
Relation between Meter and Syntax in *Othello*

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Abstract

This paper analyses Shakespeare's language in *Othello* according to the relationship between syntax and meter. There is a discussion of some selected quotes. This discussion shows if Shakespeare uses his structure and poetic license to create his optimum dramatic tension or not. It tries to shed light on the different kinds of linguistic tools and metrical distinctions that Shakespeare used to convey his meaning in *Othello*. It answers the questions: Is the tension between meter and syntax within the line and across a group of lines the same or not? To what extent is there a relationship between structure and meaning on the one hand and meter and meaning on the other hand? The study comes to a conclusion that shows the importance of using tension in both meter and syntax in order to give a certain meaning. It also highlights the importance of using the different types of poetic license in *Othello*. To achieve these goals, the stylistic/analytic approach has been applied.

Keywords:

Shakespeare's *Othello*, Meter, Syntax, Poetic license, Iambic pentameter

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1. Introduction

This paper analyses Shakespeare's language in *Othello* according to the relationship between syntax and meter. The analysis focuses on the tension between meter and syntax within the line or across a group of lines in the selected passages below. These certain passages are chosen since they are said by the main character, Othello and through analysis, they contain more poetic license both within the line and across a group of lines. Since the main focus of this research paper is to see to what extent Shakespeare uses meter to develop his main character in the play of *Othello*, the selection of the following quotes shows this tension between meter and syntax.

2. Selected Passages for Analysis:

In relation to syntax, the majority of iambic pentameter lines are parallel to syntax, which means that the line ends with a meaningful structure. In this case, there is an agreement between meter and syntax. On the other hand, there may be end-stopped lines if syntax and rhythm disagree, or if there is a tension between meter and syntax. The kinds of both end-stop and run-on lines will be under scrutiny in this chapter. Shakespeare usually employs a combination of prose and blank verse (unrhymed pentameter) in his plays. In *Othello*, there are different types of characters according to their position and class. When a character is from a lower class, Shakespeare makes him/her speak in rough prose in contrast to those of higher standing who speak in verse. Occasionally, Shakespeare's metrical moves and poetic license are used to create specific effects. The following passages, taken from *Othello*, show the tension or the cases of disagreement between meter and syntax within the line and across a group of lines.

3. Passage One from Othello (Act 1, Scene 3, Lines 158 - 170)

The following passage, taken from *Othello*, shows the conflict or the cases of disagreement between meter and syntax within the line:

3.1. The source text:

*She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:
She swore, in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing
strange,
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful:
She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man: she
thank'd me,
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story.
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake:
She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I loved her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have used:
Here comes the lady; let her witness it.*

Table 1 scansion

	Foot 1		Foot 2		Foot 3		Foot 4		Foot 5		
1	She X	gave —	me X	for —	my X	pains —	a X	world —	of X	sighs —	
2	She X	swore —	in X	faith —	'twas X ↓	strange —	'twas X ↓	pass —	ing X	strange —	
3	'Twas X ↓	pit —	i X	ful — ↑	'twas X ↓	wond —	rous X	pi —	ti X	ful — ↑	
4	She X	wish'd —	she X	had —	not X	heard —	it X	yet —	she X	wish'd —	
5	That X	heaven (—)	had X	made —	her X	such —	a X	man —	she X	thank'd —	me X
6	And X	bade —	me X	if — ↑	I X	had —	a X	friend —	that X	loved —	her X
7	I X	should —	but X	teach —	him X	how —	to X	tell —	my X	sto —	ry X
8	And X	that — ↑	would X	woo —	her u (X) X	pon —	this X	hint —	I X	spake —	
9	She X	loved —	me X	for — ↑	the X	dan —	gers X	I —	had X	pass'd —	
10	And X	I — ↑	loved —	her X	that X	she — ↑	did X	pi —	ty X	them — ↑	
11	This X	on —	ly X	is —	the X	witch —	craft —	I X	have X	used —	
12	Here X	comes —	the X	la —	dy X	let —	her X	wit —	ness X	it — ↑	
Agree		8	8		8		10		9		
Disagree		4	4		4		2		3		

Table 2 poetic license used

	line	Trochaic	Anapest	Pyrrhic	Promotion	Demotion	Compression	Epic	fem.end	Total	%
1	She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:									-	-
2	She swore, in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange,					2				2	10%
3	'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful:				2	2				4	20%
4	She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd									-	-
5	That heaven had made her such a man: she thank'd me,						1		1	2	10%
6	And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,				1				1	2	10%
7	I should but teach him how to tell my story.								1	1	5%
8	And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake:				1			1		2	10%
9	She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,				1					1	5%
10	And I loved her that she did pity them.	1			3					4	20%
11	This only is the witchcraft I have used:				1					1	5%
12	Here comes the lady; let her witness it.	1								1	5%
	Total	2	-	-	9	4	1	1	3	20	33%
	Disagreement per passage	10%	-	-	45%	20%	5%	5%	15%	33%	60

