

A Sociocognitive Discourse Study of Racism in Iago's Speech in Shakespeare's *Othello*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to conduct a sociocognitive analysis of Iago's speech in Shakespeare's *Othello*. The sociocognitive discourse is used as a methodological tool to uncover the cognitive complexity of Iago, and to explore how his metaphorical and lexical choices reflect a racial tendency among a portion of people in Elizabethan society. Iago's speech is perused through an in-depth analysis of conceptual metaphor and lexicality. The findings of the study show that Iago uses the conceptual metaphor MAN IS ANIMAL to highlight Othello's negative characteristics, such as stupidity, foolishness, and ugliness in terms of animal behaviour. Iago's hidden thoughts and plans to manipulate and control Othello's feelings towards Desdemona are depicted through the BODY PART IS A WHOLE PERSON metaphor. As for lexicality, Iago uses two lexical processes, overlexicalization and relexicalization. In the former, he uses synonymous and near-synonymous items to highlight positive self-presentation (himself) and negative other-presentation (Othello). In the latter, relexicalization, Iago avoids referring to Othello by his actual names or good attributes, but rather by personal pronouns or by nationality.

Keywords: Sociocognitive discourse, conceptual metaphor, lexicality, racism, *Othello*.

دراسة معرفية اجتماعية للخطاب العنصري في كلام ياجو في مسرحية عطيل لشكسبير

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مستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل معرفي اجتماعي لكلام ياجو في مسرحية عطيل لشكسبير. تستخدم الدراسة الخطاب المعرفي الاجتماعي كأداة منهجية لكشف التعقيد المعرفي الإدراكي لشخصية ياجو، إذ أن اختيار المفردات والعبارات المجازية لهذه الشخصية يعكس نزعة عنصرية كانت سائدة بين شريحة من البشر في المجتمع الإليزابيثي في تلك الحقبة. وتقوم تلك الدراسة على تحليل تفصيلي للإستعارة المفاهيمية والمفردات المعجمية في كلام ياجو. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن ياجو استخدم الإستعارة المفاهيمية "الإنسان حيوان" لإبراز السمات السلبية في شخصية عطيل كالغباء والحمق والقبح ومقارنتها بمثيالاتها في عالم الحيوان. كشفت الدراسة أيضًا أن استخدام ياجو للإستعارة المفاهيمية "عضو الجسم هو الشخص كاملًا" تبين ما يضمه من أفكار وخطط للتلاعب بعطيل والسيطرة على مشاعره تجاه ديمونة. وبينت الدراسة أيضًا أن ياجو كان يستخدم نوعين من الصياغات المعجمية لإبراز مشاعره العنصرية تجاه عطيل. الصياغة الأولى وهي المبالغة المفرداتية (Overlexicalization) تتمثل في استخدام ياجو للمتردافات لإبراز التصوير الإيجابي للنفس والتصوير السلبي للآخر متمثلًا في شخصية عطيل. أما الصياغة الثانية فهي إعادة بناء المفردة (Relexicalization) وقد استخدمها ياجو لتجنب ذكر عطيل بالاسم - بدافع من العنصرية - واستخدم بدلاً من ذلك إما الضمائر الشخصية أو الإشارة لعطيل بصفات مشتقة من بلد المنشأ.

الكلمات المفتاحية: خطاب معرفي اجتماعي، الإستعارة المفاهيمية، المفردات

المعجمية، العنصرية، عطيل.

1. Introduction

This study is concerned with conducting a sociocognitive discourse study (SCDS) of racism in Shakespeare's *Othello*. This is done through analyzing the discourse of one of the major racist characters in the play, namely Iago, using van Dijk's sociocognitive model of SCDS (2008; 2009; 2018). The study relies on two linguistic tools to analyze Iago's speech: conceptual metaphor analysis and lexicality analysis. It seems appropriate, however, to start this study with an account of how coloured people, like Othello, were regarded in Elizabethan England, Shakespeare's time.

