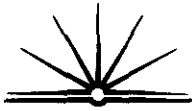


Transformations can be defined as an alteration from one to another. It is evident in my studies of the ~~texts~~ transformation of ~~the~~ William Shakespeare's classic, Hamlet into Tom Stoppard's contemporary play, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (henceforth known as R&G). These ~~text~~ texts have contributed to ~~my~~ deepening my understanding of ~~how transformation can be done through~~ how the context ~~is~~ have affected the values, themes as well as characters ~~in~~.

Firstly, in order to ~~understand~~ recognise the ~~to~~ transformation it is necessary to evaluate Hamlet. The pivot point for the alteration lies within the complexities of the plot of Hamlet. That is, Hamlet's inability to accept ~~the~~ his mother Gertrude's marriage with his uncle Claudius, so soon after ^{the death of} his father, Old Hamlet ~~and~~. This confusion is the basis of Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead the personalities of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (henceforth known as Ros & Guil) in R&G. They ~~are~~ become the major characters of R&G and the major character of Hamlet,

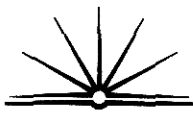


unquestionably Hamlet is shifted to a minor in Stoppard's RCG. Not only is Hamlet's power disregarded, ~~and~~ ~~also~~ his problems are also reduced in significance, so that responders can empathise and sympathise for the hapless pawns Ros & Guildenstern.

The main purpose for a transformation lies in the interests of the responder, that is, the context it was written for. Shakespeare, ~~is~~ targeting at the Elizabethan audience differs to that of Stoppard's, which is contemporary society. Hence, ideas ~~and~~ themes ~~and~~ language presented are relative to its context so that it may be comprehensible.

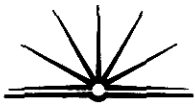
The theme of death is a major aspect in both plays, however is interpreted in a different way.

Shakespeare explores the concept of death as tragic and incorporates violence, which is evident in the ~~the~~ final scene of the play when ~~is~~ ~~everyone~~ almost everyone is dead. He expresses these thoughts ~~in~~ through the contemplation of ~~the~~ ~~the~~ advantages and disadvantages of death ~~is~~ through ~~set~~ soliloquies, namely Hamlet's famous



"to be or not to be", reflects ~~idea~~ ideology of death and the fear of death in Shakespeare's society, as opposed ~~to~~ to the lighthearted approach Stoppard implements. Stoppard explores the theme of death ~~through~~ in the light of humour and views it as merely an absence and not the end to all things. This is evident ~~to~~ through the comments of Ros & Guil when ~~it~~ they suggest that "it's not gasps and blood and falling about it's just a man failing to reappear". Death is portrayed in a more optimistic way as suggested once again through Ros & Guil, "life in a box is better than no life at all," referring to ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~idea~~ in a coffin, idea of being in a coffin, but not being the final act of the play. It is not an ending, but possible something else. It suggests the fear of death that contemporary society can relate to, but also the mentality of many that there ~~are other~~ ^{is perhaps} "life after death" being a beginning to something new. ~~The~~ The theme of death is portrayed through comedy and ~~language~~ language.

~~Shakespeare~~ Shakespeare approaches language with



prose and rhyme such as "The play is the thing, I'll catch the conscience of the king," whereas Stoppard implements ~~the~~ ~~use of~~ rhetorical questions, a word game, and other humorous aspects. ~~Just~~ Questions such as "What's the game? Where are the rules?" not only refers to the consistent word game that Ros & Guild engage themselves in, but also life. ~~Of~~ Contemporary responders can ~~under~~ relate to this often at times we also ponder ~~what~~ ~~is~~ on the question of life and death, as it is inevitable.

Through the comparison of ~~to~~ the contexts of the texts it has shaped and formed my increased understanding of the concept of transformation. The point of view adopted by Stoppard has generally persuaded me and aroused experiences of the concept of life and death. ~~It~~ It has been achieved through the formation of characters, values ~~of~~ and themes presented in both Hamlet and R&G, as well as language techniques.