3.2. Statistical Analysis of the Passage

The statistics show that the amount of disagreement between foot and word boundaries in most of the feet is less than those of agreement. This reflects less conflict and tension between meter and syntax in this part of the play since both Othello and Desdemona do not know each other in reality. Othello remarks that she loves him only because of the dangers he faces and he loves her for her pity towards him. Actually, Othello knows nothing about Desdemona's real life and even the same happens to her since she does not know much about his character. This will be clearly declared later on in the play when Desdemona discovers that she lacks the knowledge about what Othello might be if he loses his patience. The following chart shows this statistical analysis of the tension within the line:

Table 3 meter-syntax tension

Foot	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Total	%
Agree	10	9	9	7	7	42	70%
Disagree	2	3	3	5	5	18	30%

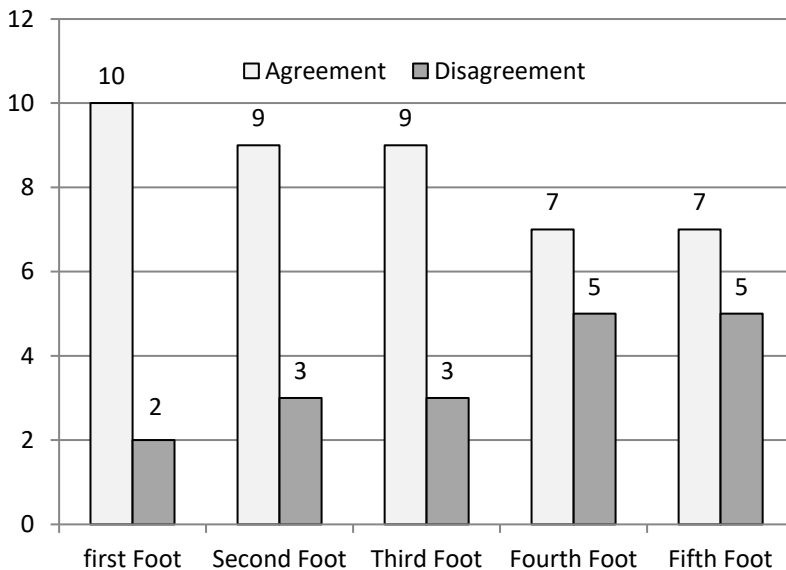


Fig. 1 meter-syntax

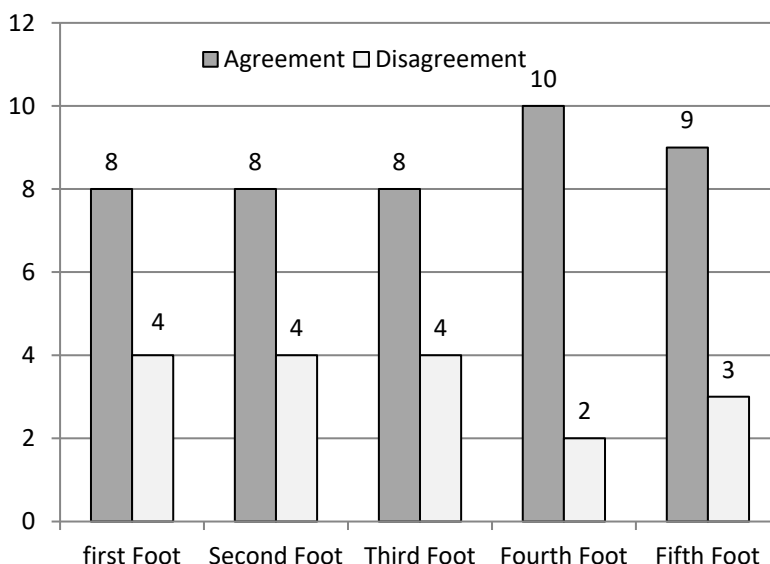


Fig. 2 poetic license

In the above passage, it is clear that almost every line gives a complete thought. This is metrically called “end-stopped lines”. It happens when a metrical line ends at a grammatical boundary as it is clear in almost all the lines of the passage. The pause usually comes at the end of the line which agrees with the end of the sentence or clause. Every line ends with a punctuation mark. These end-stopped lines show the quietness of Othello’s character in this part of the play. He speaks slowly with less feeling of anger or agitation. The sentences are more coherent with less poetic license. In this case, Shakespeare controls his rhythm. Nearly half of the lines in the passage are perfect iambic pentameter. Of course, there are some departures from the iambic norm but they are very few. This helps the reader to follow and understand every sentence easily and simply. The reader will be able to think of and explore the hidden and deeper meanings of the lines where end-stopped are given.

As an unusual character, Othello seems to be relatively passive and reactionary. His acts do not drive the plot although he is known as a military leader and a man of action. He seems to be successful in the battles which he runs and fights. This gives him a reputation in a place he seems stranger

to the original townspeople, and not one of the indigenous people of the city of Venice. Sjölin (2017) assumes that "the two ideologies of anti-racism and feminism seem to collide with each other, as Othello is both a man and a racial other" (184). As a result of that, the action of the play and the language seem complicated according to different factors. Although Othello is the main character and hero of the play, his words and actions do not take the main active role. In contrast, Iago, who is not more courageous and famous as Othello, manipulates well and his words and actions drive the plot of the play. Persichetti (2015) declares that "*Othello's* language is complicated and dynamic. It informs us who he is as well as who he tries to be" (7).