Jones (1965) argues that there is evidence of colour discrimination, or colour prejudice in Shakespeare's England. Orkin (1987) considers this discrimination a tendency that was prevalent in Europe "to see Africa as the barbarism against which European civilization defined itself" (p.167). Elizabethan Englishmen used to see African natives as barbarous, treacherous, libidinous, and jealous. The following extract (cited in Jones, 1965, p.11) is John Lok's, the captain of a trading voyage to Guinea, description of the inhabitants of some coastal parts of Africa:

"[They] were in oulde tyme called Ethiopes and Nigrite, which we nowe caule Moores, Moorens, a people of beastly lvyng, without a god, lawe, religion or common welth, and so scorched and vexed with the heate of soone, that in many places they curse it when it ryseth".

This racism is echoed in the literary tradition of the Elizabethan era particularly in drama. Many traces of racism can be followed in Shakespearean drama. In *The Merchant of Venice*, for instance, Morocco was represented as a black suitor who wanted to marry a white woman, Portia, but he is dark-faced, dark-bodied and dark-limbed. He even expresses his readiness to change his colour in order to win Portia's heart. His dream evaporates when he discovers that "life is not just" (Haresnape, 2013, p. 100). Commenting on the relationship between drama and the establishment of racist discourse

in Elizabethan England, Habib (2007) argues "that the rise of racial discourse in early modern England is intimately connected to the rise of popular drama in the early colonial reign of Elizabeth I" (p.17).

A question that needs to be raised, in this context, is whether *Othello* includes any evidence that Shakespeare had feelings of colour prejudice that was apparent in his time. Jordan (1974) argues that "Shakespeare was writing both about and to his countrymen's feelings concerning physical distinction between peoples" (p.20), but it is also observed that Shakespeare "is working consciously against colour prejudice reflected in the language" (Orkin, 1987, p. 170) used by some of his characters. The play itself shows that the racist sentiment is confined to the characters of Iago, Roderigo and Brabantio. Roderigo's racist discourse accelerates because he fails to win Desdemona. Brabantio, whose discourse shows elements of hidden racism, is mainly concerned with his daughter's elopement and disloyalty (Orkin, P.169): "fathers, from hence trust not your daughter's minds" (1.1.170). It is Iago, whose racist tendencies are exposed to the audience as early as the opening scene of the play. The outbreak of Iago's malignant racist discourse coincided with his failure to get promotion.

2. Literature Review

This review is limited to studies that use conceptual metaphors and lexicality as methodological tools to analyze Shakespeare's plays. An investigation of the related literature shows that although the bulk of academic research on the use of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT/ CM) to analyze various types discourse is abundant, the application of this theory to dramatic discourse is somewhat limited. It is theoretically and practically impossible to review all the literature conducted on CMT; therefore this review is confined to studies that are related to the context of the present study, namely the application of CMT to Shakespearean tragedies.

A Shakespearean critic who applies cognitive linguistics frameworks to Shakespeare's plays is Freeman (1993; 1995; & 1999) who analyzes *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*

using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980a ; 1980b) framework of conceptual metaphor. Freeman's (1993) CM analysis of the opening scene of *King Lear* shows that the figurative language Shakespeare uses in this scene depends on "metaphoric projection" (p.1) of the schemata of BALANCE and LINKS. The BALANCE metaphor is interpreted in terms of debits and credits as the bases of the relationship between Lear and his daughters. Filial loyalty and parental love are understood in terms of the LINKS metaphor. In his account of CM in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Freeman (1995) argues that CMs in the play are based on the PATH and CONTAINER metaphors. In addition, Freeman (1999) reads metaphors in *Antony and Cleopatra* as an amalgam of the three CMs CONTAINER, PATH and LINKS.

McDermott (2014) adopts a CM framework to analyze conceptual mappings in *Othello*. She argues that Shakespeare uses a web of metaphors that makes the audience/readers realize the intersections between body, mind and emotions. Following McDermott's line of argument, Mezghani (2021) reports a CM account of Desdemona's mind in *Othello*. The study focuses on disclosing Desdemona's "cognitive complexity" (p.20) by analyzing metaphors related to her body, her emotions, and her ethics. Mezghani reaches the conclusion that Desdemona is a rebel who defies restraints of the patriarchal society she lives in.

