book.

(ll. 54-57)

As an exercise students can dramatize the stage direction which reads:

... they (Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Adrian, Francisco) all enter the circle which Prospero had made, and there stand charm'd

(ll. 56-58)

They can then react to Prospero's statement:

... There stand, for you are spell-stopp'd

(ll. 60-61)

Prospero grants Ariel his much desired liberty and Ariel's song (ll. 88-93) describes his delight in controlling his life once again. The musical notation is included in the Arden edition, and a class sing-along might follow with simple live or taped accompaniment:<sup>25</sup>

"WHERE THE BEE SUCKS" J. WILSON. ~~QUESTFULL ARIEL~~

Where the bee sucks there suck I: In a cowslip's bell I lie: There I couch when  
owls do cry. On the bat's back I do fly, after summer merrily: Merrily, merrily  
shall I live now under the blossom that hangs on the bough. Merrily, merrily  
shall I live now, under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

Encourage students to contemplate what they would enjoy doing if they found themselves in Ariel's situation, tasting freedom after a long period of sub-

jugation. Their thoughts could be transposed into the text of a song, using the same tune as Ariel's.

## EPILOGUE

Before showing the script to the class, the teacher could read the Epilogue aloud, omitting the last rhyming word in every other line. Thus students will hear the first clue—the last word of the first line—and will supply the complementary rhyming word at the end of the next line, alternating in this manner throughout the Epilogue. This gives the teacher the chance to test students' comprehension of the play. For example:

Now my charms are all o'erthrown  
And what strength I have's mine \_\_\_\_\_ . . .

As you from crimes would pardon'd be,  
Let your indulgence set me \_\_\_\_\_.

Epilogue (ll. 1-2, 19-20)

After the Epilogue has been read, teachers and students can review the major objectives of this curriculum unit to see if they have been met. Do students have an understanding of colonization as portrayed in *The Tempest*? Can they relate the issues associated with one culture being dominated by another to other historical periods? To the present? Can they begin to question history if only one, and not multiple, perspectives are given?

Students will hopefully have seen the parallels between *The Tempest* and the chronicles throughout the reading of the play. Are any of the references to these primary sources vivid enough for students to recount from memory? They have also been trained to look at a play from the point of view of the stage technician—is it easier now to spot costume, lighting, scenery, properties, and sound references?

Lastly, the issue which I find most central, that of language and communication, can best be evaluated by returning to the questions posed at the beginning of the unit related to the point-of-contact between cultures. Hopefully students have become sensitized to Caliban's plight by the end of the play. Students can discuss their initial reactions and any changes they may have felt as the play developed.

In conclusion, this analysis of *The Tempest*, much of it seen from Caliban's perspective, illustrates the complexity of second language acquisition and the sensitivity with which E.S.O.L. instructors in particular approach teaching a new

language while at the same time encouraging pride in the students' native tongue. With an appreciation for and an understanding of different cultures and modes of expression, second language teachers will hopefully never be blessed with Caliban's invective:

You taught me language; and my profit on't  
Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you  
For learning me your language.

Act I, Scene ii (ll. 365-367)

\* \* \*

There have been several changes since this curriculum unit was written. I taught it for two years to its targeted audience, intermediate and advanced E.S.O.L. students at Roberto Clemente Middle School, mostly Puerto Rican, and for the past three years to mainstream (Anglo and Hispanic) 5th and 8th grade Humanities and Reading classes in my new position as Curriculum/Staff Developer at Betsy Ross Arts Magnet Middle School. The basic difference between the Hispanic students in both settings is that the E.S.O.L. students are new arrivals struggling with a new language, and the mainstream Hispanics range from non-Spanish speakers, i.e., monolingual English (often both they and their parents were born on the mainland and, sadly to say, no longer speak Spanish) to true bilinguals, equally at ease in both English and Spanish—the many stages of Caliban's language dilemma right before my eyes, each at a different level of second language acquisition and first language maintenance or demise. As a result, I believe, of their personal experiences with second language learning, I found the Spanish speaking E.S.O.L. and mainstream students to be more sympathetic to Caliban's plight than their mainstream (Anglo) or mainstream Hispanic (monolingual English) peers. The exceptions were those mainstream Anglo students who were struggling with either Spanish or French in foreign language classes.

