

In the piece of writing I will talk about some of the most distinctive language features in the given passage, and also how I think the passage might be performed, including, props, costume and set design.

Most of the passage is written in blank verse, this is unrhymed poetry written in iambic pentameter with approximately five stressed syllables in each line, 'But **in** the **other's** **silence do I see**' (1.1.51). But not all speech is written in iambic pentameter (some of Gremio's lines). I think that iambic pentameter is one of Shakespeare's best creations, and something that really defines him as a playwright, iambic pentameter gives the affect of a steady, constant quality to the writing, iambic pentameter is the natural rhythm of the English language. Another clear feature of language is at the beginning of the passage when Tranio and Lucentio are talking, the ends of their sentences rhyme in rhyming couplets, 'toward...forward, see...sobriety' (1.1.51). I think this is effective because it makes the words flow easily with its poetic finish.

When Bianca first speaks in the passage, we see that Shakespeare has put in some antithesis's such as 'content' which is the antithesis to 'discontent' and 'company' which is antithesis to 'myself' (1.1.102), an antithesis is a word which directly contrasts with the other word as shown in my examples. Antithetical words give contrasting ideas, making the reader or listener make a comparison in their head. Gremio says 'why will you mew her up' (1.1.102) this is metaphorical language as mew means to cage or confine, as would be done to hawks when they were moulting, therefore comparing her to hawk who should be caged, but this is not meant literally, just metaphorically. This is a continuing theme of comparing her to animals, and has the affect of making us conjure an image of her being an animal, in our minds.

We see that next to one of Lucentio's lines it says '[~~aside~~]' (1.1.102), this means that the line directed at the audience and supposedly ~~not~~ by the other characters, asides come hand in hand with soliloquies, which are spoken directly to the audience whilst the character is alone on the stage, although there is not a soliloquy in this particular passage, they are typical of Shakespeare's work and do appear at other times in the play. I think that these are effective at making the audience feel more involved, and as if they are part of the performance, even if not directly.

I imagine the set for the passage to be simple, maybe a market square with only a few simple stalls selling fruit, vegetables and maybe a stall selling jewellery, very open and friendly where everyone knows each other. When performed we should be able to easily distinguish between the hierarchy of the characters, for example we should be able to clearly see that Baptista is more important than Tranio, this could be done by the use of levels putting Baptista on a podium making him higher than Tranio, or it could be done with the use of costume and colours of costumes, for example putting Baptista in royal red or blue velvet clothes that are obviously expensive, and putting Tranio in clothes made of hessian or clothes that are ripped or damaged. We should be able to see that Katherine and Bianca are well dressed, they could have props such as umbrellas and they could have lots of jewellery on, such as earrings, necklaces and bracelets made of gold.

▲ At the beginning when Tranio begins to speak to Lucentio, I think this should be done to the audience in a Brechtian style where Tranio and Lucentio stand side by side and the words are spoken or in this case whispered to the audience but as if they were stood facing each other, this is called epic theatre and makes the audience aware that they should be under no illusion that what they are watching is real or

that the actors have become the characters. I in fact would do most of the passage in a Brechtian style as I think it is very effective and, the breaking of the 'fourth wall' makes the audience feel involved in the performance which may in turn help keep their attention for longer, as sometimes Shakespeare work can be hard to listen to for long periods of time due to the complex language and different time period.

The use of gesture would also be effective in the passage to show Katherina's attention seeking and ~~show~~ ways she would have her head held high and her body language would show how she is very strong willed and rich. Gesture is the way of conveying attitudes or feelings using non-verbal communication such as actions or ~~gestures~~, I think this would be effective because it can also convey hidden meanings and feelings that characters are not saying directly.

In conclusion I would say that there is some very distinctive language features in the passage, many of which are very typical of Shakespeare's work. There would be lots of different ways to perform the passage in modern day theatre and in an up to date style, I think that my choice of using a Bertolt Brecht inspired style would help to make the passage current, and also add another dimension to the performance, with its non naturalistic style and simple set design.

Word count: 904

Bibliography

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