Othello is so jealous. This strong feeling causes him not to have a good deal with the matter. He seems unable to see the some clear facts around him. Merzie (2011) claims that "jealousy is a powerful and strong emotion. It can tear down simple things, things not so relevant, but, as well, it can destroy entire systems such as friendships and families" (91). Jealousy was the main cause of Othello's tragic flaw. Merzie adds that "jealousy of one man has brought misery and unhappiness to many: some lost their friends while others lost much more" (91).

Here, Othello describes Desdemona's love for him. He tells how she fell in love with him by listening to the stories he was relating to her father. Shakespeare sheds light on Othello's past history through these stories which he tells about himself. He is an insider person in the Venetian society because he lives there and fights for its sake. At the same time, he is an outsider character in the Venetian society since he was born as a Moroccan. Shakespeare tries to highlight some political and social aspects of his time in the portrayal of his characters. Serageldin and Soyinka (1998) maintain that "the theater audience was very mixed. The public theater attracted people from virtually every rank and class of society" (23). Shakespeare uses this device not only with Othello but also with Desdemona who appears to reject some rules of the renaissance time such as her behavior of escaping with

Othello, marrying him and leaving her father. Sjölin (2017) maintains that "what happens in Othello and Desdemona's marriage shows striking similarities to real-life domestic violence, nowadays sometimes with more precision called 'intimate-partner violence'" (205).

3.3. Syntactic Analysis of the Passage

Othello's repetition of certain words such as "twas" and "wished" while he is recounting his wooing to the court establishes a dreamlike mood. He tries to defend himself against the accusation of kidnapping Desdemona who supports his situation when she comes in front of the duke of Venice and denies what Iago has told her father. Serageldin and Soyinka (1998) assume that "the full richness of Othello's tragedy is bared before our eyes, and continues to challenge the racism and gender double standards that plague society today" (45). At this part of the play, Othello is shown to be a charismatic and successful leader who has an objective desire. His stories draw and poster the sense of his accomplishment. In contrast, Desdemona is amazingly portrayed as a pretty, tactful and respectful woman. She assures her loyalty to her father as well as to her husband. Although she is torn between these two hard duties, she appears cruel neither to her father nor to her husband. Sharma (2014) claims that "Desdemona surrenders to him without any strong protest. She does not assert herself. It was not the age of awareness of woman's rights. Man was for God and she for God in man, as Milton said about the relationship of husband and wife" (415).

When Othello mentions the reasons why they love each other, he means that it is a pure real and mutual love depending on the facts that how he sees himself and what she sees in him. Moreover, marriage does not mainly happen as a result of drugs, magic or witchcraft as Brabantio describes Othello of doing these bad acts.

3.4. Lexical Statistics

Looking at the parts of speech used in the passage, it is noticed that:

Table 4 major word classes

Part of speech	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs
Total number	12	5	27	3
Percentage	26%	11%	57%	6%

According to the above lexical statistics, it is clear that verbs are used most. Verbs function efficiently and make sentences powerful. They help the speaker give sentences or ask questions. At this part of the play, Othello is much more confident since he thinks that both his military services and the love of Desdemona for him are enough to make him be so. Moreover, later in this scene, Othello, the moor, seems stronger in position than Desdemona's father, Brabantio, who is a Venetian citizen.

4. Passage Two from Othello (Act 3, Scene 3, Lines 442 – 449)

4.1 The Source Text

*O, that the slave had forty thousand lives!
 One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
 Now do I see 'tis true. Look here, Iago;
 All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.
 'Tis gone.
 Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell!
 Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne
 To tyrannous hate! Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,
 For 'tis of aspics' tongues!*

Table 5 scansion

	Foot 1		Foot 2		Foot 3		Foot 4		Foot 5	
1	O X	that - ↑	the X	slave -	had X ↓	for -	ty X	thous -	and X	lives -
2	One X	is -	too X ↓	poor -	too* X ↓	weak -	for X	my - ↑	rev X	enge -
3	Now X ↓	do -	I X	see -	'tis X	true -	Look -	here -	Ia -	go X
4	All X	my X	fond -	love -	thus X	do -	I X	blow -	to X	heaven (-)
5	'Tis X	gone -								
6	A X	rise -	black -	venge -	ance X	from - ↑	the X	hol -	low X	hell -
7	Yield -	up X	O X	love -	thy X	crown -	and X	heart -	ed X	throne -
8	To X	tyr -	annous X	hate -	Swell -	bos -	om X	with X	thy X	fraught -
9	For X	'tis -	of X	as -	pics' X	tongues -				
Agree	5		5		4		4		5	
Disagree	4		3		4		3		2	