As for Lexicality, the literature does not provide sufficient work on Shakespeare's lexicon in the sense adopted in the current study. This fact is justified by Crystal (2008) who states that Shakespeare's lexicon is the area which received the least attention of researchers, unlike grammar, discourse patterns and prosody which dominate scholarly interest. As a result, those who are interested in Shakespeare's lexicon do no more than providing alphabetical glossaries of lexical items that are recurrent in Shakespeare's plays. However, a few studies analyze wordplay in Shakespeare's drama like Bruster and McKeown's (2017) and Cruz-Cabanillas (1999) who focus on puns, quibbles, and witty wordplay as central phenomena in Shakespeare's plays.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is concerned with analyzing some linguistic structures used by Iago, one of the major characters in Shakespeare's *Othello*, and relating these structures to the social structures that are shared by (a specific group of) community members. Based on the tenets of sociocognitive discourse studies (SCDS), Iago's talk represents a line of thought in Elizabethan society. This line shows itself in "the cognitive aspects of the use of some metaphors" (van Dijk, 2018, p. 27), and in the lexical choice of speech participants.

SCDS is a recent approach to discourse analysis, that has been developed by van Dijk (2008; 2018) and later revised by Hart (2018a; 2018b). It mediates between linguistic structures, social structures and "shared social cognition" (van Dijk 2018, p.33). It has been argued that social participants process social structures and discourse structures in their own minds, and thus they relate these structures mentally before expressing them in the form of actual linguistic structures. Hart (2018b) argues that SCDS "emphasizes the conceptual nature of meaning construction" (p.77), thus presenting detailed semantic analyses of linguistic structures.

Like other approaches to critical discourse analysis, SCDS allows a wide range of methodological frameworks, including semantic analysis, metaphor analysis, image schema analysis, and discourse world analysis (Hart, 2018b, p.88). Taking into consideration the nature of the data, the current study is limited to two types of analytical frameworks: conceptual metaphor analysis and lexicality analysis.

3.1. Conceptual metaphor

Conceptual metaphor (CM) is a cognitive semantic model that focuses on language as a reflection of thought. Lakoff and Johnson (1980b) argue that metaphorical conceptualizations presuppose that "our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people" (p. 454). Lakoff (1993)

states that the basis of metaphor lies in the way people “conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another” (p.203).

Conceptual metaphor is analyzed in terms of “a source domain, a target domain and a source-to-target mapping” (Lakoff, 1993, p. 206). Kövecses (2010, p.11) suggests that CM can be recognized by the formula A IS B, where a part of B, the source domain, is “mapped into a part of A”, the target domain. In the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS MAGIC, for example, the target domain, LOVE, is understood in terms of the source domain, MAGIC.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980a) and Kövecses (2010) propose a tripartite classification of conceptual metaphors based on the cognitive functions these metaphors perform. Orientational metaphors refer to spatial relations such as up-down, and in-out. This type of metaphor is connected with physical experiences, and bodily orientations. Lakoff and Johnson provide the following examples to illustrate this type of metaphor:

- **“HAPPY IS UP, SAD IS DOWN.”**
- **“HEALTH IS UP, SICKNESS IS DOWN.”**

Ontological metaphors are based on conceiving “our experiences in terms of objects, substances and containers” (Kovecses, 2010, p. 38). This type of metaphor deals with vague and abstract experiences. For example, we may not exactly know what nonphysical or abstract entities, like the mind, are, but we may understand such concepts if we perceive them as physical objects. The CM “THE MIND IS A MACHINE” helps us to understand such linguistic expressions as “my mind is out of steam.”

One more category of CM is structure metaphor in which an abstract concept is metaphorically structured in terms of a more concrete one. A representative example of structure metaphor is “ARGUMENT IS WAR”, where the abstract concept “argument” is understood in terms of physical struggle.