Another change is that I have taught the unit to culminate a year-long curriculum based on primary sources (translated into English for those students who cannot read Spanish) and other materials from the period of the Conquest. By the last marking period, students have been exposed to both the European and the Caribbean perspectives and can hopefully understand the conflict in *The Tempest* in the context of the broader historical period. My interest in these writings began in Professor Echevarría's seminar and I am currently in the

beginning stages of a doctoral dissertation in Bilingual Education at the University of Connecticut. The focus will be the Taino/Arawak peoples, "encountered" by Christopher Columbus and other Europeans in the Caribbean, whose culture virtually disappeared within two generations as a result of the ensuing conflict. The upcoming (1992) Quincentennial and the relative lack of curricular materials based on these indigenous groups make these studies, I feel, a necessity.

Although I continue to use Shakespeare's original as planned in the unit, I have come across two excellent supplemental versions—an illustrated comic book with student guide and cassette (Pendulum Books), and the script adaptation by Forrest Stone (Classic Theatre for Children). Both are noted in the Bibliography. These can be used in addition to narrative versions, such as the Lambs', at the beginning of the unit, to whet students' appetites. The only problem I have encountered is the typical depiction of Caliban in the comic book—I have literally whited him out of his monster-like role and have had students draw a more human version. I have also photocopied the drawings of the various characters from the comic book, enlarged them, cut them out and glued them onto cardboard. Tape a chopstick to the back as a handle, and, presto—you've got an instant puppet show!

The setting of *The Tempest*, in my classroom at least, is definitely Caribbean. Although I have never mounted a full-scale production, I have invited other classes in for staged readings of one or two scenes. During some sessions, Caliban has taught the Europeans the traditional ball game (a cross between soccer and volleyball), exposing them for the first time to rubber. We have had Caribbean props for these presentations—root vegetables, tropical fruits, sugar cane from the local Hispanic market, salsa and merengue music and dance during the banquet scene (and prepared Puerto Rican foods which would disappear, as in the play, but which we would feast upon later), rain forest tapes of bird and animal sounds for background noise, classroom lights flashing on and off for the opening tempest/hurricane, mosquito nets and hammocks, Taino/Arawak petroglyphs on the blackboard, and artifacts strewn on the floor—even cigars!

At the recent suggestion of Professor Tom Whitaker at Yale, I have read *A Tempest* by Aimé Césaire, a contemporary writer from Martinique, and recommend it highly for teachers interested in an alternate interpretation. It is set in an African colony, and with the few expletives deleted, it is certainly within the range of students after they have been exposed to Shakespeare's work.

For a classroom twist (or as part of a production), Caliban can teach the newcomers his language, thanks to the Taino/Arawak-Spanish-English dictio-

naires that exist (theirs was not a written code, but we have European documentation of their language written in our alphabet). The following dictionary is my version—the illustrations are student adaptations of woodcuts from the period.

The possibilities, in other words, are endless. The bottom line is to have fun while you—teacher and student—learn!

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Frank Kermode, ed., p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Christopher Columbus, *Four Voyages to the New World*, R.H. Mahor, ed., p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>4</sup>Roberto Fernández Retamar, "Caliban: Notes Towards a Discussion of Culture in our America," *The Massachusetts Review*, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup>Michel de Montaigne, *Selected Essayes*, Blanchard Bates, ed., p. 77.

<sup>6</sup>Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, *Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America*, Cyclone Covey, ed., p. 28.

<sup>7</sup>Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca, *Royal Commentaries of the Incas*, p. 12.

<sup>8</sup>*The Broken Spears*, Miguel Leon-Portilla, ed., p. 34.

<sup>9</sup>Hernán Cortés, *Letters from Mexico*, A.R. Pagden, ed., p. 279.

<sup>10</sup>Columbus, p. 9.

<sup>11</sup>*The Broken Spears*, p. 13.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>14</sup>Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup>Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>17</sup>Robert Ricard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico*, p. 87.

<sup>18</sup>This song may be found in *The Tempest*, edited by Frank Kermode, p. 157.

<sup>19</sup>Christopher Columbus, p. 5.