Table 6 poetic license used

	line	Trochaic	Anapest	Pyrrhic	Promotion	Demotion	Compression	Spondaic	fem.end	Total	%
1	O, that the slave had forty thousand lives!				1	1				2	13%
2	One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.				1	2				3	19%
3	Now do I see 'tis true. Look here, Iago;	1				1		1		3	19%
4	All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.			1			1	1		3	19%
5	'Tis gone.									-	
6	Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell!				1			1		2	13%
7	Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne	1								1	6%
8	To tyrannous hate! Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,			1				1		2	13%
	Total	2	-	2	3	4	1	4	-	16	100%
	Disagreement per passage	13%	-	13%	19%	25%	6%	25%		100%	

4.2 Statistical Analysis of the Passage

Here, Shakespeare effectively presents Othello's rapid descent. Othello's insane jealousy increases in these lines. Shakespeare leads his character to the play's ultimate conclusion where evil prevails in a tragic portrayal. Othello seems to be completely under Iago's control and influence. He loses his control over his emotions. So, the tension increases significantly. The statistics show that there is an increase in the amount of disagreement between foot and word boundaries if it is compared to the previous passage from act one when Othello seems to be calmer and more confident than he is in this scene from act three. The following chart shows this statistical analysis of the tension within the line:

Table 7 meter-syntax tension

Foot	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Total	%
Agree	8	5	4	3	5	25	64%
Disagree	1	3	4	4	2	14	36%

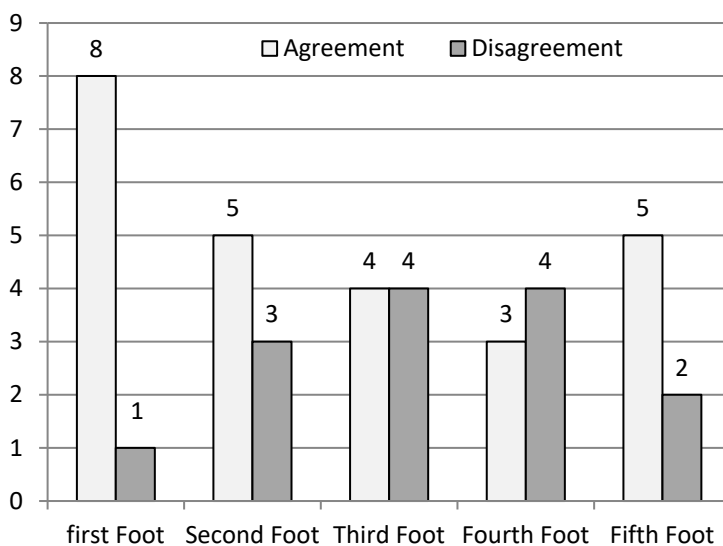


Fig. 3 meter-syntax

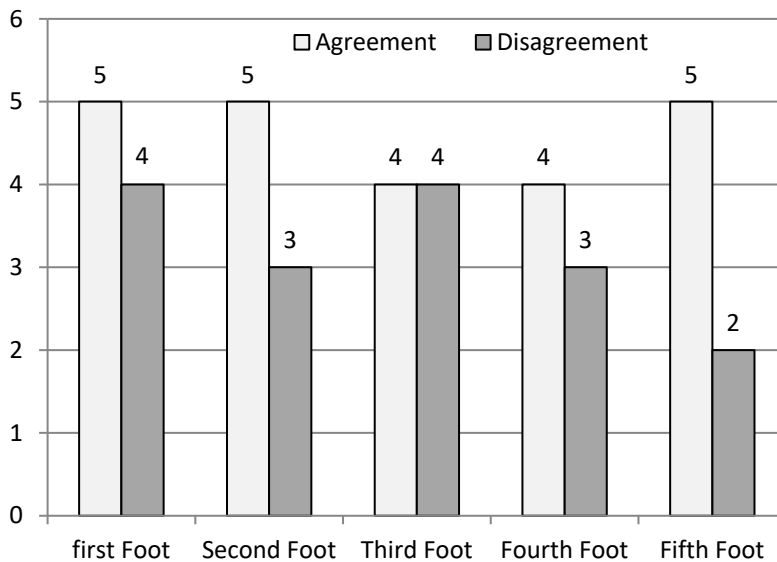


Fig. 4 poetic license

Looking at the above passage and statistics, it is clear that Othello tries to some extent to keep calm. This is because he is not sure that his wife has a relationship with Cassio but he has only doubts. The problem is that he thinks that Iago is right and Desdemona may have an affair with Cassio. Serageldin and Soyinka (1998) maintain that "Othello, though noble, is flawed. And Iago does bring him down through jealousy. This device, which has been the staple of the orthodox readings of *Othello*, is seen to be wanting in its lack of attention to the social context that motivates Iago's hatred for Othello" (40). In this scene, Shakespeare successfully builds a huge amount of tension by clearly depicting how these two main characters, Othello and Iago, represent good and evil. His dramatic irony gives the audience a chance to think about Iago's evil intentions. Moreover, he portrays the character of Othello to be more vulnerable. There is much inner conflict in Othello because of two main important reasons; the first is his excessive love for Desdemona and the second is his being lured into evil by Iago.