In the current study, metaphors are not approached as linguistic expressions that are used metaphorically by the author to give special stylistic or poetic effect. Rather, metaphors are primarily approached as a reflection of thought. That is to say that conceptual metaphors are analyzed in Iago's speech to uncover the racist feelings and thoughts Iago has towards Othello.

3.2. Lexicality

This study also builds on the sociocognitive dimensions of discourse as proposed by van Dijk's (2018) and Fairclough's (1989) models regarding lexical choice as a reflection of the social and ideological relationships between users of language. Van Dijk (1991) considers lexicalization a reflection of opinions and emotions, or the social attitudes of text producers. Lexical analysis, in this study, is intended to find out the extent to which lexical choice in discourse is a manifestation of beliefs (Fairclough, 1989).

Two lexicality processes are identified by Fowler, Hodge, Kress & Trew (1979, p. 211), namely overlexicalization and relexicalization. Repetitive use of "synonymous or near-synonymous terms" is labelled as lexicalization, or, according to Fairclough (1989, p. 115) "rewording". Relexicalization refers to "coding experience in new ways by inventing lexical items" (Fowler et al., 1979, pp. 32-33). This process signifies rejection of the commonly used lexical system, which may fall short of encoding the participants' ideological beliefs.

4. The play

The theme of *Othello* depicts itself as early as the opening scene of the play where Iago expresses his hatred toward Othello because the latter passes him over for the position of a lieutenant and gives it to Cassio. The reason given by Iago to justify his hatred is just a cover for his underlying racism. Iago's plot of revenge is based on exploiting Othello's marriage to Desdemona to manipulate Othello and make him see things falsely. The night of his wedding, Othello

is called by the Senate to defend Venice against the Turkish fleet. Upon her request, Desdemona is allowed to accompany Othello in his adventures, and she is entrusted to Iago's care during the voyage. Iago's plan of revenge is based on raising Othello's suspicions that Desdemona has some affair with his new lieutenant. He involves Cassio in a street fight, and as a result loses his post in Othello's army. Desdemona sympathizes with Cassio and asks her husband to give him back the position. Iago manages to hold Desdemona's handkerchief which is presented to her by Othello. Iago plans to get the handkerchief on Cassio, and when Othello sees it with Cassio, he believes that the handkerchief is a proof that there is some affair between his wife and Cassio. In a fit of anger Othello strangles his wife. But he soon discovers that she is innocent. Feeling sad and repentant Othello ends his own life.

5. Research questions:

- 1- What linguistic evidence is there in *Othello* that there is colour prejudice in Shakespeare's time?
- 2- What are linguistic devices employed in Iago's speech to express his racial prejudice against Othello?

6. Analysis:

6.1. Conceptual Metaphor Analysis

The character of Iago is obsessed with two major issues: his racist feelings towards Othello and his plan to take revenge, as Othello passes him over and gives the position of a lieutenant to another soldier. The metaphorical conceptualization of these issues is represented in the CMs MAN IS AN ANIMAL and BODY PART IS A WHOLE PERSON. Table (1) below is an examination of CMs in Iago's speech pertaining to Othello's physical appearance or behaviours. It is interesting to note that Iago's repeated use of animal metaphors reveals how he thinks about Othello. Iago uses these metaphors to highlight, from his own perspective, the negative properties of Othello.

