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Virgil portrays Mezentius' heroism through a wide range of linguistic techniques, with particular weight as Mezentius abandons his furor in his final moments.

Whilst Mezentius is <sup>in this extract</sup> 'Already injured', Virgil establishes Aeneas as a fierce opponent for Mezentius in the violent imagery associated with him, such as the immediacy implied in the forward placed verb "advolat." Although Aeneas taunts him and questions the absence of "Mezentius acer", Virgil shows that Mezentius retains his dignity in a heroic manner in his reference to him in terms of his ancestry "Tyrrhenus." Mezentius is also seen to harbour <sup>respect for the</sup> ~~with the~~ religious in the description, "hausit caelum mentemque recepit." Virgil's allusion to the heavens symbolises Mezentius' duty to the gods, a heroic quality which is reinforced by the juxtaposition 'caelum mentem', associating Mezentius' own mind with a greater purpose.

Mezentius' heroism in the face of his imminent death is most effectively shown in his final speech, "hostis amare, quid increpitas mortemque miraris?" This rhetorical question signifies an heroic acceptance of death as he addresses Aeneas directly, indicated by the vocative, and expresses no fear in death.

It is also evident that Mezentius' sense of love and duty to his deceased son Lausus is instrumental in his bravery as he dies. The final placement of "Lausus" in line 902 emphatically conveys the source of Mezentius' heroism. Mezentius braves death and behaves humbly in making his last request to Aeneas, "oro", lines 903 & 905. An accumulation of death imagery "corpus humo" and "sepulcro" finally emphasize Mezentius' bravery as he requests to return to Lausus, "me consorte natum." It is with much pathos, but also

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the bravery and strength ~~that~~  
befitting a hero that Merentius is  
slain (905 - 907). The juxtaposition of  
the deponent verb "loquitur" and the  
noun "uigolo" provides a violent  
insight into Merentius' bravery as he  
is stabbed "in scius."

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