The climax between goodness and malignity precisely appears at this time of the events when Othello makes himself hate his wife and think of killing an innocent person under the influence of Iago. He loves Iago and trusts his speech. It

appears to him that Iago is right, and both Desdemona and Cassio are evil characters. In reality, the opposite is right. Iago is an evil man while Cassio has not done anything wrong. Also, Desdemona is a faithful pure woman. Serageldin and Soyinka (1998) assumes that "loving Othello and Desdemona are denied by the social context in which they live and of which Iago is only the extreme manifestation and the dramatic instrument. This theme is the feminist theme of female oppression by the dominant patriarchal system of values" (44).

The theme of appearance and reality is a main one in the play. The main point is that Othello becomes infected by Iago's words. Othello, as a virtuous person, has to battle with the conflict between his untainted love for his wife Desdemona and his overwhelming jealousy.

4.3. Syntactic Analysis of the Passage

This quote shows that to some degree, Othello is still calm. He is still able to speak in complete thoughts with no signs of haste. His words are going to be rhetoric. His choice of language slightly moves from the state of being a bold calm hero into a nervous man. This is clear in the tension between syntax and meter. Most of the lines give complete thoughts. This is clear in both the structure and the development of the dialogue. His words evoke the state of anger because he doubts his wife. This is reflected in the use of short sentence structures. It is also expressed in some words such as "hate" and "vengeance". So, Othello's language is still powerful at this part of the play. By the metaphor "All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven", he tells Iago that he has to surrender his love and positive feelings to heaven in order to make a room in his heart for hate or negative feelings. Furthermore, Othello refers to his race insulting himself of being a "hate" as a result of the influence of evil Iago who ironically suggests that Othello should be aware of jealousy despite the fact that he grows it severely in Othello's heart. Actually, in this scene, Othello is completely concerned with what can be seen, shown and proved. So, he gives this speech of anger directly after he has insisted on asking for an "ocular proof" which is

the handkerchief decorated with red spots of strawberries to refer to blood and the crime of killing.

This speech from Othello draws the beginning of his flaw as a result of his lack of self-knowledge, his blindness, his lack of judgment and his readiness to trust the wrong people. Therefore, proficiently, Shakespeare reveals the disastrous consequences that may happen to a leader when he personally and politically lacks these important personality traits. The irony is that Othello searches for a proof to check his wife's love which is true for him and not asking for a proof to check Iago's love which is false. Othello starts to completely trust and believe in Iago, meanwhile he turns to doubt Desdemona's loyalty. This irony is used by Shakespeare to lead to Othello's downfall towards the end of the play. Later on, he loses his gentle nature and becomes so stressed that he kills his loyal wife, then himself.

4.4. Lexical Statistics

The following table shows the major parts of speech used in the passage:

Table 8 major word classes

Part of speech	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs
Total number	15	12	11	6
Percentage	34%	27%	25%	14%

According to the above table, Othello uses a great number of nouns and adjectives in his speech. These adjectives describe and modify nouns and enforce the intended meaning. Using certain adjectives and nouns such as “slave”, “poor”, “weak” and “revenge, in his speech, Othello transforms from a rational human being into a green-eyed monster. Moreover, descriptive words develop both the action and the meaning; they evoke the appearance of characters and how they speak and act, which is important to the reader. These words show that his mind becomes more infected by Iago's words; sometimes he repeats the same words that Iago uses several times. Consequently, this is the turning point in

the play when Othello seems to be ready to start revenge as a result of both his strong feeling of jealousy and the seeds of doubt which Iago plants in him. All these feelings of hatred to his own wife as a result of Iago's manipulation cause his downfall.

5. Passage Three from Othello (Act 4, Scene 1, Lines 35 - 43)

5.1. The Source Text:

*Lie with her! Lie on her! We say lie on her,
When they belie her. Lie with her! that's fulsome.
—Handkerchief—confessions—handkerchief!—To
confess, and be hanged for his labor;—first, to be
hanged, and then to confess.—I tremble at it. Nature
would not invest herself in such shadowing passion
without some instruction. It is not words that shake
me thus. Pish! Noses, ears, and lips.—Is't
possible?—Confess—handkerchief!—O devil!—*

Table 9 scansion

	Foot 1		Foot 2		Foot 3		Foot 4		Foot 5		
1	Lie —	with X	her X	Lie —	on X	her X	We X	say —	lie —	on X	her X
2	when X	they — ↑	be X	lie her — X	Lie —	with X	her X	that's X	ful —	some X	
3	Hand —	ker X	chief X	con X	fess —	ions X	hand —	ker X	chief X	To — ↑	
4	con X	fess —	and be (X) X	hanged —	for X	his — ↑	la —	bor X	first —	to be (X)—	
5	hanged —	and then (X) X	to con X X	fess —	I X	trem —	ble X	at it — (X)	Na —	ture X	
6	would X	not — ↑	in X	vest —	her X	self —	such X	shadow —	ing X	pas —	sion X
7	with X	out —	some X	instruc —	tion It X X	is —	not X	words —	that X	shake —	
8	me X	thus —	Pish X	Nos —	es X	ears —	and X	lips —	Is —	't X	
9	poss X	ible —	Con X	fess —	hand —	ker X	chief X	O — ↑	de —	vil X	
Agree	5		5		3		3		2		
Disagree	4		4		6		6		7		