Table 1. MAN IS ANIMAL CM in Iago’s Speech

	Linguistic Expression	Source Domain	Target Domain	Metaphor Focus	Conceptual mapping
1	“an old black ram is tuppung your white ewe” (1.1.89-90)	Ram Ewe	Othello Desdemona	Physical: black colour	Othello is compared to a black libidinous animal having love affairs with a beautiful white woman (Desdemona/ ewe).
2	“your daughter will be covered with a Barbary horse” (1.1.111)	Barbary horse	Othello	behaviour: Savageness/ rashness	Othello is compared to harsh animal (barbary horse) in terms of savageness.
3-	Ere I would drown myself for the love of a guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon” (1.3.309-10)	Guinea-hen baboon	Desdemona Othello	behaviour: easily deceived Physical: ugliness	Iago tells Rodrigo that Desdemona does not deserve to drown oneself for because she is compared to a guinea-hen that is naïve and easily deceived; otherwise he would lose his life because of Othello who is compared to a baboon in terms of ugliness.
4-	“And will as tenderly be led by the nose as asses are” (1.3.384)	Ass	Othell	behaviour: Stupidity/ foolishness	Othello is compared to an ass in terms of stupidity.
5-	“Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me, for making him egregiously as ass” (2.1.289-90)	Ass	Othello	behaviour: Stupidity/ foolishness	Othello is compared to an ass in terms of stupidity.

In (1), Iago is telling Brabantio, Desdemona’s father, about his daughter’s elopement with Othello. The use of the ram/ewe metaphor is intended to dehumanize Othello/Desdemona relationship and portray them as sheep having sexual intercourse.

Colour prejudice is depicted by the use of the adjective “black” to modify the noun “ram”. Like (1), the CM in (3) focuses on physical appearance where racial prejudice is understood in terms of ugliness (Baboons are animals known for their ugliness). CMs in (2), (4) and (5) focus on Othello’s behavioural features from Iago’s viewpoint. In (2) Iago carefully chooses the “barbary horse” to connote Othello’s vulgarity and savage behaviour. In (4) and (5), the “ass” metaphor is intended to imply stupidity and foolishness on the part of Othello.

The MAN IS ANIMAL METAPHOR negatively and manipulatively describes the physical and personal features of Othello. As van Dijk (2018) points out, these metaphors deal with “the communicative common ground, the shared knowledge, as well as the attitudes and ideologies” (p. 29) of the members of the speech communities and social groups. Okrin (1978) confirms that there is ample evidence of “colour prejudice” (p.167) in Elizabethan England. It may be argued that, in Othello, Shakespeare intentionally depicts this colour prejudice which was common during the Elizabethan era. However, this racist sentiment is not limited to Iago; it is also shared by two other characters in the play, namely Roderigo and Brabantio. It is also observed that the idea of Otherness, which is a variation of racial prejudice, is apparent in the casting of black characters in Shakespeare’s plays including Aaron in *Titus Andronicus*, Caliban in *The Tempest*, in addition to Othello.

Another CM that is dominant in Iago’s speech is BODY PART IS A WHOLE PERSON. It seems that Iago is arguing with Othello to convince him of Desdemona’s betrayal. To achieve this goal, Iago uses a number of entailed/ontological metaphors, like BODY PARTS ARE ENTITIES, BODY PARTS ARE CONTAINERS, EVENTS ARE ENTITIES, and TIME IS PERSON, to manipulate, control, and finally lead Othello to the tragic end of killing his wife and destroying himself. Rather than arguing directly with Othello to persuade him of his point, Iago, in his skillful and manipulative exploitation of language, uses body parts as target

domains. Table 2 is a detailed description of BODY PART IS A WHOLE PERSON conceptual metaphors in Iago’s speech.

Table 2. BODY PART METAPHOR in Iago’s speech

	Linguistic expression	Body Part Metaphors	Domains	Conceptual Mapping
1	Others there are Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty, Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves, 1.1.51-53	BODY PART IS A WHOLE PERSON	Source: Iago Target: heart	Heart is compared to a person (Iago) who is attending to no one but himself.
2	For when my outward action doth demonstrate The native act and figure of my heart In compliment extern, 1.1.61-63	BODY APRTS ARE ENTITIES/ BODY PARTS ARE CONTAINERS	Source: Iago Target: heart	Heart is compared to an entity or container that holds Iago’s true feelings and intentions.
3	There are many events in the womb of time which will be delivered. 1.3.731-732	EVENTS ARE ENTITIES/ TIME IS PERSON	Source: Time Target: womb	Time is compared to a person and the revealing of unknown events is compared to the delivery of babies.
4	Let's see:— After some time, to abuse Othello's ear 1.3.781-782	BODY PART IS A WHOLE PERSON	Source: Othello Target: ear	Ear is compared to a person (Othello) who is abused and told false information about his wife’s honesty.
5	I'll pour this pestilence into his ear, That she repeals him for her body's lust; 2.3.357-8	BODY PARTS ARE CONTINERS	Source: Container Target: ear	Othello’s ear is compared to a container, and pestilence is compared to a liquid.
6	And will as tenderly be led by the nose As asses are. 1.3.788-789	BODY PART IS AN OBJECT	Source: Object Target: nose	Nose is compared to a object through which Otello will be led/controlled via manipulation and false information

