

Shakespeare's Language Techniques in Othello

Metaphor- "green eyed monster" "tupping" "prove her haggard" "barbary horse", "crocodile tears"

Soliloquy- where one character speaks their thoughts and feelings out to the audience. Used as part of creating Dramatic Irony.

Aside- Characters sharing their thoughts and feelings to the audience while other characters on the stage are oblivious to what is being said.

Dramatic Irony- where the audience know what is going to happen, but the characters do not. Dramatic Irony is created through Iago's soliloquays where he outlines his nefarious plan to destroy Othello.

Foreshadowing- Where one character suggests a possible future scenario, which the audience, due to dramatic irony, know will happen but the character does not. It is a clue to future events. Desdemona says "if I do die before thee, prithee shroud me in one of those same sheets" She foreshadows her own death at the hands of Othello.

Symbolism- where one thing is used to represent another. The Willow tree is used as a symbol of forsaken love. Janus is a symbol for Iago's deceit- he is two faced- he has two sides to his personality. The handkerchief is a symbol of Othello and Desdemona's love.

Juxtaposition- the contrast between light and dark throughout the play. "Nor I neither by this heavenly light, I might do't as well I'th'dark." Desdemona is saying she would not cheat on her husband, but if she did it would be dark and evil like. Contrast between heaven and hell, a contrast between lies and the truth- When Othello confronts Desdemona- Act 4 Scene 2 Lines 34-60

Attacks- Iago attacks on Othello- based on race. Iago uses repetition in his attacks. Iago attacks on Emilia. These attacks show Iago's true personality- he is evil. At the end of the play Emilia attacks Othello repeatedly

Prose and Verse- Some characters, when they are being vulgar or common talk not in Verse (poetry) but in prose. E.g. The Duke talks of Othello's and Desdemona's love in flowing rhyming verse, this then juxtaposes with his description of the Turks,

presented in prose. Iago talks in prose when he degrades Othello to Brabantio and Roderigo. Iago talking in prose when he degrades Emilia and Bianca. Othello talks in prose when he finds out about Desdemona's cheating- he is angry.

Rhetorical Questions- Iago to create doubt in Othello making him draw conclusions about his wife's fidelity. Act 3 Scene 3 Lines 105 -107

Repetition- Act 3 Scene 3 Lines 105-107- the rhetorical questions are repeated. "I see you are moved" Iago to Othello 3,3:219-226. Iago repeats this to Othello to reinforce that Othello should be upset by what is happening.

Puns- Play on words whereby words have two meanings. "Turn, turn, turn." 4,1:250-253 by Othello- turn as in turn around and turn as in to prostitute oneself. "I have pain upon my forehead here." Forehead is a pun for having a headache (which leads to Othello having a fit) and where the cuckold's horns are. A cuckold is man cheated on by his wife. 3,3:286. Clown- "lie....lie" Lie as in to lie down and lie as in to not tell the truth. "I have a common thing" Iago degrades his wife by saying she is a whore.

Tension- Shakespeare creates tension through the use of dramatic irony. The audience know what is going to happen, that she will die at her husband's hands, but the characters do not. The tension is heightened through Emilia almost realizing the reason behind Othello's belief that Desdemona is cheating- her husband- and whether or not she will work it out and save her Mistress before it is too late. 4,2:129-145 "some rogue... devised this slander...The Moor abused by...some knave" by which Iago replies "Fie, there is no such man;it is impossible."

Racist language-

"Black ram" "thick lips" "blacker devil"-5,2:132