Table 10 poetic license used

	line	Trochaic	Anapest	Pyrrhic	Promotion	dactylic	epic	Spondaic	fem.end	Total	%
1	Lie with her! lie on her! We say lie on her,					3				3	10%
2	When they belie her. Lie with her! that's fulsome.	2		1	1		1			5	17%
3	—Handkerchief— confessions— handkerchief!—To	3		1	1					5	17%
4	confess, and be hanged for his labor;—first, to be	2			1		2			5	17%
5	hanged, and then to confess.—I tremble at it. Nature	1	1			1	1			4	14%
6	would not invest herself in such shadowing passion				1			1		2	7%
7	without some instruction. It is not words that shake						1			1	3%
8	me thus. Pish! Noses, ears, and lips.—Is't	1								1	3%
9	possible?—Confess— handkerchief!—O devil!—	2			1					3	10%
	Total	11	1	2	5	4	5	1	-	29	100%
	Disagreement per passage	38%	3%	7%	17%	14%	17%	3%	0%	100%	

5.2. Statistical Analysis of the Passage

The statistics show that the amount of disagreement between foot and word boundaries in most of the feet is more than those of agreement. Here, Othello reaches the climax of his anger after Iago tells him that Cassio has a sexual relationship with his wife, Desdemona. This clearly appears in his sentences which show more tension between meter and syntax in this part of the play, which means that Othello is completely unable to control his feelings and emotions to face Iago's plot and the tricks he uses. The following chart shows this statistical analysis of the tension within the line:

Table 11 meter-syntax tension

Foot	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Total	%
Agree	8	6	4	5	7	30	67%
Disagree	1	3	5	4	2	15	33%

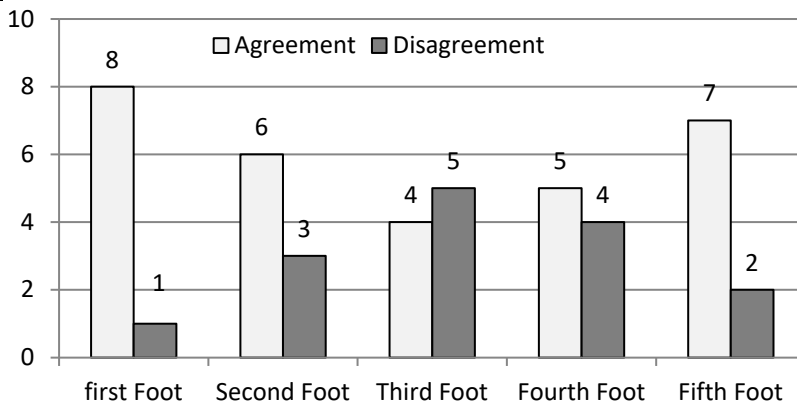


Fig. 5 meter-syntax

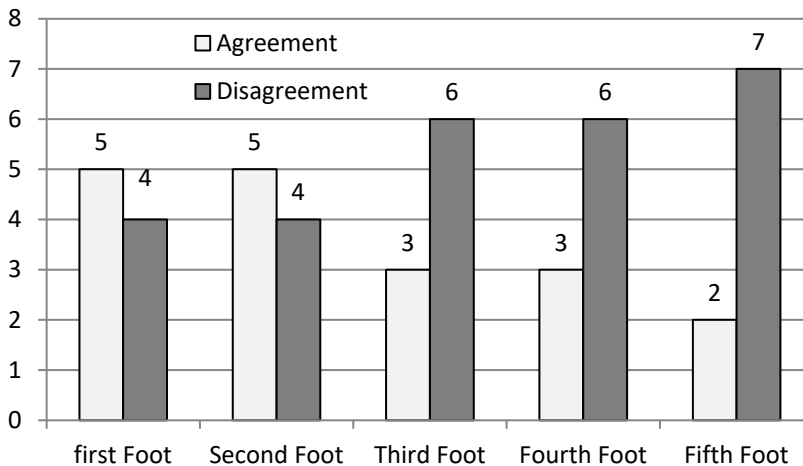


Fig. 4 poetic license

According to the above chart, Othello is clearly overwhelmed. He becomes more and more angry, responding to Iago's plot so that he seriously thinks of killing Desdemona. The periphrasis used in his speech in the phrase: "lie on her" refers to two completely different meanings; the first means telling lies about her and the second refers to the probable illegal sexual relationship between Desdemona and Cassio. Othello seems to have an emotional distress which physically affects him. He repeats Iago's words which mislead and force him to kill his innocent wife. Sharma (2014) assumes that "Othello cannot see the difference between appearance and reality" (416). As a result of Iago's plot, Othello seems unable to differentiate between true and false emotions or words. Iago tries to make Othello imagine a variety of sexual evidences that seduces him to think of his wife, Desdemona, as an unfaithful wife. Othello is very surprised and astonished at what Iago reveals to him. He asks Iago different rhetorical questions, assuring the idea of Desdemona's disloyalty such as "lie on her?" and "lie with her?" which gives Iago a great opportunity to manipulate his plot. Sharma (2014) goes on to assert that "Iago is not what he seems to be. He wears the mask of honesty but in reality he has a heart that is the very workshop of the Devil. But Othello is taken in by his show of sincerity" (416).