In (1), Iago uses the BODY PART IS A WHOLE PERSON conceptual metaphor to introduce himself as one of those people who “keep ... their hearts attending on themselves.” This early self-introduction, occurring in the first scene of the play, is a message to

the audience that Iago cares for no one but himself. According to Macmillan Online Dictionary the HEART metaphor is used in English to emphasize strong feelings and enthusiasm (<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/with-all-your-heart-and-soul?q=heart+and+sou>). This metaphor anticipates the fact that Iago will keep all his energy and feelings to serve his own goal which is manipulating, controlling and destroying the black Moor.

The metaphor in (2) considers the heart an entity or a container where Iago hides his wicked feelings and intentions towards Othello. In (3), there is a compound metaphor (containing multiple parts) where TIME is introduced in terms of a (female) person (TIME IS A PERSON) from whose womb “events ... will be delivered” (EVENTS ARE ENTITIES). Like (1), the metaphors in (2) and (3) reflect Iago’s hidden intentions and negative feelings towards Othello.

In (4) and (5), there are two examples of EAR metaphor. In (5), the conceptual metaphor BODY PART/EAR IS A CONTAINER is exploited, as Othello’s ear is understood in terms of a container where “pestilence” or illicit false information, which is understood in terms of a liquid, can be poured. In (6), Iago carefully uses the NOSE (BODY PART IS AN OBJECT) metaphor. The NOSE here is understood in terms of an object, a tool that can be used to control and manipulate Othello’s feelings regarding his wife’s honesty.

The link between human body, human action and thought is illustrated through the use of BODY PART METAPHORS in Iago’s speech. The analysis shows that these metaphors are not just linguistic expressions; rather they are properties of the human mind, and can be used to bring success to our life plans and projects. As pointed out by Lakoff and Jonson (1980b), the experience we have of our bodies structure our ideas and thoughts which are delivered in the form of metaphors.

6.2. Lexicality Analysis:

This phase of analysis focuses on two aspects of the character of Iago: his colour-oriented racism, and his revenge plan to direct Othello to the irrational act of destroying himself and murdering his wife, Desdemona. Iago skillfully manipulates lexical items to control the other characters by exploiting his background knowledge about these characters to win their trust and finally reach his evil goal. Lexicality analysis is conducted through two lexical processes: overlexicalization and relexicalization.

6.2.1. Overlexicalization

As early as the first few lines in the play, Iago uses overlexicalization to contrast his character to that of Othello. This is represented in the use of synonymous or near-synonymous words, phrases/ clauses to highlight positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. This is illustrated in the following example where overlexicalization is represented by the underlined synonymous expressions. When Iago refers to himself, he says "I know my price, I am worth no worse a place" (1.1.11), but the other (i.e. Othello) is described as "loving his own pride and purposes,/ Evades then, with a bombast circumstance/ Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war" (1.1.12-14).

This example illustrates Iago's racist feelings towards Othello. Iago admits that he knows his "price" and that he deserves a better position. Iago's racism is further shown in his mocking comments on Othello's speech which he describes as high-sounding, i.e. "a bombast"/ "stuff'd", to look more important than he really is. Using this set of contrasting synonyms, Iago seems to compare himself to Othello. Unlike Othello who hides behind his hollow and overblown words, Iago is someone who has "price" and is "worth" a higher rank in the army.