<sup>20</sup>*The Broken Spears*, pp. 11, 21, 32, 37, 62, 70, 119, 126.

<sup>21</sup>Garcilaso de la Vega el Inca, pp. 28-30.

<sup>22</sup>Christopher Columbus, p. 67.

<sup>23</sup>Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*, p. 47.

<sup>24</sup>Michel de Montaigne, p. 88.

<sup>25</sup>This song may be found in *The Tempest*, edited by Frank Kermode, p. 158.

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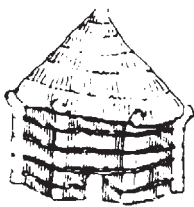




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Spanish-Taino-English Dictionary

SPANISH		TAINO		ENGLISH
Agua		Ni		Water
Algodon		Sorobei		Cotton
Arrugo		Guaitiao		Friend
Arbol		Gué Gué		Tree
Araña venenosa		Guabá		Poisonous spider
Asiento		Dujo		Seat
Bollitos de maíz		Guanimi		Corn biscuits
Bebida fermentada de casabe		Uikú		Fermented casabe drink
Bebida fermentada de maíz		Xixá		Fermented corn drink
Bueno		Tayno		Good
Bosque		Jibá		Forest
		Mortero		
Calabaza		Auyama		Squash gourd
Cama colgante		Jamaca		Hammock
Casa		Bojio		House
Cielo		Turey		Sky
Ciclón		Juracán		Hurricane
Cigarro		Tabacu		Cigar, Cigarette
Culebra		Jubo		Snake
Cueva		Guaca		Cave
				
	Bohio			
Danza		Araguaca		Dance
Danzar cantando		Areyto		Religious ceremony
El, ella, ello		Guá		He, she, it
Embarcación		Canoa		Canoe
Espintu benéfico		Yukivu		Good spirit
Espintu maléfico		Juracán		Bad spirit, hurricane
Extranjero		Arituna		Foreigner
Flor		Ana		Flower
Fuego		Guatú		Fire
Fruta del guayabo		Guayaba		Guava
Fruta de la piña		Yayama		Pineapple
Fuente de la montaña		Kalichu		Mountain spring
	Haciendo fuego			
Guerra		Guasábara		War
Grande		Ma		Big
Hijo		Guaili		Son
Hombre		Guacokio		Man
Hombre bravo		Guatibo		Brave Man
Hormiga		Bibijagua		Ant
Isla		Cáiku		Island
Jardin		Mayna		Garden
Jefe		Cacique		Leader
joya de oro para el cuello		Guanín		Gold necklace
joya de oro para las orejas		Tatagua		Gold earrings
Lagarto grande		Iguana		Iguana
Luz		Cucú		Light
Lugar escondido		Guanara		Hidden Place
Luna		Caraya		Moon
Lluvia		Para		Rain
		Hacha de piedra		

Madre	Bibi	Mother
Mar	Bagua	Sea
Maiz	Maisi	Corn
Matar	Yuca	To kill
Mariposa	Tanama	Butterfly
Montaña	O	Mountain
Mosquito grande	Corasi	Big mosquito
Muer	Guariche	Woman
No	Uá	No
Uño	Cáku	Eye
Oro	Caona	Gold
Padre	Baba	Father
Pan	Casabi	Bread
Pelota	Batú	Bell
Pez chiquito	Seti	Small fish
Piedra	Siba	Stone
Pimienta	Aji	Pepper
Plaza	Batey	Plaza
¿Por que?	Anaque	Why?
Pueblo de indios	Yucayeque	Native village
Provisión de viaje	Guacabina	Provisions for a trip
Rana	Coki	Small frog
Río	Ni, toa	River
Sacerdote médico	Bohique	Priest with medical powers
Señor	Bajari, guajeri, guamú, bo	Mister
Si	Jan ján	Yes
Sirviente	Nabori	Servant
Sol	Giiey	Sun
Tabaco	Cojibá	Tobacco
Tambor de madera	Magitey	Wooden drum
Tierra	K6	Earth
Tiburón	Cajaya	Shark
Vasija de barro para agua	Canari	Earthenware water dish
Viejo	Guatucán	Old



Tambor



Zomi