Caesura plays an important role in this speech. Othello uses single words which are not connected with each other, such as; "handkerchief", "confession", "handkerchief", "noses", "ears" and "lips". He does not use coherent structures, as he uses in the first scenes of the play. This is because of his jealousy and doubts about his wife. Sharma (2014) stresses the moral lesson in *Othello*: that "one must give no room to jealousy in one's heart. Unfounded suspicion leads to dangerous consequences" (416). Othello resorts to using prose more than blank verse or foot verse. Each line extends to the following line or even, sometimes, lines. Jealousy is now overpowering Othello as a kind of madness. His mental state makes him mumble, repeating words and sentences because he gets so upset and falls into a trance as a

result of the effect of Iago's wicked words. Iago tries to deceive Othello through his goading in order to torture him mentally to the point of madness. Therefore, it is obvious that Othello begins to see himself and his wife, Desdemona, through the eyes of Iago. He turns to be completely corrupted and broken down. His words show his agitation.

The handkerchief is an important symbol in the play. It proves both sin and innocence. Sjölin (2017) assumes that "a lost handkerchief therefore comes to represent a husband who suddenly, for no apparent reason, turns against his wife, changed from the man she fell in love with into an abuser" (224). Sjölin adds that "the handkerchief first symbolizes 'female power' and 'sexuality controlled by chastity', but when it is 'lost' and misused it starts to represent men's 'power over women'" (224).

5.3. Syntactic Analysis of the Passage

Through the lexis and syntax, Othello seems to be fractured in all his senses. When this speech is compared to his speech in the previously quoted passage from act I, it is noticed that these many questions he asks himself convey a status of insecurity. Now, his identity is threatened since he feels that he no longer knows his wife. He starts to doubt every single word she says and every single look she has. It seems that only words are behind the destruction of the character of Othello. This is clearly declared in his ironically used sentence: "It is not words that shake me thus". Also, Othello starts to use oaths "zounds!" which shows that Iago, who rubs salt on Othello's wounds, not only suggests his poisonous, progressive ideas but also his ability to influence and control Othello's speech and mind. Actually, the lines suggest Othello's degradation and degeneration.

The transformation of Othello's use of pronouns is clear in this passage. Here, instead of using "we" to talk about himself as a hero, he uses "me" and "I". This suggests insecurity. This is also clear in his asking many questions. His identity seems threatened. He doubts his wife, her looks and words. Sharma (2014) goes on to assert Othello's moral lesson assuming that "one must give no room to jealousy in one's

heart. Unfounded suspicion leads to dangerous consequences" (416). Some complete lines in this passage do not give clear meaning. They seem mere words put together with neither meaning nor coherence. These lines suggest the hero's tragic flaw. They also suggest the break-up of Othello's marital harmony with Desdemona. All these tragic flaws are caused by jealousy. Serageldin and Soyinka (1998) declare that "Othello, though noble, is flawed. And Iago does bring him down through jealousy. This device, which has been the staple of the orthodox readings of *Othello*, is seen to be wanting in its lack of attention to the social context that motivates Iago's hatred for Othello" (40).

5.4. Lexical Statistics:

Here are the main parts of speech used in the passage:

Table 12 major word classes

Part of speech	Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Adverbs
Total number	13	5	17	3
Percentage	34%	13%	45%	8%

Returning back to the passage, it is noticed that most of the sentences, structures and lexical words are repeated more than once. The verb "lie" is repeated four times. The pronoun "her" is used five times and the noun "handkerchief" is repeated three times in this short speech. Even an entire sentence is repeated like "lie on her". This refers to the jumbled feelings and inside conflicts Othello is passing through. Although Othello uses complete statements and interrogatives, he repeats most of them. He appears very confused through his jumbled speech.

6. Conclusion

All in all, as it is known that love and hate are the total opposite of each other, most of the analysis shows this in the entire play. The saying that "this who angers you, controls you" is so true in the play of *Othello* because Iago has caused everyone to be angry or upset and he seems to easily control them and their acts and behaviors. As one of the most important characters in the play, Iago is portrayed by Shakespeare as a player who plays a perfect game over nearly every other character in the play. Iago's speech convinces and controls other characters so easy. For example, Iago uses

racial distinction to persuade Othello that Desdemona has a relationship with Cassio which is the main point towards the flaw of Othello. Iago feeds his words with some clues to raise the others' fury in order to lead them easily to their end and death. Furthermore, another important reason, which causes Othello's downfall, is his over jealousy.