Another example of overlexicalization is when Iago addresses Brabantio to inform him of his daughter's elopement with Othello: "you're robb'd ... you have lost half your soul" (1.1.86-88). Later in

the play we discover that Iago knows that Desdemona and Othello are married after a long love-story. However, it is out of his racist feelings that he uses the synonymous verbs "robbed" and "lost" to refer to his inner denial of a white woman marrying a black man. Iago gave a negative presentation of the reasons that made Desdemona love Othello by providing a set of synonymous expressions that reflect his negative attitude. According to what he believes, Desdemona was just deceived by the Moor's "bragging" (talking proudly and boastly about himself), "fantastical lies", and "parting (lengthy and stupid talk about unimportant matters).

Mark me with what violence she first
loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her
fantastical lies: and will she love him still for
prating? (2.1.224-226)

Wine (1984, p.30) points out that Iago is a "corruptor of words", a manipulator who uses word-play to control everybody around him including Othello himself. His excessive repetition of lexical items, and his use of synonymous and near synonymous expressions reflect his linguistic manipulation as part of his plan to destroy the black Moor. An example of this is his repeated use of the word "honest" to change Othello's belief concerning Cassio:

Othello: Is he honest?
Iago: Honest, my lord?
Othello: Honest! Ay honest.
Iago: My Lord, for aught I know. (3.3. 101-104)
...
Iago: For Michael Cassio
I dare be sworn I think he is honest.
...
Why then, I think Cassio is an honest man.

Commenting on the repetition of the item "honest", Ragab (1998) explains that Iago himself desires to assume "the position of an honest man" (p. 96), and to imply that Cassio is the one who is dishonest. Iago's skillful linguistic manipulation is depicted in his

use of contrasting sets of synonymous phrases in his attempt to direct Othello to doubt his wife. Iago implies that a men’s “good name” is synonymous of the “jewel of their souls”. Such a jewel can be stolen or fletched, the thing which would make men poor.

Positive Synonyms	Negative Synonyms
Good name jewel of their souls	steals my purse steals trash filches from me my good name

Iago: Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
 Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
 Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something,
 nothing;
 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands:
 But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him
 And makes me poor indeed. (3.3.155-161)

Othello's presence in the scene imposes on Iago what van Dijk (2009) calls "contextual constraints" or "ideological doing delicacy" (p.205). It has been observed that Iago's discourse concerning Cassio and Desdemona is often implicit or hedged when Othello is present. This explains his consistent use of "less negative expressions, mitigations, [and] euphemisms" (p. 206). Euphemisms in Iago's discourse are shown in his selection of mild and indirect lexical items to mitigate harsh and blunt words that may be too shocking for Othello. Euphemism as a form of lexicalization is clearly illustrated when Iago codes "adultery" using other lexical items such as “filches from me my good name”, “Robs me” and “makes me poor”.

Iago continues raising the fire of jealousy in Othello’s heart when he implicitly refers to the possibility of a vicious relationship between Desdemona and Cassio by using another set of contrasting synonyms. The increasing use of negative synonyms in these

examples are carefully selected to control and direct Othello's feelings towards Desdemona and Cassio.

Positive Synonyms	Negative Synonyms
love dote	cuckold wronger damnèd doubts suspects

Iago: That cuckold lives in bliss
 Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
 But, O, what damnèd minutes tells he o'er
 Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves (
 3.3. 167-170)

6.2.2. Relexicalization

Relexicalization is firstly depicted in Iago's attempt to avoid referring to Othello by name. Instead he codes his experience by selecting other items such as the following: "his Moorship (1.1.33), the Moor (1.1.40), "an old black ram" (1.1. 89), "the devil" (1.1.91), "Barbary horse" (1.1.111), "erring barbarian" (1.3.358), "the lusty Moor" (2.1.299). This phenomenon is labelled by Reisigl and Wodak (2001, p. 45) as "rhetorical discrimination" where the outgroup members are not referred to by their actual names or good attributes, but rather by personal pronouns or by their nationalities.

