

Analyse the dramatic  
effect of the devices  
iago uses in act 3  
scene 3 to convince...

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



Who is to blame for the tragedy? Could it be the “honest” Iago who mislead the hero using his wits and persistence leading to his own demise? Maybe, but Iago can’t take all the credit for his master plan. It was his excellence in human psychology and reliability on his victims to doubt one another; he was especially reliant on the outsider, Othello. Othello, proud general to naive lover could have been the cause to his own downfall. It might have been his love towards Desdemona, causing his untamed imagination to lose control, informed of her infidelity.

This distrust caused his emotions to turn hostile, thus could be the reason for his defeat. However the question still remains. Who is to blame for the tragedy?

In Act 3 Scene 3 Iago uses a number of devices to convince Othello of Desdemona’s infidelity. One of the devices Iago uses effectively is the repetition of phrases throughout the Act. This device can be used to a great effect as the same point keeps on being repeated.

The use of repetition triggered Othello’s doubts upon his wife as Iago pretends to “protect” her hideous secret.

101 IAGO Indeed?

102 OTHELLO Indeed? Ay, indeed! Discern’st thou aught in that? Is he not honest?

104 IAGO Honest, my lord?

105 OTHELLO Honest? Ay, honest.

106 IAGO My lord, for aught I know.

107 OTHELLO What dost thou think?

108 IAGO Think, my lord?

109 OTHELLO Think, my lord! – By heaven, he echoes me, As if there were some monster in his thought too hideous to be shown!

In this dialogue between Iago and Othello there is a clear use of repetition in use. This time the dramatic device is well distinguished by the readers as well as Othello. He is aware of the fact Iago is hiding something important from him, but is unable to find the truth. However, through Iago's repetition, Othello becomes more suspicious of his old friend, Michael Cassio. Iago does this a number of times for different purposes but it can be seen that his main use of this device was to create space for doubt in Othello's mind as well as building his trust on Iago.

It has been seen that every so often Iago reminds his lord of his love and respect for him and speaks only because he sees that it is in Othello's greatest interests. Iago prolongs the sham that he is Cassio's faithful friend, which makes his pessimism to speak ill mannered of Cassio more believable.

93 IAGO My noble lord –

94 OTHELLO What dost thou say, Iago?

95 IAGO Did Michael Cassio, when you wooed my lady, know of your love?

97 OTHELLO He did, from first to last. Why dost thou ask?

98 IAGO But for satisfaction of my thought – No further harm.

This scene shows the power of strategic silences. This dramatic device is used by Iago to show Othello that he is unable to betray Cassio, his dear friend however; Iago also proves his loyalty for his lord, Othello. Iago proves this as he pauses before answering Othello. In the amount of time Iago pretends to be thinking in his silences, Othello's confusion of his wife's infidelity grows stronger.

In this Scene Iago uses one of the devices to isolate Othello from all his loved ones, he thought he knew. It was brought to his attention of all the deception that happens with Venetian women, after all he is different.

196 IAGO I know our Country Disposition well: In Venice they do let Heaven see the pranks they dare shew their husbands. Their best conscience is not to leave't undone but to keep't unknown.

Here Iago makes a speech in what commitment means to Venetian women. They may walk freely on the streets of Venice untamed, getting " busy" however, their principles don't need to tell them what their doing is ethically wrong but as long as it is unseen from their husbands. In his explanation Iago doesn't say that Desdemona is " loose" but implies this as a generalisation of Venetian women. The device works effectively on Othello because he is not aware of the Venetian society as he is from outside of Europe, where the customs and loyalty to a husband is different. The reason

Othello trusts Iago so much is because he is his only source of the truth and he portrays himself as “honest” Iago, source of all truth.

What are loaded words? This dramatic device is designed to provoke doubt on words with more than one meaning. As Iago has already brought suspicion upon Desdemona and Cassio, Iago’s most innocent comments would be twisted inside Othello’s mind to that of an ominous and disturbing deed.

124 IAGO For Michael Cassio, I dare be sworn, I think he is honest.

126 OTHELLO I think so too

Apparently the straight forwardness of Cassio is honest was too hard for Iago to state; instead he uses the big word “think”. The problem of this word for Othello is that it shows doubt and uncertainty of Iago’s judgment of his good friend. Fortunately for Iago, Othello fell for the trap into stimulating his imagination of more suspicion and distrust on his so called loved ones.

It can be seen that Iago is to blame for the tragedy however; he just played the part of the devil’s advocate. Iago is to blame but he could have not achieved his plan without remaining reliant on the others to play their part in his game. It was his manipulation and somewhat integrity on others which caused the distrust between the friends. The plan succeeded with a twist, as the other characters did not try and prevent suspicion or jealousy because there was no communication amongst them besides talking to Iago, who

turned them against one another. This tragedy could have been prevented by talking to each other and prevent stirring up any unwanted lies.

The Shakespeare play Othello is a tragedy. This tragedy was only Othello's misfortune as he was deceived and manipulated into destroying his life till death. It showed the journey of this humble, loving man slowly losing control on everything and everyone he loved, bringing him to his own downfall caused by himself and ending in death. He caused this calamity by doubt and uncertainty after he fell in love and killed her as well as his greatest enemy, himself.