As for syntax and language used by Shakespeare in the play, they suggest that Othello usually uses declarative sentences to ask rhetorical questions. Although Othello seems to be in doubt of the betrayal of Desdemona, he still remembers her as his true love. He believes that he is always right and for it he will go to heaven. This is obvious in his words: "All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven." This shows that he thinks that killing Desdemona allows him to get rid of the world of evil and that he serves God. Unfortunately, his jealousy drives him mad and makes him seek for revenge. His desire is just to see Desdemona suffering saying: "Oh, blood, Iago, blood!"

The majority of the lines in *Othello* are written in blank verse which Shakespeare generally uses in almost all his plays. It is through this technique that Shakespeare shares the thoughts of his characters by means of songs as if they sing while they tell the events. A quite different tone is also produced in this play of Othello when Shakespeare resorts to the use of prose in several scenes of the play. During Shakespeare's time, verse was considered to be of higher status than [prose](#) so it is more suitable for the heroes he chooses for his plays whereas the use of prose in *Othello* reflects Shakespeare's idea that Othello, as a hero, is not like Hamlet, Macbeth or King Lear? Prose was used for everyday speech which was ordinary to be uttered by all people, but verse was more formal. It was usually spoken by nobler characters of high position in the society. However, Shakespeare may intend that if a passage is of no particular importance, such as Act 2 Scene 2, he often writes the text in prose. In acts four and five, when Othello begins to see himself and his wife through Iago's eyes, his style begins to

break down as he has been corrupted by the evil done by Iago. His words convey his agitation such as:

Lie with her, lie on her? We say lie on her, when they belie her!

Othello's feelings are perfectly conveyed by Shakespeare through the lexis and syntax. Sometimes, he, as a hero, speaks of himself in the first and third person which convey his nobility, but also he uses pronouns such as 'we', 'they', 'his', 'I', 'me' which suggest insecurity. When he feels that he no longer knows his wife, Othello's identity is threatened because he cannot trust her looks and words. Some of his words and structures show that there is a terrible irony in the fact that he declares, as in "It is not words that shake me thus". The events of the play suggest that words are the cause of Othello's destruction and downfall. That is why Shakespeare turns between verse and prose in this play. Iago, as a powerful and skillful speaker, shows his ability to influence and control others through the power of his speech. It is obvious in the entire story that language is the source of Iago's power. He usually uses a lot of compounds, colloquialisms and oaths which fit his character as an experienced bluff soldier. Moreover, he uses complicated and persuasive language. He slips between prose and verse adapting his style to suit his different audiences or other characters in the play and his purposes. So, speech, syntax and meter play a very important role in the portrayal of characters in Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Appendix 1: List of Symbols

1	× -	Iambic foot
2	- ×	Trochaic foot
3	- × ×	Dactylic foot
4	× × -	Anapestic foot
5	--	Spondee
6	××	Pyrrhic
7	↑	Promotion
8	↓	Demotion
9		Caesura

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العلاقة بين العروض والنحو في مسرحية "عطيل" لوليام شكسبير

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المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بحث العلاقة بين العروض وتركيب الجملة في واحدة من أروع المسرحيات المأساوية للكاتب المسرحي ويليام شكسبير ألا وهي مسرحية عطيل التي تعتبر ضمن المآسي الكبرى لشكسبير والتي يمزج في أسلوبها بين لغة الشعر ولغة النثر، فتارة يستخدم النثر مع الشخصيات الأقل أهمية وتارة يستخدم لغة الشعر في حواراتهم ليرفع شأنهم. ولقد قدم شكسبير من خلال العلاقة بين النحو والعروض أفضل النماذج في تأثير الكلمات على سلوك الإنسان فصور الحب والغيرة والعاطفة أيما تصوير من خلال توظيف كلا من النحو والعروض اللذان يبرزان أهمية هذه المشاعر ومدى تأثيرها عند سوء استخدامه. فعطيل لم يكن قاتلا ولا غيورا إلا بسبب الكلمات المسمومة التي يدسها له إياغو بين الفترة والأخرى، فجعل شكسبير عطيلاً ينخدع بكل سهولة وبساطة من قبل حامل العلم، ولقد نكر النقاد أن شكسبير لم يكتب مطلقاً بدون تخطيط دقيق مسبق، فهو يختار ألفاظه بعناية فائقة، ويوظف كلا من العروض والنحو في خدمة أغراضه ومعانيه، فأخذ يوازن بين الجمل الحوارية الخبرية وكذا الإنشائية (كالاستفهام والأمر والنهي والنداء.... الخ)، وتماشيهما مع العروض أو اختلافهما على حسب الحالة المزاجية والعاطفية التي يمر بها عطيل، فقدم مأساة غاية في الروعة والبراعة عند النظر إليها وتحليل لغتها بين النحو والعروض ومدى اتفاقهما أو تغايرهما.

الكلمات المفتاحية: وليام شكسبير، مسرحية عطيل، العروض، النحو

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