Iago cannot accept the fact that Desdomna, a white European woman, have any sort of love affairs with a black African fellow. Thus, to avoid using words such as "love" or even "marriage", he recodes this experience in a different way by creating lexical items that reflect his negative representation of this relation, and of course of Othello:

... an old black ram
 Is topping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
 Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,

Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you. (1.1.88- 91)

Iago focuses only on the animal aspect of this relation; the loving couple are nothing but a "black ram" and a "white ewe". He goes on to equate this love to devil's seduction. Again the ordinary words used to describe man-woman relationship such as "love", and "marriage" are relexicalized by using the terms "sanctimony and a frail vow" (1.3.358), "lust of blood" (1.3.337), :

....you'll
have your daughter covered with a Barbary horse.
.....
Your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast
with two backs. (1.1.111-117)

Relexicalization in the above example can be further explained if we consider the lexical choices available to Iago:

(a)
have your daughter loved by Othello
have your daughter married to Othello
have your daughter covered with a Barbary horse

(b)
Your daughter and Othello are in love
Your daughter and Othello and are making love
*Your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast
with two backs*

Iago opts for the third choice as a means to present a negative presentation of this love affair which he later describes as "merely a lust of blood" (I.3.337). For him it is against the law of nature to have these two racially different people love each other:

.....It cannot be
that Desdemona should long continue her love to the
Moor, ..., nor he his to her. (1.3.344-346)

It seems that relexicalization is a preliminary stage in Iago's programme to arouse Othello's suspicion in Desdemona. Later in the play, Iago

's discourse is more direct and explicit:
She did deceive her father, marrying you; (3.3. 206)

Iago's racism is such a strong emotion that he ignores any consideration of contextual constraints as illustrated in the following example where he considers it "foul disproportion" and "unnatural" of Desdemona not to accept marriage proposals "of her own clime, complexion, and degree" and prefer the black Moor, Othello.

Ay, there's the point: as—to be bold with you—
Not to affect many proposed matches
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
Whereto we see in all things nature tends—
Foh! one may smell in such a will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural. (3.3.228-2330)

7. Conclusion

It is a human tendency to think carefully about linguistic choices before delivering utterances that reveal hidden thoughts. This study shows that Iago is careful and skillful in his use of words and linguistic structures. Analyzing Iago's speech, whether on lexicality level or conceptual metaphor level, proves that Iago's underlying meanings and intentions potentially exceed the simple superficial messages that his interlocutor may understand.

Iago is a representative of a social in-group that has colour/racial prejudice against coloured non-European residents. The reason declared by Iago to justify his hatred to Othello is that the latter ignores him and gives the post of a lieutenant to another soldier. However, this justification is a superficial cover to his inner repulsive attitude towards those "others" who have different identities and different colours. The CM analysis of Iago's speech

provides satisfactory evidence that even if Othello had given the post of a lieutenant to Iago rather than Cassio, the former's attitude towards Othello would have been no different. Iago would have found another reason to manipulate and push Othello to the same tragic end.

The findings of the study provide adequate answers to the two research questions posed in section 5. The first research question aims to find out whether or not *Othello* contains linguistic evidence of colour prejudice in Shakespeare's time. The CM analysis shows that Iago deliberately uses MAN IS ANIMAL METAPHOR to highlight Othello's negative features, such as stupidity, foolishness and ugliness, in terms of animal behaviour. The concept of "otherness" and colour prejudice is evident in Iago's avoidance to refer to Othello by name. Instead he resorts to relexicalization through the use of negative attributes, personal pronouns, or even nationality (The Moor, his Moorship, etc.). The second research question is about the linguistic devices used by Iago in his speech to express his racial orientation. Iago's hatred to Othello is expressed in his elaborate use of a couple of CMs: MAN IS ANIMAL, and BODY PART IS A WHOLE PERSON. In addition, Iago uses overlexicalization which is a set of synonymous or near-synonymous items to highlight positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation.

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