

Analysis on the importance of language in disclosing the truth about othello

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Question: Explain the importance of this scene as a turning point in our understanding of the character of Othello. How is the change in his character revealed through language?

In his play Othello, William Shakespeare shows the deterioration of the tragedy's protagonist as he is consumed by jealousy. Shakespeare is able to provide the audience with a greater understanding of Othello's character through the use of various techniques.

In the beginning of the play, Othello was portrayed as a character who was confident, calm and strong. This portrayal ultimately changes, however, in Act 3 Scene 3 of the play due to manipulation enforced by the story's antagonist: Iago. In Iago's attempt to destroy Othello, Iago convinces him that his wife Desdemona is being unfaithful with Cassio. Iago warns Othello of the infidelity by telling him that a "good name in man and women...is the immediate jewel of their souls..." Iago is also trying to notify Othello of the damage that would come to his reputation because of the affair. This line is an example of dramatic irony because the audience knows that Iago is the one who will damage Othello's reputation, not Desdemona and Cassio. The fact that Iago uses the threat of a damaged reputation to manipulate Othello may reveal to the audience Othello's true self-obsessive nature.

Another thing that Iago advises Othello to be careful of is jealousy. This is the first time that the theme of jealousy is addressed clearly in the play. Iago presents this warning through a metaphor, referring to it as "the green-eyed monster..." This metaphor shows how dangerous an emotion jealousy can be and foreshadows the destruction that it will ultimately cause within the play.

Jealousy is also a concept that is quite important in the turning point of Othello's character; the number of times that it is repeated in the extract is an example of this. The word jealousy was repeated twice by Iago and three times by Othello. This may infer that although Iago manipulated Othello, it is ultimately Othello's fault for his own demise as he allowed negative feelings such as jealousy to consume him. Iago foreshadows Othello's downfall when he says that jealousy "doth mock the meat it feeds on..."

The audience is able to grasp that this scene is a turning point for Othello due to the changes that can be seen in his character. In the beginning of the play, Othello is viewed as calm and level headed. An example of this is in Act 1 Scene 2 when Barbantio went to kill Othello for trying to 'steal'

Desdemona from him, Othello remains calm by telling him to "keep up your bright sword, for the dew will rust them..." Othello is even able to maintain a level of poise when Iago informs him of Desdemona's

infidelity. It isn't until Othello is alone does he start to doubt his trust in his wife and his composure begins to dwindle. There is evidence in the shift of composure through punctuation. Before this turning point, few exclamation marks were used when Othello spoke. The addition of exclamation marks to Othello's dialogue in this scene clearly allows the audience to see that Othello no longer has control of himself as his character transitions from calm and level headed to raging.

Two other traits that has changed in Othello's character is his strength and confidence. In the beginning, Othello seemed to be unaffected by the fact

that he was considered an outsider due to the colour of his skin. He thought that him being from a royal family and the “ services” that he had provided to Venice was enough for people to accept him. In Act 3 Scene 3, however, Othello’s true insecurities are revealed and revolved mostly around race. Othello instantly assumes the reason for Desdemona’s unfaithfulness, “ Haply for I am black, and have not those soft parts of conversation that chamberers have...” It is Othello’s insecurity that also causes his leadership attributes to transform into naivety and gullibility.

In conclusion, this scene can be seen as very important concerning the change in Othello’s character. Without the various techniques used in this scene, the audience may not have been able to grasp the true effect of Othello’s transformation on not only himself, but on the fate of other characters as well.