Close analysis of five speeches in Act2s1

1 Cassio: lines 74-87 ‘She that I spake…enwheel thee round’.

2 Iago: lines 145-157 ‘ She that was…. Small beer’.

3 Othello: lines 175-184 ‘It gives me wonder…unknown fate’.

And lines 194-204 ‘Come let us…well met at Cyprus’.

4 Iago: lines 212-225 ‘ Lay thy finger….as Cassio does?’

5 Iago: lines267-293 ‘That Cassio…seen till used’.

Re-read your speeches making sure you understand (from your walk through and listening) what is going on, and check any words that you don’t understand in the footnotes.

**Form**: is your speech a soliloquy (spoken by the character on their own, to the audience) part of dialogue (just two people) or addressed to several characters on stage. What might be the significance of this?

Is your speech in prose (which just looks like a novel) or blank verse (unrhymed poetry which is loosely iambic pentameter: five iambic feet, unstressed/stressed \*-)? Is your speech in rhyming couplets; does it have any of these in it?

What effect do you think the chosen form of your speech has on what is being said and who is saying it? (Remember, prose is used for low life characters, or baser emotions; rhyme is used for emphasing words, and regular rhyming couplets are often used to sum up action or ideas, and to signify endings.

**Language:** how does your character speak at this stage in the play? Look for semantic fields, iterative imagery, pronoun use (lots of ‘I’ or ‘you’); titles, names, terms of address, enjambement, references to abstract thought and imagery or immediate and directly denotative? Do they talk in imperatives, interrogatives, exclamatives or declaratives?

**Phonetics:** how does your character’s language sound? Is it full of soft luxuriant assonance or harsh plosives ? Is it abrupt or mellifluous, or something else and why? What is the effect of this on we the audience?

**Drama:** where is the drama in your character’s speech? Does it have dramatic irony; is it foreshadowing something; does it connote something dramatic like a storm, murder, sex etc?

When you have answered all these questions and annotated your speech accordingly, write 300 words on the effect of the language of your character’s speech on the play thus far. Include critical terminology for each quotation you use, trying to use a term that is new to you from your glossaries).